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Francis W. Halsey

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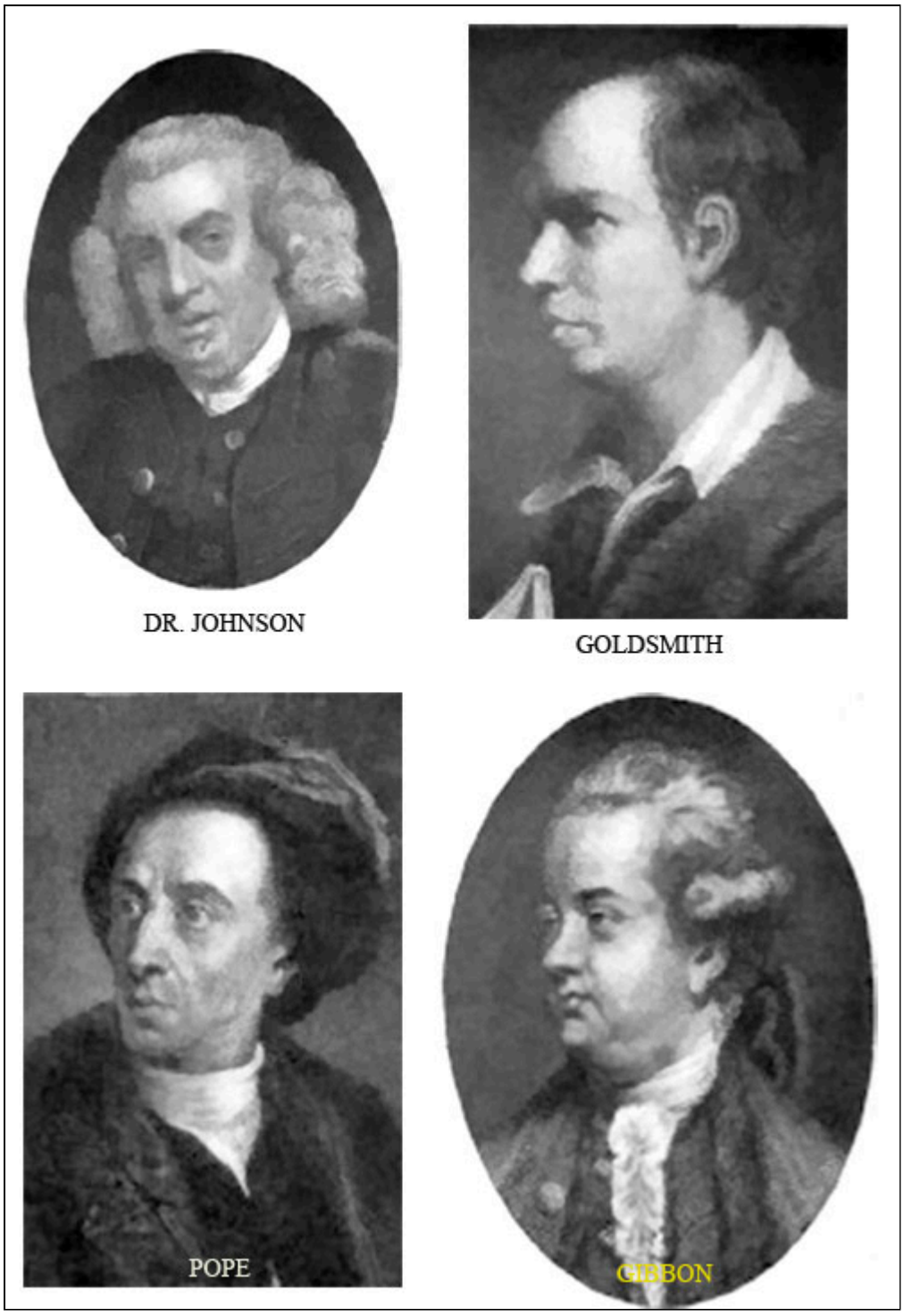

DR. JOHNSON, GOLDSMITH, POPE, and GIBBON

THE BEST
of the
WORLD'S CLASSICS
RESTRICTED TO PROSE

HENRY CABOT LODGE
Editor-in-Chief

FRANCIS W. HALSEY
Associate Editor

With an Introduction, Biographical and Explanatory Notes, etc.

IN TEN VOLUMES

Vol. IV
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND—II

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY
NEW YORK AND LONDON

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1672-1800

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VOL. IV—GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND—II

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND—II

1672-1800

SIR RICHARD STEELE [3]

Born in Ireland in 1672; died in Wales in 1729; companion of Addison at Oxford; served in the army in 1694, becoming a captain; elected to Parliament, but expelled for using seditious language; knighted under George I; quarreled with Addison in 1719; founded the Tatler, and next to Addison, was the chief writer for the Spectator.

I

OF COMPANIONS AND FLATTERERS

An old acquaintance who met me this morning seemed overjoyed to see me, and told me I looked as well as he had known me do these forty years; but, continued he, not quite the man you were when we visited together at Lady Brightly's. Oh! Isaac, those days are over. Do you think there are any such fine creatures now living as we then conversed with? He went on with a thousand incoherent circumstances, which, in his imagination, must needs please me; but they had the quite contrary effect. The flattery with which he began, in telling me how well I wore, was not disagreeable; but his indiscreet mention of a set of acquaintance we had outlived, recalled ten thousand things to my memory, which made me reflect upon my present condition with regret. Had he indeed been so kind as, after a long absence, to felicitate me upon an indolent and easy old age, and mentioned how much he and I had to thank for, who at our time of day could walk firmly, eat [4] heartily and converse cheerfully, he had kept up my pleasure in myself. But of all mankind, there are none so shocking as these injudicious civil people. They ordinarily begin upon something that they know must be a satisfaction; but then, for fear of the imputation of flattery, they follow it with the last thing in the world of which you would be reminded. It is this that perplexes civil persons. The reason that there is such a general outcry among us against flatterers is that there are so very few good ones. It is the nicest art in this life, and is a part of eloquence which does not want the preparation that is necessary to all other parts of it, that your audience should be your well-wishers; for praise from an enemy is the most pleasing of all commendations.

It is generally to be observed, that the person most agreeable to a man for a constancy, is he that has no shining qualities, but is a certain degree above great imperfections, whom he can live with as his inferior, and who will either overlook or not observe his little defects. Such an easy companion as this, either now and then throws out a little flattery, or lets a man silently flatter himself in his superiority to him. If you take notice, there is hardly a rich man in the world who has not such a led friend of small consideration, who is a darling for his insignificancy. It is a great ease to have one in our own shape a species below us, and who, without being listed in our service, is by nature of our retinue. These dependents are of excellent use on a rainy day, or when a man has not a mind to dress; or to exclude solitude, when one has neither a mind to that nor to company. There are of this [5] good-natured order who are so kind to divide themselves, and do these good offices to

many. Five or six of them visit a whole quarter of the town, and exclude the spleen, without fees, from the families they frequent. If they do not prescribe physic, they can be company when you take it.

Very great benefactors to the rich, or those whom they call people at their ease, are your persons of no consequence. I have known some of them, by the help of a little cunning, make delicious flatterers. They know the course of the town, and the general characters of persons; by this means they will sometimes tell the most agreeable falsehoods imaginable. They will acquaint you that such one of a quite contrary party said, that tho you were engaged in different interests, yet he had the greatest respect for your good sense and address. When one of these has a little cunning, he passes his time in the utmost satisfaction to himself and his friends; for his position is never to report or speak a displeasing thing to his friend. As for letting him go on in an error, he knows advice against them is the office of persons of greater talents and less discretion.

The Latin word for a flatterer (*assentator*) implies no more than a person that barely consents; and indeed such a one, if a man were able to purchase or maintain him, can not be bought too dear. Such a one never contradicts you, but gains upon you, not by a fulsome way of commending you in broad terms, but liking whatever you propose or utter; at the same time is ready to beg your pardon, and gainsay you if you chance to [6] speak ill of yourself. An old lady is very seldom without such a companion as this, who can recite the names of all her lovers, and the matches refused by her in the days when she minded such vanities—as she is pleased to call them, tho she so much approves the mention of them. It is to be noted, that a woman's flatterer is generally elder than herself, her years serving to recommend her patroness's age, and to add weight to her complaisance in all other particulars.

We gentlemen of small fortunes are extremely necessitous in this particular. I have indeed one who smokes with me often; but his parts are so low, that all the incense he does me is to fill his pipe with me, and to be out at just as many whiffs as I take. This is all the praise or assent that he is capable of, yet there are more hours when I would rather be in his company than that of the brightest man I know. It would be a hard matter to give an account of this inclination to be flattered; but if we go to the bottom of it, we shall find that the pleasure in it is something like that of receiving money which lay out. Every man thinks he has an estate of reputation, and is glad to see one that will bring any of it home to him; it is no matter how dirty a bag it is conveyed to him in, or by how clownish a messenger, so the money is good. All that we want to be pleased with flattery, is to believe that the man is sincere who gives it us. It is by this one accident that absurd creatures often outrun the most skilful in this art. Their want of ability is here an advantage, and their bluntness, as it is the seeming effect of sincerity, is the best cover to artifice. [7]

It is indeed, the greatest of injuries to flatter any but the unhappy, or such as are displeased with themselves for some infirmity. In this latter case we have a member of our club, that, when Sir Jeffrey falls asleep, wakens him with snoring. This makes Sir Jeffrey hold up for some moments the longer, to see there are men younger than himself among us, who are more lethargic than he is.

II

THE STORY-TELLER AND HIS ART[1]

I have often thought that a story-teller is born, as well as a poet. It is, I think, certain, that some men have such a peculiar cast of mind, that they see things in another light than men of grave dispositions. Men of a lively imagination and a mirthful temper will

represent things to their hearers in the same manner as they themselves were affected with them; and whereas serious spirits might perhaps have been disgusted at the sight of some odd occurences in life, yet the very same occurrences shall please them in a well-told story, where the disagreeable parts of the images are concealed, and those only which are pleasing exhibited to the fancy. Story-telling is therefore not an art, but what we call a "knack"; it doth not so much subsist upon wit as upon humor; and I will add, that it is not perfect without proper gesticulations of the body, which naturally attend [8] such merry emotions of the mind. I know very well that a certain gravity of countenance sets some stories off to advantage, where the hearer is to be surprized in the end. But this is by no means a general rule; for it is frequently convenient to aid and assist by cheerful looks and whimsical agitations.

I will go yet further, and affirm that the success of a story very often depends upon the make of the body, and the formation of the features, of him who relates it. I have been of this opinion ever since I criticized upon the chin of Dick Dewlap. I very often had the weakness to repine at the prosperity of his conceits, which made him pass for a wit with the widow at the coffee-house and the ordinary mechanics that frequent it; nor could I myself forbear laughing at them most heartily, tho upon examination I thought most of them very flat and insipid. I found, after some time, that the merit of his wit was founded upon the shaking of a fat paunch, and the tossing up of a pair of rosy jowls. Poor Dick had a fit of sickness, which robbed him of his fat and his fame at once; and it was full three months before he regained his reputation, which rose in proportion to his floridity. He is now very jolly and ingenious, and hath a good constitution for wit.

Those who are thus adorned with the gifts of nature, are apt to show their parts with too much ostentation. I would therefore advise all the professors of this art never to tell stories but as they seem to grow out of the subject-matter of the conversation, or as they serve to illustrate or enliven it. Stories that are very common are generally irksome; but [9] may be aptly introduced, provided they be only hinted at, and mentioned by way of allusion. Those that are altogether new, should never be ushered in without a short and pertinent character of the chief persons concerned, because, by that means, you may make the company acquainted with them; and it is a certain rule, that slight and trivial accounts of those who are familiar to us, administer more mirth than the brightest points of wit in unknown characters.

A little circumstance in the complexion of dress of the man you are talking of, sets his image before the hearer, if it be chosen aptly for the story. Thus, I remember Tom Lizard, after having made his sisters merry with an account of a formal old man's way of complimenting, owned very frankly that his story would not have been worth one farthing, if he had made the hat of him whom he represented one inch narrower. Besides the marking distinct characters, and selecting pertinent circumstances, it is likewise necessary to leave off in time, and end smartly; so that there is a kind of drama in the forming of a story; and the manner of conducting and pointing it is the same as in an epigram. It is a miserable thing, after one hath raised the expectation of the company by humorous characters and a pretty conceit, to pursue the matter too far. There is no retreating; and how poor is it for a story-teller to end his relation by saying, "that's all!"

III [10]

SIR ROGER AND THE WIDOW[2]

In my first description of the company in which I pass most of my time, it may be remembered that I mentioned a great affliction which my friend Sir Roger had met with in his youth; which was no less than a disappointment in love. It happened this evening that we fell into a very pleasing walk at a distance from his house. As soon as we came

into it. "It is," quoth the good old man, looking round him with a smile, "very hard that any part of my land should be settled upon one who has used me so ill as the perverse widow did; and yet I am sure I could not see a sprig of any bough of this whole walk of trees, but I should reflect upon her and her severity. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. You are to know, this was the place wherein I used to muse upon her; and by that custom I can never come into it, but the same tender sentiments revive in my mind, as if I had actually walked with that beautiful creature under these shades. I have been fool enough to carve her name on the bark of several of these trees; so unhappy is the condition of men in love, to attempt the removing of their passion by the methods which serve only to imprint it deeper. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world."

Here followed a profound silence; and I was not displeased to observe my friend falling [11] so naturally into a discourse, which I had ever before taken notice he industriously avoided. After a very long pause, he entered upon an account of this great circumstance in his life, with an air which I thought raised my idea of him above what I had ever had before; and gave me the picture of that cheerful mind of his before it received that stroke which has ever since affected his words and actions. But he went on as follows:

"I came to my estate in my twenty-second year, and resolved to follow the steps of the most worthy of my ancestors who have inhabited this spot of earth before me, in all the methods of hospitality and good neighborhood, for the sake of my fame; and in country sports and recreations, for the sake of my health. In my twenty-third year I was obliged to serve as sheriff of the county; and in my servants, officers, and whole equipage, indulged the pleasure of a young man (who did not think ill of his own person) in taking that public occasion of showing my figure and behavior to advantage. You may easily imagine to yourself what appearance I made, who am pretty tall, rode well, and was very well drest, at the head of a whole county, with music before me, a feather in my hat, and my horse well bitted. I can assure you, I was not a little pleased with the kind looks and glances I had from all the balconies and windows as I rode to the hall where the assizes were held.

"But when I came there, a beautiful creature, in a widow's habit, sat in court to hear the event of a cause concerning her dower. This commanding creature (who was born for the destruction of all who behold her) put on such a resignation in her countenance, and bore [12] the whispers of all around the court with such a pretty uneasiness, I warrant you, and then recovered herself from one eye to another, until she was perfectly confused by meeting something so wistful in all she encountered, that at last, with a murrain to her, she cast her bewitching eye upon me. I no sooner met it but I bowed like a great surprized booby; and knowing her cause was to be the first which came on, I cried, like a great captivated calf as I was, 'Make way for the defendant's witnesses.' This sudden partiality made all the county immediately see the sheriff also was become a slave to the fine widow. During the time her cause was upon trial, she behaved herself, I warrant you, with such a deep attention to her business, took opportunities to have little billets handed to her counsel, then would be in such a pretty confusion, occasioned, you must know, by acting before so much company, that not only I, but the whole court, was prejudiced in her favor; and all that the next heir to her husband had to urge was thought so groundless and frivolous, that when it came to her counsel to reply, there was not half so much said as every one besides in the court thought he could have urged to her advantage.

"You must understand, sir, this perverse woman is one of those unaccountable creatures that secretly rejoice in the admiration of men, but indulge themselves in no further consequences. Hence it is that she has ever had a train of admirers, and she removes from her slaves in town to those in the country, according to the seasons of the year. She is a [13] reading lady, and far gone in the pleasures of friendship. She is always accompanied by a confidant, who is witness to her daily protestations against our sex, and consequently a bar to her first steps toward love upon the strength of her own maxims and declarations.

"However, I must needs say this accomplished mistress of mine has distinguished me above the rest, and has been known to declare Sir Roger de Coverley was the tamest and most humane of all the brutes in the country. I was told she said so by one who thought he rallied me; but upon the strength of this slender encouragement of being thought least detestable, I made new liveries, new paired my coach horses, sent them all to town to be bitted, and taught to throw their legs well, and move all together before I pretended to cross the country, and wait upon her. As soon as I thought my retinue suitable to the character of my fortune and youth, I set out from hence to make my addresses. The particular skill of this lady has ever been to inflame your wishes, and yet command respect. To make her mistress of this art, she has a greater share of knowledge, wit, and good sense, than is usual even among men of merit. Then she is beautiful beyond the race of women. If you will not let her go on with a certain artifice with her eyes, and the skill of beauty, she will arm herself with her real charms, and strike you with admiration instead of desire. It is certain that if you were to behold the whole woman, there is that dignity in her aspect, that composure in her motion, that complacency in her manner, that if her form makes you hope, her merit makes you fear. But then again, she is such a [14] desperate scholar, that no country gentleman can approach her without being a jest.

"As I was going to tell you, when I came to her house, I was admitted to her presence with great civility; at the same time she placed herself to be first seen by me in such an attitude as I think you call the posture of a picture, that she discovered new charms, and I at last came toward her with such an awe as made me speechless. This she no sooner observed but she made her advantage of it, and began a discourse to me concerning love and honor, as they both are followed by pretenders, and the real votaries to them. When she discust these points in a discourse, which I verily believe was as learned as the best philosopher in Europe could possibly make, she asked me whether she was so happy as to fall in with my sentiments on these important particulars. Her confidant sat by her, and upon my being in the last confusion and silence, this malicious aid of hers, turning to her, says, 'I am very glad to observe Sir Roger pauses upon this subject, and seems resolved to deliver all his sentiments upon the matter when he pleases to speak.'

"They both kept their countenances, and after I had sat half an hour meditating how to behave before such profound casuists, I rose up and took my leave. Chance has since that time thrown me very often in her way, and she as often directed a discourse to me which I do not understand.

"This barbarity has kept me ever at a distance from the most beautiful object my eyes [15] ever beheld. It is thus also she deals with all mankind, and you must make love to her, as you would conquer the sphinx, by posing her. But were she like other women, and that there were any talking to her, how constant must the pleasure of that man be, who could converse with a creature—but, after all, you may be sure her heart is fixt on some one or other; and yet I have been credibly informed; but who can believe half that is said! After she had done speaking to me, she put her hand to her bosom, and adjusted her tucker. Then she cast her eyes a little down, upon my beholding her too earnestly. They say she sings excellently; her voice in her ordinary speech has something in it inexpressibly sweet. You must know I dined with her at a public table the day after I first saw her, and she helped me to some tansy in the eye of all the gentlemen in the country. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. I can assure you, sir, were you to behold her, you would be in the same condition; for as her speech is music, her form is angelic. But I find I grow irregular while I am talking of her; but, indeed, it would be stupidity to be unconcerned at such perfection. Oh, the excellent creature! she is as inimitable to all women as she is inaccessible to all men."

I found my friend begin to rave, and insensibly led him toward the house, that we might be joined by some other company; and am convinced that the widow is the secret cause of all that inconsistency which appears in some parts of my friend's discourse; tho he has so much command of himself as not directly to mention her.

IV

[16]

THE COVERLEY FAMILY PORTRAITS[3]

I was this morning walking in the gallery, when Sir Roger entered at the end opposite to me, and, advancing toward me, said he was glad to meet me among his relations the de Coverleys, and hoped I liked the conversation of so much good company who were as silent as myself. I knew he alluded to the pictures, and as he is a gentleman who does not a little value himself upon his ancient descent, I expected he would give me some account of them. We were now arrived at the upper end of the gallery, when the knight faced toward one of the pictures, and as we stood before it, he entered into the matter, after his blunt way of saying things, as they occur to his imagination, without regular introduction, or care to preserve the appearance of chain of thought.

"It is," said he, "worth while to consider the force of dress; and how the persons of one age differ from those of another, merely by that only. One may observe also, that the general fashion of one age has been followed by one particular set of people in another, and by them preserved from one generation to another. Thus the vast jutting coat and small bonnet, which was the habit in Henry the Seventh's time, is kept on in the yeomen of the guard; not without a good and politic view, because they look a foot taller, and a [17] foot and a half broader; besides, that the cap leaves the face expanded, and consequently more terrible, and fitter to stand at the entrance of palaces.

"This predecessor of ours, you see, is drest after this manner, and his cheeks would be no larger than mine, were he in a hat as I am. He was the last man that won a prize in the Tilt-yard (which is now a common street before Whitehall). You see the broken lance that lies there by his right foot. He shivered that lance of his adversary all to pieces; and bearing himself, look you, sir, in this manner, at the same time he came within the target of the gentleman who rode against him, and taking him with incredible force before him on the pommel of his saddle, he in that manner rode the tournament over, with an air that showed he did it rather to perform the rule of the lists than expose his enemy; however, it appeared he knew how to make use of a victory, and with a gentle trot he marched up to a gallery, where their mistress sat (for they were rivals), and let him down with laudable courtesy and pardonable insolence. I do not know but it might be exactly where the coffee-house is now.

"You are to know this my ancestor was not only a military genius, but fit also for the arts of peace, for he played on the bass viol as well as any gentleman at court; you see where his viol hangs by his basket-hilt sword. The action at the Tilt-yard you may be sure won the fair lady, who was a maid of honor, and the greatest beauty of her time; here she stands the next picture. You see, sir, my great-great-great-grandmother has on the new- [18] fashioned petticoat, except that the modern is gathered at the waist. My grandmother appears as if she stood in a large drum, whereas, the ladies now walk as if they were in a go-cart. For all this lady was bred at court, she became an excellent country wife, she brought ten children, and when I show you the library, you shall see in her own hand (allowing for the difference of the language) the best receipt now in English both for a hasty pudding and a white-pot.

"If you please to fall back a little, because it is necessary to look at the three next pictures at one view; these are three sisters. She on the right hand, who is so very beautiful, died a maid; the next to her, still handsomer, had the same fate, against her will; this homely thing in the middle had both their portions added to her own, and was stolen by a neighboring gentleman, a man of stratagem and resolution, for he poisoned three mastiffs to come at her, and knocked down two deer-stealers in carrying her off. Misfortunes happen in all families. The theft of this romp, and so much money, was no great matter to our estate. But the next heir that possess it was this soft gentleman whom you see there. Observe the small buttons, the little boots, the laces, the slashes about his clothes, and, above all, the posture he is drawn in (which, to be sure, was his own choosing), you see

he sits with one hand on a desk writing and looking, as it were, another way, like an easy writer, or a sonneteer. He was one of those that had too much wit to know how to live in the world; he was a man of no justice, but great good manners; he ruined everybody that [19] had anything to do with him, but never said a rude thing in his life; the most indolent person in the world; he would sign a deed that passed away half his estate with his gloves on, but would not put on his hat before a lady if it were to save his country. He is said to be the first that made love by squeezing the hand. He left the estate with ten thousand pounds debt upon it; but, however, by all hands I have been informed that he was every way the finest gentleman in the world. That debt lay heavy on our house for one generation, but it was retrieved by a gift from that honest man you see there, a citizen of our name, but nothing at all akin to us. I know Sir Andrew Freeport has said behind my back that this man was descended from one of the ten children of the maid of honor I showed you above; but it was never made out. We winked at the thing, indeed, because money was wanting at that time."

Here I saw my friend a little embarrassed, and turned my face to the next portraiture. Sir Roger went on with his account of the gallery in the following manner:

"This man [pointing to him I looked at] I take to be the honor of our house. Sir Humphrey de Coverley; he was in his dealings as punctual as a tradesman, and as generous as a gentleman. He would have thought himself as much undone by breaking his word, as if it were to be followed by bankruptcy. He served his country as a knight of the shire to his dying day. He found it no easy matter to maintain an integrity in his words and actions, even in things that regarded the offices which were incumbent upon him, in [20] the care of his own affairs and relations of life, and therefore dreaded (tho he had great talents) to go into employments of state, where he must be exposed to the snares of ambition. Innocence of life and great ability were the distinguishing parts of his character; the latter, he had often observed, had led to the destruction of the former, and he used frequently to lament that great and good had not the same signification. He was an excellent husbandman, but had resolved not to exceed such a degree of wealth; all above it he bestowed in secret bounties many years after the sum he aimed at for his own use was attained. Yet he did not slacken his industry, but to a decent old age spent the life and fortune which was superfluous to himself, in the service of his friends and neighbors."

Here we were called to dinner, and Sir Roger ended the discourse of this gentleman, by telling me, as we followed the servant, that this his ancestor was a brave man, and narrowly escaped being killed in the civil wars. "For," said he, "he was sent out of the field upon a private message the day before the battle of Worcester." The whim of narrowly escaping by having been within a day of danger, with other matters above mentioned, mixed with good sense, left me at a loss whether I was more delighted with my friend's wisdom or simplicity.

V [21]

ON CERTAIN SYMPTOMS OF GREATNESS[4]

There is no affection of the mind so much blended in human nature, and wrought into our very constitution, as pride. It appears under a multitude of disguises, and breaks out in ten thousand different symptoms. Every one feels it in himself, and yet wonders to see it in his neighbor. I must confess, I met with an instance of it the other day where I should very little have expected it. Who would believe the proud person I am going to speak of is a cobbler upon Ludgate hill? This artist being naturally a lover of respect, and considering that his circumstances are such that no man living will give it him, has contrived the figure of a beau, in wood; who stands before him in a bending posture, with

his hat under his left arm, and his right hand extended in such a manner as to hold a thread, a piece of wax, or an awl, according to the particular service in which his master thinks fit to employ him. When I saw him, he held a candle in this obsequious posture. I was very well pleased with the cobbler's invention, that had so ingeniously contrived an inferior, and stood a little while contemplating this inverted idolatry, wherein the image did homage to the man. When we meet with such a fantastic vanity in one of this order, it is no wonder if we may trace it through all degrees above it, and particularly through all the steps of greatness.

We easily see the absurdity of pride when it enters into the heart of a cobbler; tho in reality it is altogether as ridiculous and unreasonable, wherever it takes possession of a human creature. There is no temptation to it from the reflection upon our being in general, or upon any comparative perfection, whereby one man may excel another. The greater a man's knowledge is, the greater motive he may seem to have for pride; but in the same proportion as the one rises the other sinks, it being the chief office of wisdom to discover to us our weaknesses and imperfections. [22]

As folly is the foundation of pride, the natural superstructure of it is madness. If there was an occasion for the experiment, I would not question to make a proud man a lunatic in three weeks' time, provided I had it in my power to ripen his frenzy with proper applications. It is an admirable reflection in Terence, where it is said of a parasite, "*Hic homines ex stultis facit insanos*." "This fellow," says he, "has an art of converting fools into madmen." When I was in France, the region of complaisance and vanity, I have often observed that a great man who has entered a levee of flatterers humble and temperate has grown so insensibly heated by the court which was paid him on all sides, that he has been quite distracted before he could get into his coach.

If we consult the collegiates of Moorfields, we shall find most of them are beholden to their pride for their introduction into that magnificent palace. I had, some years ago, the curiosity to inquire into the particular circumstances of these whimsical freeholders; and learned from their own mouths the condition and character of each of them. Indeed, I found that all I spoke to were persons of quality. There were at that time five duchesses, three earls, two heathen gods, an emperor, and a prophet. There were also a great number of such as were locked up from their estates, and others who concealed their titles. A leather-seller of Taunton whispered me in the ear that he was the "Duke of Monmouth," but begged me not to betray him. At a little distance from him sat a tailor's wife, who asked me, as I went, if I had seen the sword-bearer, upon which I presumed to ask her who she was, and was answered, "My lady mayoress." [23]

I was very sensibly touched with compassion toward these miserable people; and, indeed, extremely mortified to see human nature capable of being thus disfigured. However, I reaped this benefit from it, that I was resolved to guard myself against a passion which makes such havoc in the brain, and produces so much disorder in the imagination. For this reason I have endeavored to keep down the secret swellings of resentment, and stifle the very first suggestions of self-esteem; to establish my mind in tranquillity, and over-value nothing in my own or in another's possession.

For the benefit of such whose heads are a little turned, tho not to so great a degree as to qualify them for the place of which I have been now speaking, I shall assign one of the sides of the college which I am erecting, for the cure of this dangerous distemper.

The most remarkable of the persons, whose disturbance arises from pride, and whom I shall use all possible diligence to cure, are such as are hidden in the appearance of quite contrary habits and dispositions. Among such, I shall, in the first place, take care of one who is under the most subtle species of pride that I have observed in my whole experience. [24]

The patient is a person for whom I have a great respect, as being an old courtier, and a friend of mine in my youth. The man has but a bare subsistence, just enough to pay his reckoning with us at the Trumpet; but, by having spent the beginning of his life is the

hearing of great men and persons of power, he is always promising to do good offices to introduce every man he converses with into the world; will desire one of ten times his substance to let him see him sometimes, and hints to him that he does not forget him. He answers to matters of no consequence with great circumspection; but, however, maintains a general civility in his words and actions, and an insolent benevolence to all whom he has to do with. This he practises with a grave tone and air; and tho I am his senior by twelve years, and richer by forty pounds per annum, he had yesterday the impudence to commend me to my face, and tell me, "he should be always ready to encourage me." In a word, he is a very insignificant fellow, but exceeding gracious. The best return I can make him for his favors is to carry him myself to Bedlam and see him well taken care of.

The next person I shall provide for is of a quite contrary character, that has in him all the stiffness and insolence of quality, without a grain of sense or good-nature, to make it either respected or beloved. His pride has infected every muscle of his face; and yet, after all his endeavors to show mankind that he contemns them, he is only neglected by all that see him, as not of consequence enough to be hated. [25]

For the cure of this particular sort of madness, it will be necessary to break through all forms with him, and familiarize his carriage by the use of a good cudgel. It may likewise be of great benefit to make him jump over a stick half a dozen times every morning.

A third, whom I have in my eye, is a young fellow, whose lunacy is such that he boasts of nothing but what he ought to be ashamed of. He is vain of being rotten, and talks publicly of having committed crimes which he ought to be hanged for by the laws of his country.

There are several others whose brains are hurt with pride, and whom I may hereafter attempt to recover; but shall conclude my present list with an old woman, who is just dropping into her grave, that talks of nothing but her birth. Tho she has not a tooth in her head, she expects to be valued for the blood in her veins, which she fancies is much better than that which glows in the cheeks of Belinda, and sets half the town on fire.

VI [26]

HOW TO BE HAPPY THO MARRIED[5]

My brother Tranquillus being gone out of town for some days, my sister Jenny sent me word she would come and dine with me, and therefore desired me to have no other company, I took care accordingly, and was not a little pleased to see her enter the room with a decent and matron-like behavior, which I thought very much became her. I saw she had a great deal to say to me, and easily discovered in her eyes, and the air of her countenance, that she had abundance of satisfaction in her heart, which she longed to communicate. However, I was resolved to let her break into her discourse her own way, and reduced her to a thousand little devices and intimations to bring me to the mention of her husband. But finding I was resolved not to name him, she began of her own accord. "My husband," said she, "gives his humble service to you," to which I only answered, "I hope he is well"; and, without waiting for a reply, fell into other subjects.

She at last was out of all patience, and said, with a smile and manner that I thought had more beauty and spirit than I had ever observed before in her, "I did not think, brother, you had been so ill-natured. You have seen, ever since I came in, that I had a mind to talk of my husband, and you will not be so kind as to give me an occasion." [27]

"I did not know," said I, "but it might be a disagreeable subject to you. You do not take me for so old-fashioned a fellow as to think of entertaining a young lady with the discourse of her husband. I know nothing is more acceptable than to speak of one who is

to be so, but to speak of one who is so! indeed, Jenny, I am a better-bred man than you think me."

She showed a little dislike at my raillery; and, by her bridling up, I perceived she expected to be treated hereafter not as Jenny Distaff, but Mrs. Tranquillus. I was very well pleased with this change in her humor; and, upon talking with her on several subjects, I could not but fancy I saw a great deal of her husband's way and manner in her remarks, her phrases, the tone of her voice, and the very air of her countenance. This gave me an unspeakable satisfaction, not only because I had found her a husband, from whom she could learn many things that were laudable, but also because I looked upon her imitation of him as an infallible sign that she entirely loved him. This is an observation that I never knew fail, tho I do not remember that any other has made it. The natural shyness of her sex hindered her from telling me the greatness of her own passion; but I easily collected it from the representation she gave me of his.

"I have everything," says she, "in Tranquillus, that I can wish for; and enjoy in him, what, indeed, you have told me were to be met with in a good husband, the fondness of a lover, the tenderness of a parent, and the intimacy of a friend." [28]

It transported me to see her eyes swimming in tears of affection when she spoke. "And is there not, dear sister," said I, "more pleasure in the possession of such a man than in all the little impertinencies of balls, assemblies, and equipage, which it cost me so much pains to make you contemn?"

She answered, smiling, "Tranquillus has made me a sincere convert in a few weeks, tho I am afraid you could not have done it in your whole life. To tell you truly, I have only one fear hanging upon me, which is apt to give me trouble in the midst of all my satisfactions: I am afraid, you must know, that I shall not always make the same amiable appearance in his eye that I do at present. You know, brother Bickerstaff, that you have the reputation of a conjurer; and, if you have any one secret in your art to make your sister always beautiful, I should be happier than if I were mistress of all the worlds you have shown me in a starry night."

"Jenny," said I, "without having recourse to magic, I shall give you one plain rule that will not fail of making you always amiable to a man who has so great a passion for you, and is of so equal and reasonable a temper as Tranquillus. Endeavor to please, and you must please; be always in the same disposition, as you are when you ask for this secret, and you may take my word, you will never want it. An inviolable fidelity, good humor, and complacency of temper outlive all the charms of a fine face, and make the decays of it invisible."

We discoursed very long upon this head, which was equally agreeable to us both; for, I must confess, as I tenderly love her, I take as much pleasure in giving her instructions for her welfare, as she herself does in receiving them. I proceeded, therefore, to inculcate these sentiments by relating a very particular passage that happened within my own knowledge. [29]

There were several of us making merry at a friend's house in a country village, when the sexton of the parish church entered the room in a sort of surprize, and told us, "that as he was digging a grave in the chancel, a little blow of his pickax opened a decayed coffin, in which there were several written papers." Our curiosity was immediately raised, so that we went to the place where the sexton had been at work, and found a great concourse of people about the grave. Among the rest there was an old woman, who told us the person buried there was a lady whose name I do not think fit to mention, tho there is nothing in the story but what tends very much to her honor. This lady lived several years an exemplary pattern of conjugal love, and, dying soon after her husband, who every way answered her character in virtue and affection, made it her death-bed request, "that all the letters which she had received from him, both before and after her marriage, should be buried in the coffin with her." These, I found upon examination, were the papers before us. Several of them had suffered so much by time that I could only pick out a few words;

as my soul! lilies! roses! dearest angel! and the like. One of them, which was legible throughout, ran thus: [30]

Madam:—

If you would know the greatness of my love, consider that of your own beauty. That blooming countenance, that snowy bosom, that graceful person, return every moment to my imagination; the brightness of your eyes hath hindered me from closing mine since I last saw you. You may still add to your beauties by a smile. A frown will make me the most wretched of men, as I am the most passionate of lovers.

It filled the whole company with a deep melancholy, to compare the description of the letter with the person that occasioned it, who was now reduced to a few crumbling bones, and a little moldering heap of earth. With much ado I deciphered another letter which began with, "My dear, dear wife." This gave me a curiosity to see how the style of one written in marriage differed from one written in courtship. To my surprize, I found the fondness rather augmented than lessened, tho the panegyric turned upon a different accomplishment. The words were as follows:

Before this short absence from you, I did not know that I loved you so much as I really do; tho, at the same time, I thought I loved you as much as possible. I am under great apprehension lest you should have any uneasiness whilst I am defrauded of my share in it, and can not think of tasting any pleasures that you do not partake with me. Pray, my dear, be careful of your health, if for no other reason but because you know I could not outlive you. It is natural in absence to make professions of an inviolable constancy; but [31] toward so much merit it is scarce a virtue, especially when it is but a bare return to that of which you have given me such continued proofs ever since our first acquaintance. I am, etc.

It happened that the daughter of these two excellent persons was by when I was reading this letter. At the sight of the coffin, in which was the body of her mother, near that of her father, she melted into a flood of tears. As I had heard a great character of her virtue, and observed in her this instance of filial piety, I could not resist my natural inclination, of giving advice to young people, and therefore addrest myself to her. "Young lady," said I, "you see how short is the possession of that beauty, in which nature has been so liberal to you. You find the melancholy sight before you is a contradiction to the first letter that you heard on that subject; whereas, you may observe the second letter, which celebrates your mother's constancy, is itself, being found in this place, an argument of it. But, madam, I ought to caution you not to think the bodies that lie before you your father and your mother. Know their constancy is rewarded by a nobler union than by this mingling of their ashes, in a state where there is no danger or possibility of a second separation."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] From the Guardian.

[2] From the Spectator.

[3] From the Spectator.

[4] From the Tatler.

[5] From the Tatler.

LORD BOLINGBROKE [32]

Born in 1678, died in 1751; his name, before he was a peer, Henry St. John; entered Parliament in 1701, acting with the Tories; Secretary of War in 1704-08; Secretary of State in 1710-14; created Viscount Bolingbroke in 1714; opposed the accession of the House of Hanover, and on the death of Queen Anne in 1714, fled to France, entering the service of the Pretender, by whom he was soon dismissed and then returned to England; a friend of Pope and Swift, Pope's "Essay on Man" being addrest to him.

I

OF THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE

I think very differently from most men of the time we have to pass, and the business we have to do, in this world. I think we have more of one, and less of the other, than is commonly supposed. Our want of time, and the shortness of human life, are some of the principal commonplace complaints which we prefer against the established order of things; they are the grumblings of the vulgar, and the pathetic lamentations of the philosopher; but they are impertinent and impious in both. The man of business despises the man of pleasure for squandering his time away; the man of pleasure pities or laughs at the man of business for the same thing; and yet both concur superciliously and absurdly to find fault with the Supreme Being for having given them so little time. The philosopher, who misspends it very often as much as the others, joins in the same cry, and [33] authorizes this impiety. Theophrastus thought it extremely hard to die at ninety, and to go out of the world when he had just learned how to live in it. His master Aristotle found fault with nature for treating man in this respect worse than several other animals; both very unphilosophically! and I love Seneca the better for his quarrel with the Stagirite[6] on this head.

We see, in so many instances, a just proportion of things, according to their several relations to one another, that philosophy should lead as to conclude this proportion preserved, even where we can not discern it; instead of leading us to conclude that it is not preserved where we do not discern it, or where we think that we see the contrary. To conclude otherwise is shocking presumption. It is to presume that the system of the universe would have been more wisely contrived, if creatures of our low rank among intellectual natures had been called to the councils of the Most High; or that the Creator ought to mend His work by the advice of the creature. That life which seems to our self-love so short, when we compare it with the ideas we frame of eternity, or even with the duration of some other beings, will appear sufficient, upon a less partial view, to all the ends of the creation, and of a just proportion in the successive course of generations. The term itself is long; we render it short; and the want we complain of flows from our profusion, not from our poverty.

Let us leave the men of pleasure and of business, who are often candid enough to own [34] that they throw away their time, and thereby to confess that they complain of the Supreme Being for no other reason than this, that He has not proportioned His bounty to their extravagance. Let us consider the scholar and philosopher, who, far from owning that he throws any time away, reproves others for doing it; that solemn mortal who abstains from the pleasures, and declines the business of the world, that he may dedicate his whole time to the search of truth and the improvement of knowledge. When such a one complains of the shortness of human life in general, or of his remaining share in particular, might not a man more reasonable, tho less solemn, expostulate thus with him: "Your complaint is indeed consistent with your practise; but you would not possibly renew your complaint if you reviewed your practise. Tho reading makes a scholar, yet every scholar is not a philosopher, nor every philosopher a wise man. It cost you twenty

years to devour all the volumes on one side of your library; you came out a great critic in Latin and Greek, in the Oriental tongues, in history and chronology; but you were not satisfied. You confest that these were the *literæ nihil sanantes*, and you wanted more time to acquire other knowledge. You have had this time; you have passed twenty years more on the other side of your library, among philosophers, rabbis, commentators, school-men, and whole legions of modern doctors. You are extremely well versed in all that has been written concerning the nature of God, and of the soul of man, about matter and form, body and spirit, and space and eternal essences, and incorporeal substances, and the rest [35] of those profound speculations. You are a master of the controversies that have arisen about nature and grace, about predestination and freewill, and all the other abstruse questions that have made so much noise in the schools, and done so much hurt in the world. You are going on, as fast as the infirmities you have contracted will permit, in the same course of study; but you begin to foresee that you shall want time, and you make grievous complaints of the shortness of human life. Give me leave now to ask you how many thousand years God must prolong your life in order to reconcile you to His wisdom and goodness?

"It is plain, at least highly probable, that a life as long as that of the most aged of the patriarchs would be too short to answer your purposes; since the researches and disputes in which you are engaged have been already for a much longer time the objects of learned inquiries, and remain still as imperfect and undetermined as they were at first. But let me ask you again, and deceive neither yourself nor me, have you, in the course of these forty years, once examined the first principles and the fundamental facts on which all those questions depend, with an absolute indifference of judgment, and with a scrupulous exactness? with the same care that you have employed in examining the various consequences drawn from them, and the heterodox opinions about them? Have you not taken them for granted in the whole course of your studies? Or, if you have looked now and then on the state of the proofs brought to maintain them, have you not [36] done it as a mathematician looks over a demonstration formerly made—to refresh his memory, not to satisfy any doubt? If you have thus examined, it may appear marvelous to some that you have spent so much time in many parts of those studies which have reduced you to this hectic condition of so much heat and weakness. But if you have not thus examined, it must be evident to all, nay, to yourself on the least cool reflection, that you are still, notwithstanding all your learning, in a state of ignorance. For knowledge can alone produce knowledge; and without such an examination of axioms and facts, you can have none about inferences."

In this manner one might expostulate very reasonably with many a great scholar, many a profound philosopher, many a dogmatical casuist. And it serves to set the complaints about want of time, and the shortness of human life, in a very ridiculous but a true light.

II

RULES FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORY[7]

I have considered formerly, with a good deal of attention, the subject on which you command me to communicate my thoughts to you; and I practised in those days, as much as business and pleasure allowed me time to do, the rules that seemed to me necessary to [37] be observed in the study of history. They were very different from those which writers on the same subject have recommended, and which are commonly practised. But I confess to your lordship that this neither gave me then, nor has given me since, any distrust of them. I do not affect singularity. On the contrary, I think that a due deference is to be paid to received opinions, and that a due compliance with received customs is to be held; tho both the one and the other should be, what they often are, absurd or ridiculous. But this

servitude is outward only, and abridges in no sort the liberty of private judgment. The obligations of submitting to it likewise, even outwardly, extend no further than to those opinions and customs which can not be opposed; or from which we can not deviate without doing hurt, or giving offense, to society. In all these cases, our speculations ought to be free; in all other cases, our practise may be so. Without any regard, therefore, to the opinion and practise even of the learned world, I am very willing to tell you mine. But as it is hard to recover a thread of thought long ago laid aside, and impossible to prove some things and explain others, without the assistance of many books which I have not here, your lordship must be content with such an imperfect sketch as I am able to send you in this letter.

The motives that carry men to the study of history are different. Some intend, if such as they may be said to study, nothing more than amusement, and read the life of Aristides or Phocion, of Epaminondas or Scipio, Alexander or Cæsar, just as they play a game at [38] cards, or as they would read the story of the seven champions.

Others there are whose motive to this study is nothing better, and who have the further disadvantage of becoming a nuisance very often to society, in proportion to the progress they make. The former do not improve their reading to any good purpose; the latter pervert it to a very bad one, and grow in impertinence as they increase in learning. I think I have known most of the first kind in England, and most of the last in France. The persons I mean are those who read to talk, to shine in conversation, and to impose in company; who, having few ideas to vend of their own growth, store their minds with crude unruminated facts and sentences, and hope to supply by bare memory the want of imagination and judgment.

But these are in the two lowest forms. The next I shall mention are in one a little higher; in the form of those who grow neither wiser nor better by study themselves, but who enable others to study with greater ease, and to purposes more useful; who make fair copies of foul manuscripts, give the signification of hard words, and take a great deal of other grammatical pains. The obligation to these men would be great indeed, if they were in general able to do anything better, and submitted to this drudgery for the sake of the public; as some of them, it must be owned with gratitude, have done, but not later, I think, than about the time of the resurrection of letters. When works of importance are pressing, generals themselves may take up the pickax and the spade; but in the ordinary [39] course of things, when that pressing necessity is over, such tools are left in the hands destined to use them, the hands of common soldiers and peasants. I approve, therefore, very much the devotion of a studious man at Christ Church, who was overheard in his oratory entering into a detail with God, acknowledging the divine goodness in furnishing the world with makers of dictionaries! These men court fame, as well as their letters, by such means as God has given them to acquire it; and Littleton exerted all the genius he had when he made a dictionary, tho Stephens did not. They deserve encouragement, however, while they continue to compile, and neither affect wit, nor presume to reason.

There is a fourth class, of much less use than these, but of much greater name. Men of the first rank in learning, and to whom the whole tribe of scholars bow with reverence. A man must be as indifferent as I am to common censure or approbation, to avow a thorough contempt for the whole business of these learned lives; for all the researches into antiquity, for all the systems of chronology and history, that we owe to the immense labors of a Scaliger, a Bochart, a Petavius, an Usher, and even a Marsham. The same materials are common to them all; but these materials are few, and there is a moral impossibility that they should ever have more. They have combined these into every form that can be given to them; they have supposed, they have guessed, they have joined disjointed passages of different authors, and broken traditions of uncertain originals, of various people, and of centuries remote from one another as well as from ours. In short, [40] that they might leave no liberty untaken, even a wild fantastical similitude of sounds has served to prop up a system. As the materials they have are few, so are the very best and such as pass for authentic extremely precarious, as learned persons themselves confess.

Julius Africanus, Eusebius, and George the Monk opened the principal sources of all this science; but they corrupted the waters. Their point of view was to make profane history and chronology agree with sacred. For this purpose, the ancient monuments that these writers conveyed to posterity were digested by them according to the system they were to maintain; and none of these monuments were delivered down in their original form and genuine purity. The dynasties of Manetho, for instance, are broken to pieces by Eusebius, and such fragments of them as suited his design are stuck into his work. We have, we know, no more of them. The "Codex Alexandrinus" we owe to George the Monk. We have no other authority for it; and one can not see without amazement such a man as Sir John Marsham undervaluing this authority in one page, and building his system upon it in the next. He seems even by the lightness of his expressions, if I remember well, for it is long since I looked into his canon, not to be much concerned what foundation his system had, so he showed his skill in forming one, and in reducing the immense antiquity of the Egyptians within the limits of the Hebraic calculation.

FOOTNOTES:

[6] A name under which Aristotle was sometimes known, from his birthplace Stag.

[7] One of the "Letters on the Study of History."

ALEXANDER POPE [41]

Born to London in 1688, died in 1744; his father a linen draper, converted to the Catholic faith; not regularly educated, owing to his frail and sickly body; began to write in boyhood, and before he was seventeen had met the leading literary men of London; his "Essay on Criticism," published in 1711, translation of Homer in 1720 and 1725, "Essay on Man," in 1732-34.

I

AN ANCIENT ENGLISH COUNTRY SEAT[8]

'Tis not possible to express the least part of the joy your return gives me; time only and experience will convince you how very sincere it is. I excessively long to meet you, to say so much, so very much to you, that I believe I shall say nothing. I have given orders to be sent for the first minute of your arrival—which I beg you will let them know at Mr. Jervas's. I am four-score miles from London, a short journey compared to that I so often [42] thought at least of undertaking, rather than die without seeing you again. Tho the place I am in is such as I would not quit for the town, if I did not value you more than any, nay everybody else there; and you will be convinced how little the town has engaged my affections in your absence from it, when you know what a place this is which I prefer to it; I shall therefore describe it to you at large, as the true picture of a genuine ancient country-seat.

You must expect nothing regular in my description of a house that seems to be built before rules were in fashion: the whole is so disjointed, and the parts so detached from each other, and yet so joining again, one can not tell how, that—in a poetical fit—you would imagine it had been a village in Amphion's time, where twenty cottages had taken a dance together, were all out, and stood still in amazement ever since. A stranger would

be grievously disappointed who should ever think to get into this house the right way. One would expect, after entering through the porch, to be let into the hall; alas! nothing [43] less, you find yourself in a brew-house. From the parlor you think to step into the drawing-room; but, upon opening the iron-nailed door, you are convinced, by a flight of birds about your ears, and a cloud of dust in your eyes, that it is the pigeon-house. On each side our porch are two chimneys, that wear their greens on the outside, which would do as well within, for whenever we make a fire, we let the smoke out of the windows. Over the parlor window hangs a sloping balcony, which, time has turned to a very convenient penthouse. The top is crowned with a very venerable tower, so like that of the church just by, that the jackdaws build in it as if it were the true steeple.

The great hall is high and spacious, flanked with long tables, images of ancient hospitality; ornamented with monstrous horns, about twenty broken pikes, and a matchlock musket or two, which they say were used in the civil wars. Here is one vast arched window, beautifully darkened with divers scutcheons of painted glass. There seems to be great propriety in this old manner of blazoning upon glass, ancient families being like ancient windows, in the course of generations seldom free from cracks. One shining pane bears date 1286. The youthful face of Dame Elinor owes more to this single piece than to all the glasses she ever consulted in her life. Who can say after this that glass is frail, when it is not half so perishable as human beauty or glory? For in another pane you see the memory of a knight preserved, whose marble nose is moldered from his monument in the church adjoining. And yet, must not one sigh to reflect, that the most [44] authentic record of so ancient a family should lie at the mercy of every boy that throws a stone? In this hall, in former days, have dined gartered knights and courtly dames, with ushers, sewers, and seneschals; and yet it was but the other night that an owl flew in hither, and mistook it for a barn.

This hall lets you up (and down) over a very high threshold, into the parlor. It is furnished with historical tapestry, whose marginal fringes do confess the moisture of the air. The other contents of this room are a broken-bellied virginal, a couple of crippled velvet chairs, with two or three mildewed pictures of moldy ancestors, who look as dismally as if they came fresh from hell with all their brimstone about 'em. These are carefully set at the further corner: for the windows being everywhere broken, make it so convenient a place to dry poppies and mustard-seed in, that the room is appropriated to that use.

Next this parlor lies, as I said before, the pigeon-house, by the side of which runs an entry that leads, on one hand and t'other, into a bed-chamber, a buttery, and a small hole called the chaplain's study. Then follow a brew-house, a little green and gilt parlor, and the great stairs, under which is the dairy. A little further on the right, the servants' hall; and by the side of it, up six steps, the old lady's closet, which has a lattice into the said hall, that, while she said her prayers, she might cast an eye on the men and maids. There are upon this ground floor in all twenty-four apartments, hard to be distinguished by particular names; among which I must not forget a chamber that has in it a large antiquity of timber, [45] which seems to have been either a bedstead or a cider-press.

Our best room above is very long and low, of the exact proportion of a bandbox; it has hangings of the finest work in the world; those, I mean, which Arachne spins out of her own bowels: indeed, the roof is so decayed, that after a favorable shower of rain, we may, with God's blessing, expect a crop of mushrooms between the chinks of the floors.

All this upper story has for many years had no other inhabitants than certain rats, whose very age renders them worthy of this venerable mansion, for the very rats of this ancient seat are gray. Since these have not quitted it, we hope at least this house may stand during the small remainder of days these poor animals have to live, who are now too infirm to remove to another: they have still a small subsistence left them in the few remaining books of the library.

I had never seen half what I have described, but for an old starched gray-headed steward, who is as much an antiquity as any in the place, and looks like an old family picture walked out of its frame. He failed not, as we passed from room to room, to relate several

memoirs of the family; but his observations were particularly curious in the cellar: he shewed where stood the triple rows of butts of sack, and where were ranged the bottles of tent for toasts in the morning; he pointed to the stands that supported the iron-hooped hogsheads of strong beer; then stepping to a corner, he lugged out the tattered fragment of an unframed picture: "This," says he, with tears in his eyes, "was poor Sir Thomas, once [46] master of all the drink I told you of: he had two sons (poor young masters!) that never arrived to the age of his beer; they both fell ill in this very cellar, and never went out upon their own legs." He could not pass by a broken bottle without taking it up to show us the arms of the family on it. He then led me up the tower, by dark winding stone steps, which landed us into several little rooms, one above the other; one of these was nailed up, and my guide whispered to me the occasion of it. It seems the course of this noble blood was a little interrupted about two centuries ago by a freak of the Lady Frances, who was here taken with a neighboring prior; ever since which the room has been nailed up, and branded with the name of the adultery-chamber. The ghost of Lady Frances is supposed to walk here: some prying maids of the family formerly reported that they saw a lady in a farthingale through the keyhole; but this matter was hushed up, and the servants forbid to talk of it.

I must needs have tired you with this long letter; but what engaged me in the description was a generous principle to preserve the memory of a thing that must itself soon fall to ruin; nay, perhaps, some part of it before this reaches your hands: indeed, I owe this old house the same sort of gratitude that we do to an old friend that harbors us in his declining condition, nay, even in his last extremities. I have found this an excellent place for retirement and study, where no one who passes by can dream there is an inhabitant, and even anybody that would visit me dares not venture under my roof. You will not [47] wonder I have translated a great deal of Homer in this retreat; any one that sees it will own I could not have chosen a fitter or more likely place to converse with the dead. As soon as I return to the living, it shall be to converse with the best of them. I hope, therefore, very speedily to tell you in person how sincerely and unalterably I am, madam, your most faithful, obliged, and obedient servant.

I beg Mr. Wortley to believe me his most humble servant.

II

HIS COMPLIMENTS TO LADY MARY[9]

I have been (what I never was till now) in debt to you for a letter some weeks. I was informed you were at sea, and that 'twas to no purpose to write till some news had been heard of you somewhere or other. Besides, I have had a second dangerous illness, from which I was more diligent to be recovered than from the first, having now some hopes of seeing you again. If you make any tour in Italy, I shall not easily forgive you for not [48] acquainting me soon enough to have met you there. I am very certain I shall never be polite unless I travel with you, and it is never to be repaired, the loss that Homer has sustained for want of my translating him in Asia.

You will come here full of criticisms against a man who wanted nothing to be in the right, but to have kept you company; you have no way of making me amends but by continuing an Asiatic when you return to me, whatever English airs you may put on to other people. I prodigiously long for your sounds, your remarks, your Oriental learning; but I long for nothing so much as your Oriental self. You must of necessity be advanced so far back in true nature and simplicity of manners, by these three years' residence in the East, that I shall look upon you as so many years younger than you was, so much nearer innocence (that is truth) and infancy (that is openness). I expect to see your soul as much thinner drest than your body, and that you have left off as weary and cumbersome a great many

damned European habits. Without offense to your modesty be it spoken, I have a burning desire to see your soul stark naked, for I am confident it is the prettiest kind of white soul in the universe. But I forget whom I am talking to; you may possibly by this time believe according to the Prophet, that you have none; if so, show me that which comes next to a soul, you may easily put it upon a poor ignorant Christian for a soul and please him as well with it—I mean your heart—Mohammed I think allows you hearts; which (together [49] with fine eyes and other agreeable equivalents) are with all the souls on the other side of the world.

But if I must be content with seeing your body only, God send it come quickly. I honor it more than the diamond casket that held Homer's Iliads; for in the very twinkle of one eye of it there is more wit, and in the very dimple of one cheek of it there is more meaning, than all the souls that were carefully put into woman since God had the making of them.

I have a mind to fill the rest of this paper with an accident that has happened just under my eyes, and has made a great impression on me. I have just passed part of the summer at an old romantic seat of my Lord Harcourt's which he lent me. It overlooks a commonfield, where, under the shade of the haycock, sat two lovers as constant as ever were found in romance, beneath a spreading beech. The name of the one (let it sound as it will) was John Hewet; of the other, Sarah Drew. John was a well-set man of about five and twenty, Sarah a brown woman of eighteen. John had for several months borne the labor of the day in the same field with Sarah; when she milked it was his morning and evening charge to bring the cows to her pail.

Their love was the talk, but not the scandal, of the whole neighborhood; for all they aimed at was the blameless possession of each other in marriage. It was but this very morning that he had obtained her parent's consent, and it was but till the next week that they were to wait to be happy. Perhaps this very day, in the interval of their work, they were talking about their wedding clothes, and John was now matching several kinds of [50] poppies and field flowers to her complexion to make her a present of knots for the day.

While they are thus employed (it was in the last of July) a terrible storm of thunder and lightning arose, that drove the laborers to what shelter the trees or hedge afforded. Sarah, frightened and out of breath, sunk on a haycock, and John (who was never separated from her) sate by her side, having raked two or three heaps together to secure her. Immediately there was heard so loud a crash as if heaven were burst asunder. The laborers, all solicitous for each other's safety, called to one another. Those that were nearest our lovers, hearing no answer, stept to the place where they lay; they first saw a little smoke and after this the faithful pair—John with one arm about his Sarah's neck, and the other held over her face as if to screen her from the lightning. They were struck dead and already grown stiff and cold in this tender posture. There was no mark or discoloring on their bodies, only that Sarah's eyebrow was a little singed and a small spot between her breasts. They were buried the next day in one grave, in the parish of Stanton Harcourt, in Oxfordshire; where my lord Harcourt, at my request, has erected a monument over them....

Upon the whole, I can't think these people unhappy. The greatest happiness, next to living as they would have done, was to die as they did. The greatest honor people of their low degree could have was to be remembered on a little monument; unless you will give them another—that of being honored with a tear from the finest eyes in the world. I know you [51] have tenderness; you must have it; it is the very emanation of good sense and virtue; the finest minds like the finest metals dissolve the easiest.

But when you are reflecting upon objects of pity, pray do not forget one, who had no sooner found out an object of the highest esteem than he was separated from it; and who is so very unhappy as not to be susceptible of consolation from others, by being so miserable in the right as to think other women what they really are. Such a one can't but be desperately fond of any creature that is quite different from these. If the Circassian be utterly void of such honor as these have, and such virtue as these boast of, I am content. I

have detested the sound of honest woman, and loving spouse, ever since I heard the pretty name of Odaliche.

Dear Madam, I am forever yours,

My most humble services to Mr. Wortley.[10] Pray let me hear from you soon, tho I shall very soon write again. I am confident half our letters are lost.

III

[52]

HOW TO MAKE AN EPIC POEM[11]

It is no small pleasure to me, who am zealous in the interests of learning, to think I may have the honor of leading the town into a very new and uncommon road of criticism. As that kind of literature is at present carried on, it consists only in a knowledge of mechanic rules which contribute to the structure of different sorts of poetry, as the receipts of good housewives do to the making puddings of flour, oranges, plums, or any other ingredients. It would, methinks, make these my instructions more easily intelligible to ordinary readers, if I discoursed of these matters in the style in which ladies learned in economics dictate to their pupils for the improvement of the kitchen and larder.

I shall begin with epic poetry, because the critics agree it is the greatest work human nature is capable of. I know the French have already laid down many mechanical rules for compositions of this sort, but at the same time they cut off almost all undertakers from the possibility of ever performing them; for the first qualification they unanimously require in a poet is a genius. I shall here endeavor (for the benefit of my countrymen) to make it manifest that epic poems may be made "without a genius," nay, without learning, or much reading. This must necessarily be of great use to all those poets who confess they never read, and of whom the world is convinced they never learn. What Molière [53]
observes of making a dinner, that any man can do it with money, and if a profest cook can not without, he has his art for nothing, the same may be said of making a poem—it is easily brought about by him that has a genius, but the skill lies in doing it without one. In pursuance of this end, I shall present the reader with a plain and certain receipt, by which even sonneteers and ladies may be qualified for this grand performance.

I know it will be objected that one of the chief qualifications of an epic poet is to be knowing in all arts and sciences. But this ought not to discourage those that have no learning, as long as indexes and dictionaries may be had, which are the compendium of all knowledge. Besides, since it is an established rule that none of the terms of those arts and sciences are to be made use of, one may venture to affirm our poet can not impertinently offend in this point. The learning which will be more particularly necessary to him is the ancient geography of towns, mountains, and rivers; for this let him take Culverius, value fourpence.

Another quality required is a complete skill in languages. To this I answer that it is notorious persons of no genius have been oftentimes great linguists. To instance in the Greek, of which there are two sorts; the original Greek, and that from which our modern authors translate. I should be unwilling to promise impossibilities; but modestly speaking, this may be learned in about an hour's time with ease. I have known one who became a sudden professor of Greek immediately upon application of the left-hand page [54]
of the Cambridge Homer to his eye. It is in these days with authors as with other men, the well bred are familiarly acquainted with, them at first sight; and as it is sufficient for a good general to have surveyed the ground he is to conquer, so it is enough for a good poet to have seen the author he is to be master of. But to proceed to the purpose of this paper.

For the Fable.—Take out of any old poem, history book, romance or legend (for instance, Geoffrey of Monmouth, or Don Belianis of Greece[12]), those parts of story which afford most scope for long descriptions. Put these pieces together, and throw all the adventures you fancy into one tale. Then take a hero you may choose for the sound of his name, and put him into the midst of these adventures. There let him work for twelve books; at the end of which you may take him out ready prepared to conquer, or to marry; it being necessary that the conclusion of an epic poem be fortunate.

To Make an Episode.—Take any remaining adventure of your former collection, in which you could no way involve your hero; or any unfortunate accident that was too good to be thrown away; and it will be of use applied to any other person, who may be lost and evaporate in the course of the work, without the least damage to the composition.

For the Moral and Allegory.—These you may extract out of the fable afterward, at your leisure. Be sure you strain them sufficiently. [55]

For the Manners.—For those of the hero, take all the best qualities you can find in all the celebrated heroes of antiquity; if they will not be reduced to a consistency, lay them all in a heap upon him. But be sure they are qualities which your patron would be thought to have; and, to prevent any mistake which the world may be subject to, select from the alphabet those capital letters that compose his name, and set them at the head of a dedication before your poem. However, do not absolutely observe the exact quantity of these virtues, it not being determined whether or no it be necessary for the hero of a poem to be an honest man. For the under characters, gather them from Homer and Virgil, and change the names as occasion serves.

For the Machines.—Take of deities, male and female, as many as you can use. Separate them into two equal parts, and keep Jupiter in the middle. Let Juno put him in a ferment, and Venus mollify him. Remember on all occasions to make use of volatile Mercury. If you have need of devils, draw them out of Milton's Paradise, and extract your spirits from Tasso. The use of these machines is evident; for since no epic poem can possibly subsist without them, the wisest way is to reserve them for your greatest necessities. When you can not extricate your hero by any human means, or yourself by your own wits, seek relief from heaven, and the gods will do your business very readily. This is according to [56] the direct prescription of Horace in his "Art of Poetry," verse 191:

> Never presume to make a god appear,
> But for a business worthy of a god.[13]

That is to say, a poet should never call upon the gods for their assistance but when he is in great perplexity.

For a Tempest.—Take Eurus, Zephyr, Auster, and Boreas, and cast them together in one verse. Add to these of rain, lightning, and of thunder (the loudest you can) *quantum sufficit*. Mix your clouds and billows well together until they foam, and thicken your description here and there with a quicksand. Brew your tempest well in your head, before you set it a-blowing.

For a Battle.—Pick a large quantity of images and descriptions from Homer's "Iliad," with a spice or two of Virgil, and if there remain any overplus you may lay them by for a skirmish. Season it well with similes, and it will make an excellent battle.

For Burning a Town.—If such a description be necessary, because it is certain there is one in Virgil, Old Troy is ready burned to your hands. But if you fear that would be thought borrowed, a chapter or two of the Theory of the Conflagration, well circumstanced, and done into verse, will be a good succedaneum.

As for Similes and Metaphors, they may be found all over the creation; the most ignorant may gather them, but the danger is in applying them. For this advise with your bookseller.

For the Language (I mean the diction).—Here it will do well to be an imitator of Milton, [57] for you will find it easier to imitate him in this than anything else. Hebraisms and Grecisms are to be found in him, without the trouble of learning the languages. I knew a painter, who (like our poet) had no genius, make his daubings to be thought originals by setting them in the smoke. You may in the same manner give the venerable air of antiquity to your piece by darkening it up and down with old English. With this you may be easily furnished upon any occasion by the dictionary commonly printed at the end of Chaucer.

I must not conclude without cautioning all writers without genius in one material point, which is, never to be afraid of having too much fire in their works. I should advise rather to take their warmest thoughts, and spread them abroad upon paper; for they are observed to cool before they are read.

FOOTNOTES:

[8] A letter to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. The mansion here described is Stanton Harcourt, near the hamlet of Cokethorpe in Oxfordshire. Here the Harcourts had lived since the twelfth century. At the date of Pope's letter, it was the seat of Simon Harcourt, first viscount, but Simon's father, Sir Philip Harcourt, for many years was the last of the family actually to live there, his widow afterward permitting the buildings to fall into the state of decay which Pope describes. In the tower is an upper chamber over the chapel which still bears the name of "Pope's Study." It was there, in 1718, that Pope finished the fifth volume of his translation of Homer. Simon, the first viscount, had taken up his residence at Stanton Harcourt a short time before the date of Pope's letter—that is, about 1715. He frequently had as guests Pope, Swift, Gay and Prior, being himself fond of literary pursuits. Twelve letters written to him by Pope have been preserved among the family papers. Pope, in his letter to Lady Mary, of September 1, 1718, which here follows the one beginning on the previous page, in referring to the mansion uses the words, "which he lent me," indicating that Pope was occupying the mansion at the invitation of Lord Harcourt. Swift and Harcourt sometimes quarreled over political matters, in which Harcourt was prominent. On one occasion Swift called him "Trimming Harcourt."

[9] A letter dated September 1, 1718, and addrest to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who was then living in Turkey. Pope and she afterward (about 1722) quarreled bitterly. Leslie Stephen, discussing the matter, says "the extreme bitterness with which Pope ever afterward assailed her can be explained most plausibly, and least to his discredit, upon the assumption that his extravagant expressions of gallantry covered some real passion." If this be a true inference, his passion "was probably converted into antipathy by the contempt with which she received his declaration."

[10] Her husband, Edward Wortley Montagu, the name Montagu having been added for reasons connected with a family estate.

[11] From the Guardian.

[12] "Belianis of Greece" was a continuation of the romance "Amadis of Gaul," which was published in Spanish in 1547, and translated into English in 1598. The author was Jeronimo Fernandez.

[13] The translation is by Roscommon.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU [58]

Baptized in 1689, died in 1762; eldest daughter of the Duke of Kingston; married Edward Wortley Montagu, grandson of the Earl of Sandwich, in 1712; her husband sent to Turkey as ambassador in 1716; she was a close friend of Pope, but afterward quarreled with him; in 1739 left England, settling in Venice, where she remained until 1762; her "Letters" published in 1763, with further instalments in 1767 and later years.

I

ON HAPPINESS IN THE MATRIMONIAL STATE[14]

I received both your Monday letters before I wrote the inclosed, which, however, I send you. The kind letter was written and sent Friday morning, and I did not receive yours till Saturday noon. To speak truth, you would never have had it else; there were so many things in yours to put me out of humor. Thus, you see, it was on no design to repair anything that offended you. You only show me how industrious you are to find faults in [59] me: why will you not suffer me to be pleased with you?

I would see you if I could (tho perhaps it may be wrong); but in the way that I am here, 'tis impossible. I can't come to town but in company with my sister-in-law: I can carry her nowhere but where she pleases; or if I could, I would trust her with nothing. I could not walk out alone without giving suspicion to the whole family; should I be watched, and seen to meet a man—judge of the consequences!

You speak of treating with my father, as if you believed he would come to terms afterward. I will not suffer you to remain in the thought, however advantageous it might be to me; I will deceive you in nothing. I am fully persuaded he will never hear of terms afterward. You may say, 'tis talking oddly of him. I can't answer to that; but 'tis my real opinion, and I think I know him. You talk to me of estates, as if I was the most interested woman in the world. Whatever faults I may have shown in my life, I know not one action in it that ever proved me mercenary. I think there can not be a greater proof to the contrary than my treating with you, where I am to depend entirely upon your generosity, at the same time that I may have settled on me £500 per annum pin-money, and a considerable jointure, in another place; not to reckon that I may have by his temper what command of his estate I please: and with you I have nothing to pretend to. I do not, however, make a merit to you: money is very little to me, because all beyond necessaries I do not value that is to be purchased by it. If the man proposed to me had £10,000 per [60] annum, and I was sure to dispose of it all, I should act just as I do. I have in my life known a good deal of show, and never found myself the happier for it.

In proposing to you to follow the scheme proposed by that friend, I think 'tis absolutely necessary for both our sakes. I would have you want no pleasure which a single life would afford you. You own you think nothing so agreeable. A woman that adds nothing to a man's fortune ought not to take from his happiness. If possible, I would add to it; but I will not take from you any satisfaction you could enjoy without me. On my own side, I endeavor to form as right a judgment of the temper of human nature, and of my own in particular, as I am capable of. I would throw off all partiality and passion, and be calm in my opinion. Almost all people are apt to run into a mistake, that when they once feel or give a passion, there needs nothing to entertain it. This mistake makes, in the number of women that inspire even violent passions, hardly one preserve one after possession. If we marry, our happiness must consist in loving one another; 'tis principally my concern to think of the most probable method of making that love eternal. You object against living in London: I am not fond of it myself, and readily give it up to you; tho I am assured there needs more art to keep a fondness alive in solitude, where it generally preys upon itself.

There is one article absolutely necessary: to be ever beloved, one must ever be agreeable. There is no such thing as being agreeable without a thorough good-humor, a natural [61] sweetness of temper, enlivened by cheerfulness. Whatever natural funds of gaiety one is born with, 'tis necessary to be entertained with agreeable objects. Anybody capable of tasting pleasure when they confine themselves to one place, should take care 'tis the place in the world the most agreeable. Whatever you may now think (now, perhaps, you have some fondness for me), tho your love should continue in its full force there are hours when the most beloved mistress would be troublesome. People are not forever (nor is it in human nature that they should be) disposed to be fond; you would be glad to find in me the friend and the companion. To be agreeably the last, it is necessary to be gay and entertaining. A perpetual solitude, in a place where you see nothing to raise your spirits, at length wears them out, and conversation insensibly becomes dull and insipid. When I have no more to say to you, you will like me no longer.

How dreadful is that view! You will reflect for my sake you have abandoned the conversation of a friend that you liked, and your situation in a country where all things would have contributed to make your life pass in (the true *volupté*) a smooth tranquillity. I shall lose the vivacity which should entertain you, and you will have nothing to recompense you for what you have lost. Very few people that have settled entirely in the country, but have grown at length weary of one another. The lady's conversation generally falls into a thousand impertinent effects of idleness; and the gentleman falls in love with his dogs and his horses, and out of love with everything else. I am not now [62] arguing in favor of the town: you have answered me as to that point.

In respect of your health, 'tis the first thing to be considered, and I shall never ask you to do anything injurious to that. But 'tis my opinion, 'tis necessary, to be happy, that we neither of us think any place more agreeable than that where we are. I have nothing to do in London; and 'tis indifferent to me if I never see it more. I know not how to answer your mentioning gallantry, nor in what sense to understand you: whomever I marry, when I am married I renounce all things of the kind. I am willing to abandon all conversation but yours; I will part with anything for you, but you. I will not have you a month, to lose you for the rest of my life. If you can pursue the plan of happiness begun with your friend, and take me for that friend, I am ever yours. I have examined my own heart whether I can leave everything for you; I think I can: if I change my mind, you shall know before Sunday; after that I will not change my mind.

If 'tis necessary for your affairs to stay in England, to assist your father in his business, as I suppose the time will be short, I would be as little injurious to your fortune as I can, and I will do it. But I am still of opinion nothing is so likely to make us both happy as what I propose. I foresee I may break with you on this point, and I shall certainly be displeased with myself for it, and wish a thousand times that I had done whatever you pleased; but, however, I hope I shall always remember how much more miserable than anything else [63] would make me, should I be to live with you and to please you no longer. You can be pleased with nothing when you are not pleased with your wife. One of the "Spectators" is very just that says, "A man ought always to be upon his guard against spleen and a too severe philosophy; a woman, against levity and coquetry." If we go to Naples, I will make no acquaintance there of any kind, and you will be in a place where a variety of agreeable objects will dispose you to be ever pleased. If such a thing is possible, this will secure our everlasting happiness; and I am ready to wait on you without leaving a thought behind me.

II

INOCULATION FOR THE SMALLPOX[15]

Apropos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that will make you wish yourself here. The smallpox, so fatal and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless, by the invention of ingrafting, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who make it their business to perform the operation every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated. People send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the smallpox; they make parties for this purpose, and when they are [64] met (commonly fifteen or sixteen together), the old woman comes with a nutshell full of the matter of the best sort of smallpox, and asks what vein you please to have opened. She immediately rips open that you offer with a large needle (which gives you no more pain than a common scratch), and puts into the vein as much matter as can lie upon the head of her needle, and after that binds up the little wound with a hollow bit of shell; and in this manner opens four or five veins.

The Grecians have commonly the superstition of opening one in the middle of the forehead, one in each arm, and one in the breast, to mark the sign of the cross; but this has a very ill effect, all these wounds leaving little scars, and is not done by those that are not superstitious, who choose to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed. The children or young patients play together all the rest of the day, and are in perfect health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to seize them, and they keep their beds two days, very seldom three. They have very rarely above twenty or thirty [spots] in their faces, which never mark; and in eight days' time they are as well as before their illness. Where they are wounded, there remain running sores during the distemper, which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year thousands undergo this operation; and the French ambassador says, pleasantly, that they take the smallpox here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it; [65] and you may believe that I am well satisfied of the safety of this experiment, since I intend to try it on my dear little son.

I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in England; and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their revenue for the good of mankind. But that distemper is too beneficial to them, not to expose to all their resentment the hardy wight that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps if I live to return, I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion, admire the heroism in the heart of your friend, etc., etc.

FOOTNOTES:

[14] Letter to Edward Wortley Montagu, written before she married him. Lady Mary was married to Montagu on August 12, 1712. At his first proposal to her, he had been rejected. Lady Mary's father insisted that she should marry another man; the settlements for this marriage had been drawn and the wedding day fixt, when Lady Mary left her father's house and married Montagu privately. Montagu was a man of some eminence in public life, but noted for miserly habits. He accumulated one of the largest private estates of his time.

[15] Letter to Sarah Criswell, dated Adrianople, Turkey, April 1, O. S., 1717. To Lady Mary is usually accorded chief credit for the introduction of inoculation into western Europe.

LORD CHESTERFIELD [66]

Born in 1694, died in 1773; educated at Cambridge; became a member of Parliament; filled several places in the diplomatic service; became Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland in 1734; his "Letters to His Son," published in 1774 after his death.

I

OF GOOD MANNERS, DRESS AND THE WORLD[16]

There is a *bienséance* with regard to people of the lowest degree; a gentleman observes it with his footman, even with the beggar in the street. He considers them as objects of compassion, not of insult; he speaks to neither *d'un ton brusque*, but corrects the one coolly, and refuses the other with humanity. There is no one occasion in the world, in which *le ton brusque* is becoming a gentleman. In short, *les bienséances* are another word for manners, and extend to every part of life. They are propriety; the Graces should attend in order to complete them: the Graces enable us to do genteelly and pleasingly what *les bienséances* require to be done at all. The latter are an obligation upon every man; the former are an infinite advantage and ornament to any man. [67]

People unused to the world have babbling countenances, and are unskilful enough to show what they have sense enough not to tell. In the course of the world, a man must very often put on an easy, frank countenance, upon very disagreeable occasions; he must seem pleased, when he is very much otherwise; he must be able to accost and receive with smiles those whom he would much rather meet with swords. In courts he must not turn himself inside out. All this may, nay, must be done, without falsehood and treachery: for it must go no further than politeness and manners, and must stop short of assurances and professions of simulated friendship. Good manners to those one does not love are no more a breach of truth than "your humble servant," at the bottom of a challenge, is; they are universally agreed upon and understood to be things of course. They are necessary guards of the decency and peace of society: they must only act defensively; and then not with arms poisoned with perfidy. Truth, but not the whole truth, must be the invariable principle of every man who hath either religion, honor, or prudence.

I can not help forming some opinion of a man's sense and character from his dress; and I believe most people do as well as myself. Any affectation whatsoever in dress implies in my mind a flaw in the understanding.... A man of sense carefully avoids any particular character in his dress; he is accurately clean for his own sake; but all the rest is for other people's. He dresses as well, and in the same manner, as the people of sense and fashion of the place where he is. If he dresses better, as he thinks—that is, more than they—he is a fop; if he dresses worse, he is unpardonably negligent: but of the two, I would rather have a young fellow too much than too little drest, the excess on that side will wear off with a little age and reflection; but if he is negligent at twenty, he will be a sloven at forty and stink at fifty years old. Dress yourself fine where others are fine, and plain where others are plain; but take care always that your clothes are well made and fit you, for otherwise they will give you a very awkward air. When you are once well drest for the day, think no more of it afterward; and without any stiffness or fear of discomposing that dress, let all your motions be as easy and natural as if you had no clothes on at all. [68]

A friend of yours and mine has justly defined good breeding to be "the result of much good sense, some good nature, and a little self-denial for the sake of others, and with a view to obtain the same indulgence from them." Taking this for granted (as I think it can not be disputed), it is astonishing to me that anybody who has good sense and good nature (and I believe you have both) can essentially fail in good breeding. As to the modes of it, indeed, they vary according to persons, places, and circumstances, and are only to be acquired by observation and experience; but the substance of it is everywhere and eternally the same. Good manners are to particular societies what good morals are to society in general—their cement and their security. And as laws are enacted to enforce [69]

good morals, or at least to prevent the ill effects of bad ones, so there are certain rules of civility, universally implied and received, to enforce good manners and punish bad ones. And indeed there seems to me to be less difference, both between the crimes and punishments, than at first one would imagine.... Mutual complaisances, attentions, and sacrifices of little conveniences are as natural an implied compact between civilized people as protection and obedience are between kings and subjects: whoever in either case violates that compact, justly forfeits all advantages arising from it. For my own part, I really think that next to the consciousness of doing a good action, that of doing a civil one is the most pleasing: and the epithet which I should covet the most, next to that of Aristides, would be that of "well-bred."

Men who converse only with women are frivolous, effeminate puppies, and those who never converse with them are bears.

The desire of being pleased is universal. The desire of pleasing should be so too. Misers are not so much blamed for being misers as envied for being rich.

Dissimulation, to a certain degree, is as necessary in business as clothes are in the common intercourse of life; and a man would be as imprudent who should exhibit his inside naked, as he would be indecent if he produced his outside so.

A woman will be implicitly governed by the man whom she is in love with, but will not be directed by the man whom she esteems the most. The former is the result of passion, [70] which is her character; the latter must be the effect of reasoning, which is by no means of the feminine gender.

The best moral virtues are those of which the vulgar are, perhaps, the best judges.

Let us, then, not only scatter benefits, but even strew flowers, for our fellow travelers in the rugged ways of this wretched world.

Your duty to man is very short and clear; it is only to do to him whatever you would be willing that he should do to you. And remember in all the business of your life to ask your conscience this question, Should I be willing that this should be done to me? If your conscience, which will always tell you truth, answers no, do not do that thing. Observe these rules, and you will be happy in this world and still happier in the next.

Carefully avoid all affectation either of mind or body. It is a very true and a very trite observation that no man is ridiculous for being what he really is, but for affecting to be what he is not. No man is awkward by nature, but by affecting to be genteel, and I have known many a man of common sense pass generally for a fool because he affected a degree of wit that God had denied him. A plowman is by no means awkward in the exercise of his trade, but would be exceedingly ridiculous if he attempted the airs and grace of a man of fashion.

What is commonly called in the world a man or a woman of spirit are the two most detestable and most dangerous animals that inhabit it. They are strong-headed, captious, jealous, offended without reason, and offending with as little. The man of spirit has immediate recourse to his sword, and the woman of spirit to her tongue, and it is hard to [71] say which of the two is the most mischievous weapon.

Speak to the King with full as little concern (tho with more respect) as you would to your equals. This is the distinguishing characteristic of a gentleman and a man of the world.

That silly article of dress is no trifle. Never be the first nor the last in the fashion. Wear as fine clothes as those of your rank commonly do, and rather better than worse, and when you are well drest once a day do not seem to know that you have any clothes on at all, but let your carriage and motion be as easy as they would be in your nightgowns.

Let your address when you first come into any company be modest, but without the least bashfulness or sheepishness, steady without impudence, and as unembarrassed as if you were in your own room. This is a difficult point to hit, and therefore deserves great

attention; nothing but a long usage of the world and in the best company can possibly give it.

II

OF ATTENTIONS TO LADIES[17]

Women, in a great degree, establish or destroy every man's reputation of good breeding; you must, therefore, in a manner, overwhelm them with the attentions of which I have spoken; they are used to them, they expect them; and, to do them justice, they commonly [72] requite them. You must be sedulous, and rather over officious than under, in procuring them their coaches, their chairs, their conveniences in public places; not see what you should not see; and rather assist, where you can not help seeing. Opportunities of showing these attentions present themselves perpetually; but if they do not, make them. As Ovid advises his lover, when he sits in the circus near his mistress, to wipe the dust off her neck, even if there be none. *Si nullus tamen excute nullum*. Your conversation with women should always be respectful; but at the same time, *enjoué*, and always addrest to their vanity. Everything you say or do should convince them of the regard you have (whether you have it or not) for their beauty, their wit, or their merit. Men have possibly as much vanity as women, tho of another kind; and both art and good breeding require that, instead of mortifying, you should please and flatter it, by words and looks of approbation.

Suppose (which is by no means improbable) that at your return to England, I should place you near the person of some one of the royal family; in that situation good breeding, engaging address, adorned with all the graces that dwell at courts, would very probably make you a favorite, and, from a favorite, a minister; but all the knowledge and learning in the world, without them, never would. The penetration of princes seldom goes deeper than the surface. It is the exterior that always engages their hearts; and I would never advise you to give yourself much trouble about their understandings. Princes in general (I [73] mean those Porphyrogenets who are born and bred in purple) are about the pitch of women; bred up like them, and are to be addrest and gained in the same manner. They always see, they seldom weigh. Your luster, not your solidity, must take them; your inside will afterward support and secure what your outside has acquired.

With weak people (and they undoubtedly are three parts in four of mankind) good breeding, address, and manners are everything; they can go no deeper: but let me assure you, that they are a great deal, even with people of the best understandings. Where the eyes are not pleased, and the heart is not flattered, the mind will be apt to stand out. Be this right or wrong, I confess, I am so made myself. Awkwardness and ill breeding shock me, to that degree, that where I meet with them, I can not find in my heart to inquire into the intrinsic merit of that person; I hastily decide in myself, that he can have none; and am not sure, I should not even be sorry to know that he had any. I often paint you in my imagination, in your present *lontananza*; and, while I view you in the light of ancient and modern learning, useful and ornamental knowledge, I am charmed with the prospect; but when I view you in another light, and represent you awkward, ungraceful, ill bred, with vulgar air and manners, shambling toward me with inattention and distractions, I shall not pretend to describe to you what I feel, but will do as a skilful painter did formerly, draw a veil before the countenance of the father.

I dare say you know already enough of architecture to know that the Tuscan is the [74] strongest and most solid of all the orders; but, at the same time, it is the coarsest and clumsiest of them. Its solidity does extremely well for the foundation and base floor of a great edifice; but, if the whole building be Tuscan, it will attract no eyes, it will stop no passengers, it will invite no interior examination; people will take it for granted that the

finishing and furnishing can not be worth seeing, where the front is so unadorned and clumsy. But, if upon the solid Tuscan foundation, the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian orders rise gradually with all their beauty, proportions, and ornaments, the fabric seizes the most incurious eye, and stops the most careless passenger, who solicits admission as a favor, nay, often purchases it. Just so will it fare with your little fabric, which at present I fear has more of the Tuscan than of the Corinthian order. You must absolutely change the whole front or nobody will knock at the door. The several parts which must compose this new front are elegant, easy, natural, superior good breeding; and an engaging address; genteel motions; an insinuating softness in your looks, words, and actions; a spruce, lively air, and fashionable dress; and all the glitter that a young fellow should have.

FOOTNOTES:

[16] From the "Letters to His Son," *passim*. Chesterfield, the man of affairs—and he had real distinction in the public life of his time—is quite forgotten, but his letters, which he wrote for private purposes and never dreamed would be published, have made him one of the English literary immortals.

[17] From the "Letters to His Son."

HENRY FIELDING [75]

Born in 1707, died in 1754; son of Gen. Edmund Fielding; admitted to the bar in 1740; made a justice of the peace in 1748; chairman of Quarter Sessions in 1749; published "Joseph Andrews" in 1742, "Tom Jones" in 1749, and "Amelia" in 1751; among other works wrote many plays and "A Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon," which was published in 1755, after his death which occurred in Lisbon.

I

TOM THE HERO ENTERS THE STAGE[18]

As we determined when we first sat down to write this history to flatter no man, but to guide our pen throughout by the directions of truth, we are obliged to bring our hero on the stage in a much more disadvantageous manner than we could wish; and to declare honestly, even at his first appearance, that it was the universal opinion of all Mr. Allworthy's family that he was certainly born to be hanged.

Indeed, I am sorry to say there was too much reason for this conjecture, the lad having from his earliest years discovered a propensity to many vices, and especially to one, which hath as a direct tendency as any other to that fate which we have just now observed to have been prophetically denounced against him. He had been already convicted of three robberies; viz., of robbing an orchard, of stealing a duck out of a [76] farmer's yard, and of picking Master Blifil's pocket of a ball.

The vices of this young man were, moreover, heightened by the disadvantageous light in which they appeared, when opposed to the virtues of Master Blifil, his companion—a youth of so different a caste from little Jones, that not only the family but all the neighborhood resounded his praises. He was indeed a lad of a remarkable disposition;

sober, discreet, and pious beyond his age,—qualities which gained him the love of every one who knew him; whilst Tom Jones was universally disliked, and many exprest their wonder that Mr. Allworthy would suffer such a lad to be educated with his nephew, lest the morals of the latter should be corrupted by his example.

An incident which happened about this time will set the character of these two lads more fairly before the discerning reader than is in the power of the longest dissertation.

Tom Jones, who bad as he is must serve for the hero of this history, had only one friend among all the servants of the family; for as to Mrs. Wilkins, she had long since given him up, and was perfectly reconciled to her mistress. This friend was the gamekeeper, a fellow of a loose kind of disposition, and who was thought not to entertain much stricter notions concerning the difference of *meum* and *tuum* than the young gentleman himself. And hence this friendship gave occasion to many sarcastical remarks among the domestics, most of which were either proverbs before, or at least are become so now; and indeed, the wit of them all may be comprised in that short Latin proverb, "*Noscitur a socio*," which I think is thus exprest in English: "You may know him by the company he keeps." [77]

To say the truth, some of that atrocious wickedness in Jones, of which we have just mentioned three examples, might perhaps be derived from the encouragement he had received from this fellow, who in two or three instances had been what the law calls an accessory after the fact. For the whole duck and a great part of the apples were converted to the use of the gamekeeper and his family. Tho as Jones alone was discovered, the poor lad bore not only the whole smart but the whole blame; both which fell again to his lot on the following occasion.

Contiguous to Mr. Allworthy's estate was the manor of one of those gentlemen who are called preservers of the game. This species of men, from the great severity with which they revenge the death of a hare or a partridge, might be thought to cultivate the same superstition with the Bannians in India, many of whom, we are told, dedicate their whole lives to the preservation and protection of certain animals; was it not that our English Bannians, while they preserve them from other enemies, will most unmercifully slaughter whole horse-loads themselves, so that they stand clearly acquitted of any such heathenish superstition.

I have indeed a much better opinion of this kind of men than is entertained by some, as I take them to answer the order of nature, and the good purposes for which they were ordained, in a more ample manner than many others. Now, as Horace tells us, that there are a set of human beings, *fruges consumere nati*, "born to consume the fruits of the earth," so I make no manner of doubt but that there are others, *feras consumere nati*, "born to consume the beasts of the field," or as it is commonly called, the game; and none, I believe, will deny but that those squires fulfil this end of their creation. [78]

Little Jones went one day a-shooting with the gamekeeper; when happening to spring a covey of partridges, near the border of that manor over which fortune, to fulfil the wise purposes of nature, had planted one of the game-consumers, the birds flew into it and were marked (as it is called) by the two sportsmen in some furze bushes, about two or three hundred paces beyond Mr. Allworthy's dominions.

Mr. Allworthy had given the fellow strict orders, on pain of forfeiting his place, never to trespass on any of his neighbors; no more on those who were less rigid in this matter than on the lord of the manor. With regard to others, indeed, these orders had not been always very scrupulously kept; but as the disposition of the gentleman with whom the partridges had taken sanctuary was well known, the gamekeeper had never yet attempted to invade his territories. Nor had he done it now, had not the younger sportsman, who was excessively eager to pursue the flying game, over-persuaded him; but Jones being very importunate, the other, who was himself keen enough after the sport, yielded to his persuasions, entered the manor, and shot one of the partridges.

The gentleman himself was at that time on horseback, at a little distance from them; and [79] hearing the gun go off, he immediately made toward the place, and discovered poor Tom; for the gamekeeper had leapt into the thickest part of the furze-brake, where he had happily concealed himself.

The gentleman having searched the lad and found the partridge upon him, denounced great vengeance, swearing he would acquaint Mr. Allworthy. He was as good as his word, for he rode immediately to his house and complained of the trespass on his manor, in as high terms and as bitter language as if his house had been broken open and the most valuable furniture stolen out of it. He added that some other person was in his company, tho he could not discover him; for that two guns had been discharged, almost in the same instant. And, says he, "We have found only this partridge, but the Lord knows what mischief they have done."

At his return home, Tom was presently convened before Mr. Allworthy. He owned the fact, and alleged no other excuse but what was really true; viz., that the covey was originally sprung in Mr. Allworthy's own manor.

Tom was then interrogated who was with him, which Mr. Allworthy declared he was resolved to know, acquainting the culprit with the circumstance of the two guns, which had been deposed by the squire and both his servants; but Tom stoutly persisted in asserting that he was alone; yet, to say the truth, he hesitated a little at first, which would have confirmed Mr. Allworthy's belief, had what the squire and his servants said wanted any further confirmation.

The gamekeeper, being a suspected person, was now sent for and the question put to him; [80] but he, relying on the promise which Tom had made him to take all upon himself, very resolutely denied being in company with the young gentleman, or indeed having seen him the whole afternoon.

Mr. Allworthy then turned toward Tom with more than usual anger in his countenance, and advised him to confess who was with him; repeating that he was resolved to know. The lad, however, still maintained his resolution, and was dismissed with much wrath by Mr. Allworthy, who told him he should have the next morning to consider of it, when he should be questioned by another person and in another manner.

Poor Jones spent a very melancholy night, and the more so as he was without his usual companion, for Master Blifil was gone abroad on a visit with his mother. Fear of the punishment he was to suffer was on this occasion his least evil; his chief anxiety being lest his constancy should fail him and he should be brought to betray the gamekeeper, whose ruin he knew must now be the consequence.

Nor did the gamekeeper pass his time much better. He had the same apprehensions with the youth; for whose honor he had likewise a much tenderer regard than for his skin.

In the morning, when Tom attended the Reverend Mr. Thwackum, the person to whom Mr. Allworthy had committed the instruction of the two boys, he had the same questions put to him by that gentleman which he had been asked the evening before, to which he returned the same answers. The consequence of this was so severe a whipping, that it [81] possibly fell little short of the torture with which confessions are in some countries extorted from criminals.

Tom bore his punishment with great resolution; and tho his master asked him between every stroke whether he would not confess, he was contented to be flayed rather than betray his friend, or break the promise he had made.

The gamekeeper was now relieved from his anxiety, and Mr. Allworthy himself began to be concerned at Tom's sufferings: for besides that Mr. Thwackum, being highly enraged that he was not able to make the boy say what he himself pleased, had carried his severity much beyond the good man's intention, this latter began now to suspect that the squire had been mistaken, which his extreme eagerness and anger seemed to make probable;

and as for what the servants had said in confirmation of their master's account, he laid no great stress upon that. Now, as cruelty and injustice were two ideas of which Mr. Allworthy could by no means support the consciousness a single moment, he sent for Tom, and after many kind and friendly exhortations, said, "I am convinced, my dear child, that my suspicions have wronged you; I am sorry that you have been so severely punished on this account"; and at last gave him a little horse to make him amends, again repeating his sorrow for what had passed.

Tom's guilt now flew in his face more than any severity could make it. He could more easily bear the lashes of Thwackum than the generosity of Allworthy. The tears burst from his eyes, and he fell upon his knees, crying, "Oh, sir, you are too good to me. Indeed [82] you are. Indeed I don't deserve it." And at that very instant, from the fulness of his heart, had almost betrayed the secret; but the good genius of the gamekeeper suggested to him what might be the consequence to the poor fellow, and this consideration sealed his lips.

Thwackum did all he could to dissuade Allworthy from showing any compassion or kindness to the boy, saying "he had persisted in untruth"; and gave some hints that a second whipping might probably bring the matter to light.

But Mr. Allworthy absolutely refused to consent to the experiment. He said the boy had suffered enough already for concealing the truth, even if he was guilty, seeing that he could have no motive but a mistaken point of honor for so doing.

"Honor!" cried Thwackum with some warmth: "mere stubbornness and obstinacy! Can honor teach any one to tell a lie, or can any honor exist independent of religion?"

This discourse happened at table when dinner was just ended; and there were present Mr. Allworthy, Mr. Thwackum, and a third gentleman.

II [83]

PARTRIDGE SEES GARRICK AT THE PLAY[19]

Mr. Jones having spent three hours in reading and kissing the aforesaid letter,[20] and being, at last, in a state of good spirits, from the last-mentioned considerations, he agreed to carry an appointment, which he had before made, into execution. This was, to attend Mrs. Miller, and her younger daughter, into the gallery at the playhouse, and to admit Mr. Partridge as one of the company. For as Jones had really that taste for humor which many affect, he expected to enjoy much entertainment in the criticisms of Partridge, from whom he expected the simple dictates of nature, unimproved, indeed, but likewise unadulterated by art.

In the first row then of the first gallery did Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miller, her youngest daughter, and Partridge take their places. Partridge immediately declared it was the finest place he had ever been in. When the first music was played, he said, "it was a wonder how so many fiddlers could play at one time, without putting one another out." While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs. Miller, "Look, look, madam, the very picture of the man in the end of the common prayer book before the gunpowder-treason [84] service." Nor could he help observing with a sigh, when all the candles were lighted, "That here were candles enough burned in one night to keep an honest poor family for a whole twelvemonth."

As soon as the play, which was "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark," began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break silence till the entrance of the ghost; upon which he asked Jones, "What man that was in the strange dress; something," said he, "like what I have seen in the picture. Sure it is not armor, is it?" Jones answered, "That is the ghost." To

which Partridge replied with a smile, "Persuade me to that, sir, if you can. Tho I can't say I ever actually saw a ghost in my life, yet I am certain I should know one, if I saw him, better than that comes to. No, no, sir; ghosts don't appear in such dresses as that, neither." In this mistake, which caused much laughter in the neighborhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue, till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick, which he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage? "O la! sir," said he, "I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of anything; for I know it is but a play. And if it was really a ghost, it could do one no harm at such a distance, and in so much company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only person." "Why, who," cries Jones, "dost thou take to be such a coward here besides thyself?" "Nay, you may call me [85] a coward if you will; but if that little man there upon the stage is not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay: go along with you! Ay, to be sure! Who's fool then? Will you? lud have mercy upon such foolhardiness? Whatever happens, it is good enough for you. Follow you? I'd follow the devil as soon. Nay, perhaps it is the devil—for they say he can put on what likeness he pleases. Oh! here he is again. No farther! No, you have gone far enough already; farther than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions." Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried, "Hush! hush! dear sir, don't you hear him?" And during the whole speech of the ghost, he sat with his eyes fixt partly on the ghost and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open; the same passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeding likewise in him.

When the scene was over Jones said, "Why, Mr. Partridge, you exceed my expectations. You enjoy the play more than I conceived possible." "Nay, sir," answered Partridge, "if you are not afraid of the devil, I can't help it; but to be sure, it is natural to be surprized at such things, tho I know there is nothing in them: not that it was the ghost that surprized me, neither; for I should have known that to have been only a man in a strange dress; but when I saw the little man so frightened himself, it was that which took hold of me." "And dost thou imagine, then, Partridge," cries Jones, "that he was really frightened?" "Nay, sir," said Partridge, "did not you yourself observe afterward, when he found it was his [86] own father's spirit and how he was murdered in the garden, how his fear forsook him by degrees, and he was struck dumb with sorrow, as it were, just as I should have been, had it been my own case? But hush! O la! what noise is that! There he is again. Well, to be certain, tho I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder, where those men are." Then turning his eyes again upon Hamlet, "Ay, you may draw your sword; what signifies a sword against the power of the devil?"

During the second act Partridge made very few remarks. He greatly admired the fineness of the dresses; nor could he help observing upon the king's countenance. "Well," said he, "how people may be deceived by faces? *Nulla fides fronti* is, I find, a true saying. Who would think, by looking in the king's face, that he had ever committed a murder?" He then inquired after the ghost; but Jones, who intended he should be surprized, gave him no other satisfaction than, "that he might possibly see him again soon, and in a flash of fire."

Partridge sat in fearful expectation of this; and now, when the ghost made his next appearance, Partridge cried out, "There sir, now; what say you now? is he frightened now or no? As much frightened as you think me, and, to be sure, nobody can help some fears. I would not be in so bad a condition as what's his name, Squire Hamlet, is there, for all the world. Bless me! what's become of the spirit? As I am a living soul, I thought I saw him sink into the earth." "Indeed, you saw right," answered Jones. "Well, well," cries [87] Partridge, "I know it is only a play; and besides, if there was anything in all this, Madam Miller would not laugh so; for as to you, sir, you would not be afraid, I believe, if the devil was here in person. There, there—ay, no wonder you are in such a passion; shake the vile wicked wretch to pieces. If she was my own mother, I would serve her so. To be sure all duty to a mother is forfeited by such wicked doings.—Ay, go about your business; I hate the sight of you."

Our critic was now pretty silent till the play which Hamlet introduces before the king. This he did not at first understand, till Jones explained it to him; but he no sooner entered into the spirit of it, than he began to bless himself that he had never committed murder. Then turning to Mrs. Miller, he asked her, "If she did not imagine the king looked as if he was touched; tho he is," said he, "a good actor, and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not have so much to answer for, as that wicked man there hath, to sit upon a much higher chair than he sits upon. No wonder he run away; for your sake I'll never trust an innocent face again."

The grave-digging scene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who exprest much surprize at the number of skulls thrown upon the stage. To which Jones answered, "That it was one of the most famous burial-places about town." "No wonder then," cries Partridge, "that the place is haunted. But I never saw in my life a worse grave-digger. I had a sexton, when I was clerk, that should have dug three graves while he is digging [88] one. The fellow handles a spade as if it was the first time he had ever had one in his hand. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe." Upon Hamlet's taking up the skull, he cried out, "Well! it is strange to see how fearless some men are: I never could bring myself to touch anything belonging to a dead man, on any account. He seemed frightened enough too at the ghost, I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit*."

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play, at the end of which Jones asked him, "Which of the players he had liked best?" To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question, "The king, without doubt." "Indeed, Mr. Partridge," says Mrs. Miller, "you are not of the same opinion with the town; for they are all agreed that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage." "He the best player!" cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer, "why, I could act as well as he himself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me, any man, that is, any good man, that had such a mother, would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me; but indeed, madam, tho I was never to a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country; and the king for my money; he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other. Anybody may see he is an actor."

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[89]

III

MR. ADAMS IN A POLITICAL LIGHT[21]

"I do assure you, sir," says he, taking the gentleman by the hand, "I am heartily glad to meet with a man of your kidney; for, tho I am a poor parson, I will be bold to say I am an honest man, and would not do an ill thing to be made a bishop; nay, tho it hath not fallen in my way to offer so noble a sacrifice, I have not been without opportunities of suffering for the sake of my conscience, I thank heaven for them; for I have had relations, tho I say it, who made some figure in the world, particularly a nephew, who was a shopkeeper and an alderman of a corporation. He was a good lad, and was under my care when a boy, and I believe would do what I bade him to his dying day.

"Indeed, it looks like extreme vanity in me to affect being a man of such consequence as to have so great an interest in an alderman; but others have thought so too, as manifestly appeared by the rector whose curate I formerly was sending for me on the approach of an election, and telling me if I expected to continue in his cure that I must bring my nephew to vote for one Colonel Courtly, a gentleman whom I had never heard tidings of till that instant. I told the rector I had no power over my nephew's vote (God forgive me for such prevarication!); that I supposed he would give it according to his conscience; that I would [90] by no means endeavor to influence him to give it otherwise. He told me it was in vain to

equivocate; that he knew I had already spoke to him in favor of Squire Fickle, my neighbor; and indeed it was true I had; for it was at a season when the church was in danger, and when all good men expected they knew not what would happen to us all. I then answered boldly, if he thought I had given my promise he affronted me in proposing any breach of it.

"Not to be too prolix, I persevered, and so did my nephew, in the esquire's interest, who was chose chiefly through his means; and so I lost my curacy. Well, sir, but do you think the esquire ever mentioned a word of the church? *ne verbum quidem, ut ita dicam*; within two years he got a place, and hath ever since lived in London, where I have been informed (but God forbid I should believe that) that he never so much as goeth to church. I remained, sir, a considerable time without any cure, and lived a full month on one funeral sermon, which I preached on the indisposition of a clergyman; but this by the bye.

"At last, when Mr. Fickle got his place, Colonel Courtly stood again; and who should make interest for him but Mr. Fickle himself! that very identical Mr. Fickle, who had formerly told me the colonel was an enemy to both the church and state, had the confidence to solicit my nephew for him; and the colonel himself offered me to make me chaplain to his regiment, which I refused in favor of Sir Oliver Hearty, who told us he [91] would sacrifice everything to his country; and I believe he would, except his hunting, which he stuck so close to that in five years together he went but twice up to Parliament; and one of those times, I have been told, never was within sight of the House. However, he was a worthy man, and the best friend I ever had; for, by his interest with a bishop, he got me replaced into my curacy, and gave me eight pounds out of his own pocket to buy me a gown and cassock and furnish my house. He had our interest while he lived, which was not many years.

"On his death I had fresh applications made to me; for all the world knew the interest I had in my good nephew, who now was a leading man in the corporation; and Sir Thomas Booby, buying the estate which had been Sir Oliver's, proposed himself a candidate. He was then a young gentleman just come from his travels; and it did me good to hear him discourse on affairs, which, for my part, I knew nothing of. If I had been master of a thousand votes he should have had them all.

"I engaged my nephew in his interest, and he was elected; and a very fine Parliament-man he was. They tell me he made speeches of an hour long, and, I have been told, very fine ones; but he could never persuade the Parliament to be of his opinion. *Non omnia possumus omnes*. He promised me a living, poor man! and I believe I should have had it, but an accident happened, which was that my lady had promised it before, unknown to him. This indeed I never heard till afterward; for my nephew, who died about a month before the incumbent, always told me I might be assured of it. [92]

"Since that time, Sir Thomas, poor man! had always so much business that he never could find leisure to see me. I believe it was partly my lady's fault, too, who did not think my dress good enough for the gentry at her table. However, I must do him the justice to say he never was ungrateful; and I have always found his kitchen, and his cellar too, open to me: many a time, after service on a Sunday—for I preached at four churches—have I recruited my spirits with a glass of his ale. Since my nephew's death, the corporation is in other hands; and I am not a man of that consequence I was formerly. I have now no longer any talents to lay out in service of my country; and to whom nothing is given, of him can nothing be required.

"However, on all proper seasons, such as the approach of an election, I throw a suitable dash or two into my sermons, which I have the pleasure to hear is not disagreeable to Sir Thomas and the other honest gentlemen my neighbors, who have all promised me these five years to procure an ordination for a son of mine, who is now near thirty, hath an infinite stock of learning, and is, I thank Heaven, of an unexceptionable life; tho, as he was never at a university, the bishop refuses to ordain him. Too much care can not indeed be taken in admitting any to the sacred office; tho I hope he will never act so as to be a disgrace to any order, but will serve his God and his country to the utmost of his power,

as I have endeavored to do before him; nay, and will lay down his life whenever called to that purpose. I am sure I have educated him in those principles; so that I have acquitted my duty, and shall have nothing to answer for on that account. But I do not distrust him, for he is a good boy; and if Providence should throw it in his way to be of as much consequence in a public light as his father once was, I can answer for him he will use his talents as honestly as I have done." [93]

FOOTNOTES:

[18] From "Tom Jones, a Foundling," Book 3, Chapter 2.

[19] From Book 16, Chapter 5, of "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling."

[20] This was a letter from Sophia Weston, hoping "that Fortune may be sometime kinder to us than at present."

[21] From Book 2, Chapter 8, of "The Adventures of Joseph Andrews."

SAMUEL JOHNSON [94]

Born in 1709, died in 1784; son of a bookseller; educated at Oxford, where he made a translation into Latin of Pope's "Messiah"; established a school near Lichfield in 1736, which soon failed; among its pupils David Garrick, with whom he went to London in 1737; issued the plan of his "Dictionary" in 1747, and published it in two volumes in 1755; published "The Vanity of Human Wishes" in 1749; started *The Rambler*, a periodical, in 1750; writing nearly the whole of it; wrote "Rasselas" in 1759; went to Scotland with Boswell in 1773; published an edition of Shakespeare in 1765.

I

ON PUBLISHING HIS "DICTIONARY"[22]

It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life to be rather driven by the fear of evil than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure without hope of praise; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished for neglect, where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward.

Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of dictionaries; whom mankind have considered, not as the pupil, but the slave of science, the pioneer of literature, doomed only to remove rubbish and clear obstructions from the paths through which learning and genius press forward to conquest and glory, without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress. Every other author may aspire to praise; the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach, and even this negative recompense has been yet granted to very few.... [95]

In hope of giving longevity to that which its own nature forbids to be immortal, I have devoted this book, the labor of years, to the honor of my country, that we may no longer yield the palm of philology without a contest to the nations of the continent. The chief glory of every people arises from its authors: whether I shall add anything by my own writings to the reputation of English literature, must be left to time; much of my life has

been lost under the pressures of disease; much has been trifled away; and much has always been spent in provision for the day that was passing over me; but I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble if, by my assistance, foreign nations and distant ages gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth; if my labors afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle.

When I am animated by this wish, I look with pleasure on my book, however defective, and deliver it to the world with the spirit of a man that has endeavored well. That it will immediately become popular, I have not promised to myself; a few wild blunders and risible absurdities, from which no work of such multiplicity was ever free, may for a time furnish folly with laughter, and harden ignorance into contempt; but useful diligence will at last prevail, and there never can be wanting some who distinguish desert, who will consider that no dictionary of a living tongue ever can be perfect, since, while it is [96]
hastening to publication, some words are budding and some falling away; that a whole life can not be spent upon syntax and etymology, and that even a whole life would not be sufficient; that he whose design includes whatever language can express, must often speak of what he does not understand; that a writer will sometimes be hurried by eagerness to the end, and sometimes faint with weariness under a task which Scaliger compares to the labors of the anvil and the mine; that what is obvious is not always known, and what is known is not always present; that sudden fits of inadvertency will surprize vigilance, slight avocations will seduce attention, and casual eclipses of the mind will darken learning; and that the writer shall often in vain trace his memory at the moment of need for that which yesterday he knew with intuitive readiness, and which will come uncalled into his thoughts tomorrow.

In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and tho no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns, yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it, that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amid inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have [97]
only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixt, and comprized in a few volumes, be yet, after the toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive; if the aggregated knowledge and cooperating diligence of the Italian academicians did not secure them from the censure of Beni;[23] if the embodied critics of France, when fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its economy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which if I could obtain in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise.

II

POPE AND DRYDEN COMPARED[24]

Pope profest to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was presented, he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his [98]
character may receive some illustration, if he be compared with his master.

Integrity of understanding and nicety of discernment were not allotted in a less proportion to Dryden than to Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was sufficiently shown by the dismission of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never desired to apply all the judgment that he had. He wrote, and profest to write, merely for the people; and when he pleased others he contented himself. He spent no time in struggles to rouse latent powers; he never attempted to make that better which was already good, not often to mend what he must have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little consideration; when occasion or necessity called upon him, he poured out what the present moment happened to supply, and, when once it had passed the press, ejected it from his mind; for when he had no pecuniary interest, he had no further solicitude.

Pope was not content to satisfy: he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavored to do his best: he did not court the candor, but dared the judgment of his reader, and expecting no indulgence from others, he showed none to himself. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven.

For this reason he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he considered and reconsidered them. The only poems which can be supposed to have been written with [99]
such regard to the times as might hasten their publication, were the two satires of "Thirty-eight," of which Dodsley[25] told me that they were brought to him by the author that they might be fairly copied. "Almost every line," he said, "was then written twice over. I gave him a clean transcript, which he sent some time afterward to me for the press with almost every line written twice over a second time."

His declaration, that his care for his works ceased at their publication, was not strictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiss in the first edition, he silently corrected in those that followed. He appears to have revised the "Iliad," and freed it from some of its imperfections; and the "Essay on Criticism" received many improvements after its first appearance. It will seldom be found that he altered without adding clearness, elegance, or vigor.

Pope had perhaps the judgment of Dryden, but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge the superiority must be allowed to Dryden, whose education was more scholastic, and who, before he became an author, had been allowed more time for study, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illustrations from a more extensive circumference of science. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehensive speculation, and those of Pope by minute attention. There [100]
is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the sole praise of either; for both excelled likewise in prose; but Pope did not borrow his prose from his predecessor. The style of Dryden is capricious and varied, that of Pope is cautious and uniform. Dryden obeys the motions of his own mind, Pope constrains his mind to his own rules of composition. Dryden is sometimes vehement and rapid, Pope is always smooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, rising into inequalities, and diversified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and leveled by the roller.

Of genius, that power which constitutes a poet, that quality without which judgment is cold and knowledge is inert, that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates, the superiority must, with some hesitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred, that of this poetical vigor Pope had only a little because Dryden had more; for every other writer since Milton must give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it must be said, that if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always hasty, either excited by some external occasion, or extorted by domestic necessity; he composed without consideration, and published without correction. What

his mind could supply at call, or gather in one excursion, was all that he sought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condense his sentiments, to [101] multiply his images, and to accumulate all that study might produce or chance might supply. If the flights of Dryden, therefore, are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant. Dryden often surpasses expectation, and Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent astonishment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

III

LETTER TO CHESTERFIELD ON THE COMPLETION OF THE "DICTIONARY"[26]

My Lord: I have been lately informed by the proprietor of the *World* that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honor, which, being very little accustomed to favors from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, [102] like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addrest your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of [103] publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and can not enjoy it; till I am solitary, and can not impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favorer of learning, I shall not be disappointed tho I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my lord,

Your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

IV

[104]

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN A GARRET[27]

Nothing has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they can not comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixt conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven, by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradictions the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silkworm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixt stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure [105] to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation; why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus, or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavored to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, tho they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, "when the wind blows, worship its echo." This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for [106] Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept:

> How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
> Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing showers!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an early writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him:

> ... 'Tis sweet thy laboring steps to guide
> To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
> And all the magazines of learning fortified:
> From thence to look below on human kind,
> Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.[28]

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established:

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined that the garret is generally chosen by the wits as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in [107] his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they can not be supposed sufficiently important to have operated invariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of a universal practise, there must still be presumed a universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates; but no man [108] has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, tho every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered by a long series of observations that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapors, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth accelerates the fancy and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, tho not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favorable to his intellects, according to rules [109] which I have long studied, and which I may perhaps reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer than that he who towers to the fifth story is whirled through more space by every

circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful, because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and, therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniences of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the center in a garret.

FOOTNOTES:

[22] From the Preface to the "Dictionary."

[23] Paul Beni was an Italian literary critic, who was born in 1552, and died in 1625. He was a professor of theology, philosophy and belles-lettres. The severity of his criticisms created many enemies. He supported Tasso as against the Della Cruscans.

[24] From the "Lives of the Poets."

[25] Robert Dodsley, publisher, bookseller and author, was born about 1703 and died in 1764.

[26] The date of this famous letter—perhaps now the most famous of all Johnson's writings—is February 7, 1755. Leslie Stephen has probably said the most definite word as to the circumstances in which it was written, and in its justification. Johnson and Chesterfield at one time were friendly. The first offense on Chesterfield's part is said to have been caused by a reception accorded to Colley Cibber, while Johnson was kept waiting in an anteroom: this, however, has been denied by Boswell on the authority of Johnson himself. There seems to be no doubt that Chesterfield neglected Johnson while he was struggling with the "Dictionary." The articles which he wrote for the *World*, to which the first sentence in the letter refers, are believed to have been written with a view to securing from Johnson a dedication of the "Dictionary" to himself. Mr. Stephen remarks on the "singular dignity and energy" of Johnson's letter. Johnson did not make it public in his own lifetime, but ultimately gave copies of it to two of his friends, one of whom was Boswell. Boswell published it in his "Life of Johnson," and deposited the original in the British Museum. Chesterfield made no reply to the letter, but, in conversation with Dodsley, the bookseller, a friend of both men, said he had always been ready to receive Johnson, and blamed Johnson's pride and shyness for the outcome of the acquaintance. Chesterfield was long thought to have referred to Johnson as a "respectable Hottentot," this being on the authority of Boswell, but Dr. Birkbeck Hill has shown that this was not true. Mr. Stephen declares that Johnson's letter "justifies itself," and that no author can fail to sympathize with his declaration of literary independence.

[27] From No. 117 of *The Rambler.*

[28] This translation of the passage from Lucretius is Dryden's.

DAVID HUME

[110]

Born in 1711, died in 1776; educated at Edinburgh; lived in France from 1734 to 1737; accompanied Gen. St. Clair on an embassy to Vienna and Turin as judge-advocate; appointed keeper of the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh in 1752; visited France again in 1763; Under-secretary of State in 1767; published his treatise on "Human Nature" in 1739; his "Essays" in

1741; his "Human Understanding" in 1748; his "History of England" in 1754-61.

I

THE CHARACTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH[29]

So dark a cloud overcast the evening of that day, which had shone out with a mighty luster in the eyes of all Europe! There are few great personages in history who have been more exposed to the calumny of enemies and the adulation of friends than Queen Elizabeth; and yet there is scarcely any whose reputation has been more certainly determined by the unanimous consent of posterity. The unusual length of her administration, and the strong features of her character, were able to overcome all prejudices; and obliging her detractors to abate much of their invectives, and her admirers somewhat of their panegyrics, have at last, in spite of political factions, and what is more, of religious animosities, produced a uniform judgment with regard to her conduct. Her vigor, her constancy, her magnanimity, her penetration, vigilance, and address are [111] allowed to merit the highest praises, and appear not to have been surpassed by any person that ever filled a throne: a conduct less rigorous, less imperious, more sincere, more indulgent to her people, would have been requisite to form a perfect character. By the force of her mind she controlled all her more active and stronger qualities, and prevented them from running into excess: her heroism was exempt from temerity, her frugality from avarice, her friendship from partiality, her active temper from turbulency and a vain ambition: she guarded not herself with equal care or equal success from lesser infirmities —the rivalship of beauty, the desire of admiration, the jealousy of love, and the sallies of anger.

Her singular talents for government were founded equally on her temper and on her capacity. Endowed with a great command over herself, she soon obtained an uncontrolled ascendent over her people; and while she merited all their esteem by her real virtues, she also engaged their affections by her pretended ones. Few sovereigns of England succeeded to the throne in more difficult circumstances; and none ever conducted the government with such uniform success and felicity. Tho unacquainted with the practise of toleration—the true secret for managing religious factions—she preserved her people, by her superior prudence, from those confusions in which theological controversy had involved all the neighboring nations: and tho her enemies were the most powerful princes of Europe, the most active, the most enterprising, the least scrupulous, she was able by [112] her vigor to make deep impressions on their states; her own greatness meanwhile remained untouched and unimpaired.

The wise ministers and brave warriors who flourished under her reign, share the praise of her success; but instead of lessening the applause due to her, they make great addition to it. They owed, all of them, their advancement to her choice; they were supported by her constancy, and with all their abilities they were never able to acquire any undue ascendant over her. In her family, in her court, in her kingdom, she remained equally mistress: the force of the tender passions was great over her, but the force of her mind was still superior; and the combat which her victory visibly cost her, serves only to display the firmness of her resolution, and the loftiness of her ambitious sentiments.

The fame of this princess, tho it has surmounted the prejudices both of faction and bigotry, yet lies still exposed to another prejudice, which is more durable because more natural, and which, according to the different views in which we survey her, is capable either of exalting beyond measure or diminishing the luster of her character. This prejudice is founded on the consideration of her sex. When we contemplate her as a woman, we are apt to be struck with the highest admiration of her great qualities and

extensive capacity; but we are also apt to require some more softness of disposition, some greater lenity of temper, some of those amiable weaknesses by which her sex is distinguished. But the true method of estimating her merit is to lay aside all these [113] considerations, and consider her merely as a rational being placed in authority, and intrusted with the government of mankind. We may find it difficult to reconcile our fancy to her as a wife or a mistress; but her qualities as a sovereign, tho with some considerable exceptions, are the object of undisputed applause and approbation.

II

THE DEFEAT OF THE ARMADA[30]

The Lizard was the first land made by the Armada, about sunset; and as the Spaniards took it for the Ramhead near Plymouth, they bore out to sea with an intention of returning next day, and attacking the English navy. They were descried by Fleming, a Scottish pirate, who was roving in those seas, and who immediately set sail to inform the English admiral of their approach, another fortunate event which contributed extremely to the safety of the fleet. Effingham[31] had just time to get out of port, when he saw the Spanish Armada coming full sail toward him, disposed in the form of a crescent, and stretching the distance of seven miles from the extremity of one division to that of the other.

The writers of that age raise their style by a pompous description of this spectacle; the most magnificent that had ever appeared upon the ocean, infusing equal terror and [114] admiration into the minds of all beholders. The lofty masts, the swelling sails, and the towering prows of the Spanish galleons seem impossible to be justly painted, but by assuming the colors of poetry; and an eloquent historian of Italy, in imitation of Camden, has asserted that the Armada, tho the ships bore every sail, yet advanced with a slow motion; as if the ocean groaned with supporting, and the winds were tired with impelling, so enormous a weight. The truth, however, is, that the largest of the Spanish vessels would scarcely pass for third rates in the present navy of England; yet were they so ill framed or so ill governed, that they were quite unwieldy, and could not sail upon a wind, nor tack on occasion, nor be managed in stormy weather, by the seamen. Neither the mechanics of shipbuilding, nor the experience of mariners, had attained so great perfection as could serve for the security and government of such bulky vessels; and the English, who had already had experience how unserviceable they commonly were, beheld without dismay their tremendous appearance.

Effingham gave orders not to come to close fight with the Spaniards; where the size of the ships, he inspected, and the numbers of the soldiers, would be a disadvantage to the English; but to cannonade them at a distance, and to wait the opportunity which winds, currents, or various accidents, must afford him, of intercepting some scattered vessels of the enemy. Nor was it long before the event answered expectation. A great ship of Biscay, on board of which was a considerable part of the Spanish money, took fire by accident; [115] and while all hands were employed in extinguishing the flames, she fell behind the rest of the Armada. The great galleon of Andalusia was detained by the springing of her mast, and both these vessels were taken, after some resistance, by Sir Francis Drake. As the Armada advanced up the channel, the English hung upon its rear, and still infested it with skirmishes. Each trial abated the confidence of the Spaniards, and added courage to the English; and the latter soon found, that even in close fight the size of the Spanish ships was no advantage to them. Their bulk exposed them the more to the fire of the enemy; while their cannon, placed too high, shot over the heads of the English. The alarm having now reached the coast of England, the nobility and gentry hastened out with their vessels from every harbor, and reenforced the admiral. The Earls of Oxford, Northumberland,

and Cumberland, Sir Thomas Cecil, Sir Robert Cecil, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Thomas Vavasor, Sir Thomas Gerrard, Sir Charles Blount, with many others, distinguished themselves by this generous and disinterested service of their country. The English fleet, after the conjunction of those ships, amounted to a hundred and forty sail.

The Armada had now reached Calais, and cast anchor before that place in expectation that the Duke of Parma, who had gotten intelligence of their approach, would put to sea and join his forces to them. The English admiral practised here a successful stratagem upon the Spaniards. He took eight of his smaller ships, and filling them with all [116] combustible materials, sent them one after another into the midst of the enemy. The Spaniards fancied that they were fireships of the same contrivance with a famous vessel which had lately done so much execution in the Schelde near Antwerp; and they immediately cut their cables, and took to flight with the greatest disorder and precipitation. The English fell upon them next morning while in confusion; and besides doing great damage to other ships, they took or destroyed about twelve of the enemy.

By this time it was become apparent, that the intention for which these preparations were made by the Spaniards was entirely frustrated. The vessels provided by the Duke of Parma were made for transporting soldiers, not for fighting; and that general, when urged to leave the harbor, positively refused to expose his flourishing army to such apparent hazard; while the English not only were able to keep the sea, but seemed even to triumph over their enemy. The Spanish admiral found, in many recounters, that while he lost so considerable a part of his own navy, he had destroyed only one small vessel of the English; and he foresaw that by continuing so unequal a combat, he must draw inevitable destruction on all the remainder. He prepared therefore to return homeward; but as the wind was contrary to his passage through the channel, he resolved to sail northward, and making the tour of the island, reach the Spanish harbors by the ocean. The English fleet followed him during some time; and had not their ammunition fallen short, by the negligence of the officers in supplying them, they had obliged the whole Armada to [117] surrender at discretion. The Duke of Medina[32] had once taken that resolution; but was diverted from it by the advice of his confessor. This conclusion of the enterprise would have been more glorious to the English; but the event proved almost equally fatal to the Spaniards. A violent tempest overtook the Armada after it passed the Orkneys. The ships had already lost their anchors, and were obliged to keep to sea. The mariners, unaccustomed to such hardships, and not able to govern such unwieldy vessels, yielded to the fury of the storm, and allowed their ships to drive either on the western isles of Scotland, or on the coast of Ireland, where they were miserably wrecked. Not a half of the navy returned to Spain; and the seamen as well as soldiers who remained were so overcome with hardships and fatigue, and so dispirited by their discomfiture, that they filled all Spain with accounts of the desperate valor of the English, and of the tempestuous violence of that ocean which surrounds them.

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III

THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

Nothing appears more surprizing to those who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; and the implicit submission with which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we inquire by what means this wonder is effected, we shall find that as Force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is, therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular. The soldan of Egypt, or the emperor of Rome, might

drive his harmless subjects, like brute beasts, against their sentiments and inclination; but he must, at least, have led his mamelukes, or prætorian bands, like men, by their opinions.

Opinion is of two kinds, to wit, opinion of interest, and opinion of right. By opinion of interest, I chiefly understand the sense of the general advantage which is reaped from government, together with the persuasion that the particular government, which is established, is equally advantageous with any other that could easily be settled. When this opinion prevails among the generality of a state, or among those who have the force in [119] their hands, it will give great security to any government.

Right is of two kinds, right to Power and right to Property. What prevalence opinion of the first kind has over mankind may easily be understood by observing the attachment which all nations have to their ancient government, and even to those names which have had the sanction of antiquity. Antiquity always begets the opinion of right; and whatever disadvantageous sentiments we may entertain of mankind, they are always found to be prodigal both of blood and treasure in the maintenance of public justice. There is, indeed, no particular in which, at first sight, there may appear a greater contradiction in the frame of the human mind than the present. When men act in a faction, they are apt, without shame or remorse, to neglect all the ties of honor and morality, in order to serve their party; and yet when a faction is formed upon a point of right or principle, there is no occasion where men discover a greater obstinacy, and a more determined sense of justice and equity. The same social disposition of mankind is the cause of these contradictory appearances.

It is sufficiently understood that the opinion of right to property is of moment in all matters of government. A noted author has made property the foundation of all government; and most of our political writers seem inclined to follow him in that particular. This is carrying the matter too far; but still it must be owned that the opinion of right to property has a great influence in this subject.

Upon these three opinions, therefore, of public interest, of right to power, and of right to [120] property, are all governments founded, and all authority of the few over the many. There are, indeed, other principles, which add force to these, and determine, limit, or alter their operation—such as self-interest, fear, and affection; but still we may assert that these other principles can have no influence alone, but suppose the antecedent influence of those opinions above mentioned. They are, therefore, to be esteemed the secondary, not the original principles of government.

For, first, as to self-interest, by which I mean the expectation of particular rewards, distinct from the general protection which we receive from government, it is evident that the magistrate's authority must be antecedently established, at least be hoped for, in order to produce this expectation. The prospect of reward may augment his authority with regard to some particular persons; but can never give birth to it, with regard to the public. Men naturally look for the greatest favors from their friends and acquaintance; and, therefore, the hopes of any considerable number of the state would never center in any particular set of men, if these men had no other title to magistracy, and had no separate influence over the opinions of mankind. The same observation may be extended to the other two principles of fear and affection. No man would have any reason to fear the fury of a tyrant, if he had no authority over any but from fear; since, as a single man, his bodily force can reach but a small way, and all the further power he possesses must be founded either on our own opinion, or on the presumed opinion of others. And tho [121] affection to wisdom and virtue in a sovereign extends very far, and has great influence, yet he must antecedently be supposed invested with a public character, otherwise the public esteem will serve him in no stead, nor will his virtue have any influence beyond a narrow sphere.

A government may endure for several ages, tho the balance of power and the balance of property do not coincide. This chiefly happens where any rank or order of the state has acquired a large share in the property; but, from the original constitution of the

government, has no share in the power. Under what pretense would any individual of that order assume authority in public affairs? As men are commonly much attached to their ancient government, it is not to be expected that the public would ever favor such usurpations. But where the original constitution allows any share of power, tho small, to an order of men, who possess a large share of the property, it is easy for them gradually to stretch their authority, and bring the balance of power to coincide with that of property. This has been the case with the House of Commons in England.

Most writers that have treated of the British Government have supposed that, as the Lower House represents all the commons of Great Britain, its weight in the scale is proportioned to the property and power of all whom it represents. But this principle must not be received as absolutely true. For tho the people are apt to attach themselves more to the House of Commons than to any other member of the constitution, the House being [122] chosen by them as their representatives, and as the public guardians of their liberty, yet are there instances where the House, even when in opposition to the crown, has not been followed by the people; as we may particularly observe of the Tory House of Commons in the reign of King William. Were the members obliged to receive instructions from their constituents, like the Dutch deputies, this would entirely alter the case; and if such immense power and riches, as those of all the commons of Great Britain, were brought into the scale, it is not easy to conceive that the crown could either influence that multitude of people, or withstand that balance of property. It is true the crown has great influence over the collective body in the elections of members; but were this influence, which at present is only exerted once in seven years, to be employed in bringing over the people to every vote, it would soon be wasted, and no skill, popularity, or revenue could support it. I must, therefore, be of opinion that an alteration in this particular would introduce a total alteration in our government, and would soon reduce it to a pure republic—and, perhaps, to a republic of no inconvenient form. For tho the people, collected in a body like the Roman tribes, be quite unfit for government, yet, when dispersed in small bodies, they are more susceptible both of reason and order; the force of popular currents and tides is, in a great measure, broken; and the public interest may be pursued with some method and constancy. But it is needless to reason any further concerning a form of government which is never likely to have place.

FOOTNOTES:

[29] From Chapter 44 of the "History of England."

[30] From Chapter 42 of the "History of England."

[31] Lord Howard, of Effingham, admiral of the English fleet.

[32] The Duke of Medina-Sidonia commanded the Armada, as successor to Santa Cruz, "the ablest seaman of Spain," who had died just as the ships were ready to sail. Medina-Sidonia is understood to have taken the command reluctantly, as if aware of his unfitness for so great a task, as indeed was proved by the event.

LAURENCE STERNE [123]

Born in 1713, died in 1768; his father an officer in one of Marlborough's regiments; educated at Cambridge, admitted to holy orders in 1738; became Prebendary of York, published "Tristram Shandy" in 1760; visited France in 1762 and Italy in 1765; published "The Sentimental Journey" in 1768, and died the same year.

I

THE STARLING IN CAPTIVITY[33]

And as for the Bastile, the terror is in the word. Make the most of it you can, said I to myself, the Bastile is but another word for a tower, and a tower is but another word for a house you can't get out of. Mercy on the gouty! for they are in it twice a year; but with nine livres a day, and pen, and ink, and paper, and patience, albeit a man can't get out, he may do very well within, at least for a month or six weeks; at the end of which, if he is a harmless fellow, his innocence appears, and he comes out a better and wiser man than he went in.

I had some occasion—I forget what—to step into the courtyard as I settled this account; and remember I walked down-stairs in no small triumph with the conceit of my reasoning. Beshrew the somber pencil, said I vauntingly, for I envy not its powers, which paints the evils of life with so hard and deadly a coloring. The mind sits terrified at the [124] objects she has magnified herself and blackened: reduce them to their proper size and hue, she overlooks them. "'Tis true," said I, correcting the proposition, "the Bastile is not an evil to be despised; but strip it of its towers, fill up the fosse, unbarricade the doors, call it simply a confinement, and suppose 'tis some tyrant of a distemper and not of a man which holds you in it, the evil vanishes, and you bear the other half without complaint." I was interrupted in the heyday of this soliloquy with a voice which I took to be of a child, which complained "it could not get out." I looked up and down the passage, and seeing neither man, woman nor child, I went out without further attention.

In my return back through the passage, I heard the same words repeated twice over; and looking up I saw it was a starling hung in a little cage; "I can't get out, I can't get out," said the starling. I stood looking at the bird; and to every person who came through the passage, it ran fluttering to the side toward which they approached it, with the same lamentation of its captivity: "I can't get out," said the starling. "God help thee!" said I, "but I'll let thee out, cost what it will"; so I turned about the cage to get the door. It was twisted and double-twisted so fast with wire, there was no getting it open without pulling the cage to pieces. I took both hands to it. The bird flew to the place where I was attempting his deliverance, and thrusting his head through the trellis, prest his breast against it as if impatient. "I fear, poor creature," said I, "I can not set thee at liberty." "No," said the starling, "I can't get out; I can't get out," said the starling. I vow I never [125] had my affections more tenderly awakened; or do I remember an incident in my life where the dissipated spirits, to which my reason had been a bubble, were so suddenly called home. Mechanical as the notes were, yet so true in tune to nature were they chanted, that in one moment they overthrew all my systematic reasonings upon the Bastile; and I heavily walked up-stairs, unsaying every word I had said in going down them.

"Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still, Slavery," said I, "still thou art a bitter draft; and tho thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account. 'Tis thou, thrice sweet and gracious goddess," addressing myself to liberty, "whom all in public or in private worship, whose taste is grateful, and ever will be so, till Nature herself shall change; no tint of words can spot thy snowy mantle, or chemic power turn thy scepter into iron; with thee to smile upon him as he eats his crust, the swain is happier than his monarch, from whose court thou art exiled. Gracious Heaven!" cried I, kneeling down upon the last step but one in my ascent, "grant me but health, thou great bestower of it, and give me but this fair goddess as my companion, and shower down thy miters, if it seem good unto thy divine providence, upon those heads which are aching for them."

The bird in his cage pursued me into my room. I sat down close to my table, and leaning my head upon my hand, I began to figure to myself the miseries of confinement. I was in a right frame for it, and so I gave full scope to my imagination. I was going to begin with the millions of my fellow creatures born to no inheritance but slavery; but finding, [126] however affecting the picture was, that I could not bring it near me, and that the multitude of sad groups in it did but distract me, I took a single captive, and having first shut him up in his dungeon, I then looked through the twilight of his grated door to take his picture. I beheld his body half-wasted away with long expectation and confinement, and felt what kind of sickness of the heart it was which arises from hope deferred. Upon looking nearer I saw him pale and feverish; in thirty years the western breeze had not once fanned his blood; he had seen no sun, no moon, in all that time, nor had the voice of friend or kinsman breathed through his lattice; his children—but here my heart began to bleed, and I was forced to go on with another part of the portrait. He was sitting upon the ground upon a little straw, in the furthest corner of his dungeon, which was alternately his chair and bed; a little calendar of small sticks lay at the head, notched all over with the dismal days and nights he had passed there; he had one of these little sticks in his hand, and with a rusty nail he was etching another day of misery to add to the heap. As I darkened the little light he had, he lifted up a hopeless eye toward the door, then cast it down, shook his head, and went on with his work of affliction. I heard his chains upon his legs, as he turned his body to lay his little stick upon the bundle. He gave a deep sigh: I saw the iron enter into his soul. I burst into tears: I could not sustain the picture of confinement which my fancy had drawn.

II [127]

TO MOULINES WITH MARIA[34]

When Maria had come a little to herself, I asked her if she remembered a pale thin person of a man who had sat down betwixt her and her goat about two years before? She said she was unsettled much at that time, but remembered it upon two accounts; that, ill as she was, she saw the person pitied her: and next, that her goat had stolen his handkerchief, and that she had beat him for the theft. "She had washed it," she said, "in the brook, and kept it ever since in her pocket to restore it to him in case she should ever see him again, which," she added, "he had half promised her."

As she told me this, she took the handkerchief out of her pocket to let me see it: she had folded it up neatly in a couple of vine-leaves, tied around with a tendril: on opening it, I saw an S. marked in one of the corners.

She had since that, she told me, strayed as far as Rome, and walked around St. Peter's once, and returned back: that she found her way alone across the Apennines, had traveled over all Lombardy without money, and through the flinty roads of Savoy without shoes: how she had borne it, and how she had got supported she could not tell: "But, 'God tempers the wind,'" said Maria, "'to the shorn lamb.'"

"Shorn, indeed, and to the quick," said I: "and wast thou in my own land, where I have a [128] cottage, I would take thee to it, and shelter thee; thou shouldst eat of my own bread, and drink of my own cup: I would be kind to thy Sylvio; in all thy weaknesses and wanderings I would seek after thee, and bring thee back; when the sun went down, I would say my prayers; and when I had done, thou shouldst play thy evening song upon thy pipe, nor would the incense of my sacrifice be worse accepted for entering heaven along with that of a broken heart!"

Nature melted within me as I uttered this: and Maria observing, as I took out my handkerchief, that it was steeped too much already to be of use, would needs go wash it

in the stream. "And where will you dry it, Maria?" said I.

"I'll dry it in my bosom," said she: "'twill do me good."

"And is your heart still so warm, Maria?" said I.

I touched upon a string on which hung all her sorrows: she looked with wistful disorder for some time in my face; and then, without saying anything, took her pipe, and played her service to the Virgin. The string I had touched ceased to vibrate; in a moment or two, Maria returned to herself, let her pipe fall, and rose up.

"And where are you going, Maria?" said I.

She said, "To Moulines."

"Let us go," said I, "together."

Maria put her arm within mine, and lengthening the string to let the dog follow, in that order we entered Moulines.

III

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THE DEATH OF LE FEVRE[35]

"In a fortnight or three weeks," added my uncle Toby, smiling, "he might march."

"He will never march, an' please your Honor, in this world," said the Corporal.

"He will march," said my uncle Toby, rising up from the side of the bed with one shoe off.

"An' please your Honor," said the Corporal, "he will never march but to his grave."

"He shall march," cried my uncle Toby, marching the foot which had a shoe on, tho without advancing an inch—"he shall march to his regiment."

"He can not stand it," said the Corporal.

"He shall be supported," said my uncle Toby.

"He'll drop at last," said the Corporal, "and what will become of his body?"

"He shall not drop," said my uncle Toby firmly.

"Ah, well—a—day!—do what we can for him," said Trim, maintaining his point, "the poor soul will die."

"He shall not die, by G—," cried my uncle Toby.

The accusing spirit, which flew up to heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in; and the recording angel, as he wrote it down, dropt a tear upon the word, and blotted it out forever.

[130]

My uncle Toby went to his bureau, put his purse into his breeches-pocket, and, having ordered the Corporal to go early in the morning for a physician, he went to bed and fell asleep. The sun looked bright the morning after to every eye in the village but to Le Fevre's and his afflicted son's; the hand of death prest heavy upon his eyelids; and hardly could the wheel at the cistern turn round its circle, when my uncle Toby, who had rose up an hour before his wonted time, entered the Lieutenant's room, and without preface or apology, sat himself down upon the chair by the bedside, and independently of all modes

and customs, opened the curtain in the manner an old friend and brother-officer would have done it, and asked him how he did, how he had rested in the night, what was his complaint, where was his pain, and what he could do to help him; and without giving him time to answer any one of these inquiries, went on, and told him of the little plan which he had been concerting with Corporal the night before for him.

"You shall go home directly, Le Fevre," said my uncle Toby, "to my house, and we'll send for a doctor to see what's the matter: and we'll have an apothecary; and the Corporal shall be your nurse; and I'll be your servant, Le Fevre."

There was a frankness in my uncle Toby, not the effect of familiarity, but the cause of it, which let you at once into his soul, and showed you the goodness of his nature. To this, there was something in his looks, and voice, and manner, super-added, which eternally beckoned to the unfortunate to come and take shelter under him; so that, before my uncle Toby had half finished the kind offers he was making to the father, had the son insensibly [131]
prest up close to his knees, and had taken hold of the breast of his coat, and was pulling it toward him. The blood and spirits of Le Fevre, which were waxing cold and slow within him, and were retreating to their last citadel, the heart, rallied back, the film forsook his eyes for a moment; he looked up wishfully in my uncle Toby's face; then cast a look upon his boy; and that ligament, fine as it was, was never broken.

Nature instantly ebbed again; the film returned to its place; the pulse fluttered, stopt, went on, throbbed, stopt again, moved, stopt. Shall I go on? No.

IV

PASSAGES FROM THE ROMANCE OF MY UNCLE TOBY AND THE WIDOW[36]

Now, as Widow Wadman did love my uncle Toby, and my uncle Toby did not love Widow Wadman, there was nothing for Widow Wadman to do, but to go on and love my uncle Toby—or let it alone.

Widow Wadman would do neither the one nor the other....

As soon as the Corporal had finished the story of his amour—or rather my uncle Toby for him—Mrs. Wadman silently sallied forth from her arbor, replaced the pin in her mob, passed the wicker-gate, and advanced slowly toward my uncle Toby's sentry-box; the disposition which Trim had made in my uncle Toby's mind was too favorable a crisis to [132]
be let slipt.

The attack was determined upon: it was facilitated still more by my uncle Toby's having ordered the Corporal to wheel off the pioneer's shovel, the spade, the pickax, the piquets, and other military stores which lay scattered upon the ground where Dunkirk stood. The Corporal had marched; the field was clear.

Now, consider, sir, what nonsense it is, either in fighting or writing, or anything else (whether in rime to it or not) which a man has occasion to do, to act by plan: for if ever Plan, independent of all circumstances, deserved registering in letters of gold (I mean in the archives of Gotham) it was certainly the Plan of Mrs. Wadman's attack of my uncle Toby in his sentry-box, by Plan. Now, the plan hanging up in it at this juncture, being the Plan of Dunkirk, and the tale of Dunkirk a tale of relaxation, it opposed every impression she could make: and, besides, could she have gone upon it, the maneuver of fingers and hands in the attack of the sentry-box was so outdone by that of the fair Beguine's, in Trim's story, that just then, that particular attack, however successful before, became the most heartless attack that could be made.

Oh! let woman alone for this. Mrs. Wadman had scarce opened the wicker-gate, when her genius sported with the change of circumstances.

She formed a new attack in a moment.

"I am half distracted, Captain Shandy," said Mrs. Wadman, holding up her cambric handkerchief to her left eye, as she approached the door of my uncle Toby's sentry-box; "a mote, or sand, or something I know not what, has got into this eye of mine; do look [133] into it; it is not in the white."

In saying which, Mrs. Wadman edged herself close in beside my uncle Toby, and squeezing herself down upon the corner of his bench, she gave him an opportunity of doing it without rising up. "Do look into it," said she.

Honest soul! thou didst look into it with as much innocency of heart as ever child looked into a raree show-box; and 'twere as much a sin to have hurt thee.

If a man will be peeping of his own accord into things of that nature, I've nothing to say to it.

My uncle Toby never did: and I will answer for him, that he would have sat quietly upon a sofa from June to January (which, you know, takes in both the hot and cold months) with an eye as fine as the Thracian Rhodope's beside him, without being able to tell whether it was a black or a blue one.

The difficulty was, to get my uncle Toby to look at one at all.

'Tis surmounted. And—

I see him yonder, with his pipe pendulous in his hand, and the ashes falling out of it, looking and looking, then rubbing his eyes, and looking again, with twice the good nature that ever Galileo looked for a spot in the sun.

In vain! for, by all the powers which animate the organ, Widow Wadman's left eye shines this moment as lucid as her right; there is neither mote, nor sand, nor dust, nor chaff, nor speck, nor particle of opaque matter floating in it. There is nothing, my dear paternal uncle! but one lambent delicious fire, furtively shooting out from every part of it, in all [134] directions into thine.

If thou lookest, Uncle Toby, in search of this mote one moment longer, thou art undone.

An eye is, for all the world, exactly like a cannon, in this respect, that it is not so much the eye or the cannon, in themselves, as it is the carriage of the eye and the carriage of the cannon; by which both the one and the other are enabled to do so much execution. I don't think the comparison a bad one; however, as 'tis made and placed at the head of the chapter, as much for use as ornament, all I desire in return is, that whenever I speak of Mrs. Wadman's eyes (except once in the next period) that you keep it in your fancy.

"I protest, madam," said my uncle Toby, "I can see nothing whatever in your eye."

"It is not in the white," said Mrs. Wadman. My uncle Toby looked with might and main into the pupil.

Now, of all the eyes which ever were created, from your own, madam, up to those of Venus herself, which certainly were as venereal a pair of eyes as ever stood in a head, there never was an eye of them all so fitted to rob my uncle Toby of his repose as the very eye at which he was looking; it was not, madam, a rolling eye, a romping, or a wanton one; nor was it an eye sparkling, petulant, or imperious, of high claims and terrifying expectations, which would have curdled at once that milk of human nature, of which my uncle Toby was made up; but 'twas an eye full of gentle salutations and soft responses, speaking, not like the trumpet-stop of some ill-made organ, in which many an eye I talk [135] to holds coarse converse, but whispering soft, like that last low accent of an expiring

saint, "How can you live comfortless, Captain Shandy, and alone, without a bosom to lean your head on—or trust your cares to?"

It was an eye—

But I shall be in love with it myself, if I say another word about it.

It did my uncle Toby's business....

The world is ashamed of being virtuous. My uncle Toby knew little of the world; and therefore, when he felt he was in love with Widow Wadman, he had no conception that the thing was any more to be made a mystery of than if Mrs. Wadman had given him a cut with a gap'd knife across his finger. Had it been otherwise—yet, as he ever looked upon Trim as a humbler friend, and saw fresh reasons every day of his life to treat him as such—it would have made no variation in the manner in which he informed him of the affair.

"I am in love, Corporal!" quoth my uncle Toby....

Tho the Corporal had been as good as his word in putting my uncle Toby's great Ramillies wig into pipes, yet the time was too short to produce any great effects from it; it had lain many years squeezed up in the corner of his old campaign-trunk; and as bad forms are not so easy to be got the better of, and the use of candle-ends not so well understood, it was not so pliable a business as one would have wished. The Corporal, with cheery eye and both arms extended, had fallen back perpendicular from it a score [136] times, to inspire it, if possible, with a better air:—had Spleen given a look at it, 'twould have cost her ladyship a smile; it curled everywhere but where the Corporal would have it; and where a buckle or two, in his opinion, would have done it honor, he could as soon have raised the dead.

Such it was, or rather, such would it have seemed upon any other brow; but the sweet look of goodness which sat upon my uncle Toby's assimilated everything around it so sovereignly to itself, and Nature had, moreover, wrote gentleman with so fair a hand in every line of his countenance, that even his tarnished gold-laced hat and huge cockade of flimsy taffeta became him; and, tho not worth a button in themselves, yet the moment my uncle Toby put them on, they became serious objects, and, altogether, seemed to have been picked up by the hand of Science to set him off to advantage.

Nothing, in this world could have cooperated more powerfully toward this than my uncle Toby's blue and gold, had not Quantity, in some measure, been necessary to grace. In a period of fifteen or sixteen years since they had been made, by a total inactivity in my uncle Toby's life (for he seldom went further than the bowling green), his blue and gold had become so miserably too straight for him that it was with the utmost difficulty the Corporal was able to get him into them; the taking up at the sleeves was of no advantage; they were laced, however, down the back, and at the seams of the sides, etc., in the mode of King William's reign; and to shorten all description, they shone so bright against the sun that morning, and had so metallic and doughty an air with them, that, had my uncle [137] Toby thought of attacking in armor, nothing could have so well imposed upon his imagination.

As for the thin scarlet breeches, they had been unripped by the tailor between the legs, and left at sixes and sevens.

Yes, madam; but let us govern our fancies. It is enough they were held impracticable the night before; and, as there was no alternative in my uncle Toby's wardrobe, he sallied forth in the red plush.

The Corporal had arrayed himself in poor Le Fevre's regimental coat; and with his hair tucked up under his Montero-cap, which he had furbished up for the occasion, marched three paces distant from his master; a whiff of military pride had puffed out his shirt at

the wrist; and upon that, in a black leather thong clipt into a tassel beyond the knot, hung the Corporal's stick. My uncle Toby carried his cane like a pike.

"It looks well, at least," quoth my father to himself....

When my uncle Toby and the Corporal had marched down to the bottom of the avenue, they recollected their business lay the other way; so they faced about, and marched up straight to Mrs. Wadman's door.

"I warrant your Honor," said the Corporal, touching his Montero-cap with his hand as he passed him in order to give a knock at the door. My uncle Toby, contrary to his invariable way of treating his faithful servant, said nothing good or bad; the truth was, he had not altogether marshaled his ideas; he wished for another conference, and, as the Corporal was mounting up the three steps before the door, he hem'd twice; a portion of my uncle [138]
Toby's most modest spirits fled, at each expulsion, toward the Corporal; he stood with the rapper of the door suspended for a full minute in his hand, he scarce knew why. Bridget stood perdue within, with her finger and her thumb upon the latch, benumbed with expectation; and Mrs. Wadman, with an eye ready to be deflowered again, sat breathless behind the window-curtain of her bed-chamber, watching their approach.

"Trim!" said my uncle Toby; but, as he articulated the word, the minute expired, and Trim let fall the rapper.

My uncle Toby, perceiving that all hopes of a conference were knocked on the head by it, whistled Lillabullero.

As Mrs. Bridget opened the door before the Corporal had well given the rap, the interval betwixt that and my uncle Toby's introduction into the parlor was so short that Mrs. Wadman had but just time to get from behind the curtain, lay a Bible upon the table, and advance a step or two toward the door to receive him.

My uncle Toby saluted Mrs. Wadman, after the manner in which women were saluted by men in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirteen; then facing about, he marched up abreast with her to the sofa, and in three plain words, tho not before he was sat down, nor after he was sat down, but as he was sitting down, told her, "he was in love"; so that my uncle Toby strained himself more in the declaration than he needed.

Mrs. Wadman naturally looked down upon a slit she had been darning up in her apron, in [139]
expectation every moment that my uncle Toby would go on; but having no talents for amplification, and Love, moreover, of all others, being a subject of which he was the least a master, when he had told Mrs. Wadman once that he loved her, he let it alone, and left the matter to work after its own way.

My father was always in raptures with this system of my uncle Toby's, as he falsely called it, and would often say, That could his brother Toby to his process have added but a pipe of tobacco, he had wherewithal to have his way, if there was faith in a Spanish proverb, toward the hearts of half the women upon the globe.

My uncle Toby never understood what my father meant; nor will I presume to extract more from it than a condemnation of an error which the bulk of the world lie under; but the French, every one of them to a man, who believe in it almost as much as the Real Presence, "That talking of love is making it."

I would as soon set about making a black pudding by the same receipt.

Let us go on: Mrs. Wadman sat in expectation my uncle Toby would do so, to almost the first pulsation of that minute, wherein silence on one side or the other generally becomes indecent; so edging herself a little more toward him, and raising up her eyes, sub-blushing as she did it, she took up the gantlet, or the discourse (if you like it better), and communed with my uncle Toby thus:

"The cares and disquietudes of the marriage-state," quoth Mrs. Wadman, "are very great." [140]

"I suppose so," said my uncle Toby.

"And therefore when a person," continued Mrs. Wadman, "is so much at his ease as you are, so happy, Captain Shandy, in yourself, your friends, and your amusements, I wonder what reasons can incline you to the state?"

"They are written," quoth my uncle Toby, "in the Common Prayer-Book."

Thus far my uncle Toby went on warily, and kept within his depth, leaving Mrs. Wadman to sail upon the gulf as she pleased.

"As for children," said Mrs. Wadman, "tho a principal end, perhaps, of the institution, and the natural wish, I suppose, of every parent, yet do not we all find that they are certain sorrows, and very uncertain comforts? and what is there, dear sir, to pay one for the heart-aches, what compensation for the many tender and disquieting apprehensions of a suffering and defenseless mother who brings them into life?"

"I declare," said my uncle Toby, smitten with pity, "I know of none: unless it be the pleasure which it has pleased God ..."

"A fiddlestick!" quoth she....

FOOTNOTES:

[33] From the "Sentimental Journey."

[34] From the "Sentimental Journey."

[35] From "Tristram Shandy."

[36] From "Tristram Shandy."

THOMAS GRAY

[141]

Born in 1716, died in 1771; educated at Eton, where he began a lifelong friendship with Horace Walpole; traveled on the Continent with Walpole in 1739; settled in Cambridge in 1741, where in 1768 he was made professor of Modern History; refused the laureateship in 1757; published his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" in 1751; his poems and letters collected by Mason in 1775.

I

WARWICK CASTLE[37]

I have been at Warwick, which is a place worth seeing. The town is on an eminence surrounded every way with a fine cultivated valley, through which the Avon winds, and at the distance of five or six miles, a circle of hills, well wooded, and with various objects crowning them, that close the prospect. Out of the town on one side of it, rises a rock that might remind one of your rocks at Durham, but that it is not so savage, or so lofty, and that the river, which, washes its foot, is perfectly clear, and so gentle, that its current is hardly visible. Upon it stands the castle, the noble old residence of the Beauchamps and

Nevilles, and now of Earl Brooke. He has sash'd the great apartment that's to be sure (I can't help these things), and being since told, that square sash-windows were not Gothic, he has put certain whim-whams within side the glass, which appearing through are to look like fret-work. Then he has scooped out a little burrow in the massy walls of the place for his little self and his children, which is hung with paper and printed linen, and carved chimney-pieces, in the exact manner of Berkley Square or Argyle buildings. What in short can a lord do nowadays, that is lost in a great old solitary castle, but skulk about, and get into the first hole he finds, as a rat would do in like case. [142]

A pretty long old stone bridge leads you into the town with a mill at the end of it, over which the rock rises with the castle upon it with all its battlements and queer ruined towers, and on your left hand the Avon strays through the park, whose ancient elms seem to remember Sir Philip Sidney, who often walk'd under them, and talk of him to this day. The Beauchamp Earls of Warwick lie under stately monuments in the choir of the great church, and in our lady's chapel adjoining to it. There also lie Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick; and his brother, the famous Lord Leicester, with Lettice, his countess. This chapel is preserved entire, tho the body of the church was burned down sixty years ago, and rebuilt by Sir C. Wren.

I had heard often of Guy-Cliff, two miles from the town; so I walked to see it, and of all improvers commend me to Mr. Greathead, its present owner. He shew'd it me himself, and is literally a fat young man with a head and face much bigger than they are usually worn. It was naturally a very agreeable rock, whose cliffs cover'd with large trees hung beetling over the Avon, which twists twenty ways in sight of it. There was the cell of Guy, Earl of Warwick, cut in the living stone, where he died a hermit (as you may see in a penny history, that hangs upon the rails in Moorfields). There were his fountains bubbling out of the cliff; there was a chantry founded to his memory in Henry the Sixth's time. But behold the trees are cut down to make room for flowering shrubs; the rock is cut up, till it is as smooth and as sleek as satin; the river has a gravel-walk by its side; the cell is a grotto with cockle-shells and looking glass; the fountains have an iron gate before them, and the chantry is a barn, or a little house. Even the poorest bite of nature that remain are daily threatened, for he says (and I am sure, when the Greatheads are once set upon a thing, they will do it) he is determined it shall be all new. These were his words, and they are fate. [143]

II

TO HIS FRIEND MASON ON THE DEATH OF MASON'S MOTHER[38]

I break in upon you at a moment when we least of all are permitted to disturb our friends, only to say that you are daily and hourly present to my thoughts. If the worst be not yet passed, you will neglect and pardon me; but if the last struggle be over, if the poor object of your long anxieties be no longer sensible to your kindness, or to her own sufferings, allow me (at least in idea, for what could I do were I present more than this), to sit by you in silence, and pity from my heart, not her who is at rest, but you who lose her. May He who made us, the Master of our pleasures and of our pains, preserve and support you. Adieu. [144]

I have long understood how little you had to hope.

III

ON HIS OWN WRITINGS[39]

To your friendly accusation I am glad I can plead not guilty with a safe conscience. Dodsley told me in the Spring that the plates from Mr. Bentley's designs were worn out, and he wanted to have them copied and reduced to a smaller scale for a new edition. I dissuaded him from so silly an expense, and desired he would put in no ornaments at all. The "Long Story" was to be totally omitted, as its only use (that of explaining the prints) was gone: but to supply the place of it in bulk, lest my works should be mistaken for the works of a flea, or a pismire, I promised to send him an equal weight of poetry or prose: so, since my return hither, I put up about two ounces of stuff, viz., the "Fatal Sisters," the [145]
"Descent of Odin" (of both which you have copies), a bit of something from the Welch, and certain little Notes, partly from justice (to acknowledge the debt where I had borrowed anything), partly from ill temper, just to tell the gentle reader that Edward I was not Oliver Cromwell, nor Queen Elizabeth the Witch of Endor. This is literally all; and with all this, I shall be but a shrimp of an author. I gave leave also to print the same thing at Glasgow; but I doubt my packet has miscarried, for I hear nothing of its arrival as yet.

To what you say to me so civilly, that I ought to write more, I reply in your own words (like the Pamphleteer, who is going to confute you out of your own mouth), What has one to do when turned of fifty, but really to think of finishing? However, I will be candid (for you seem to be so with me), and avow to you, that till four-score-and-ten, whenever the humor takes me, I will write, because I like it; and because I like myself better when I do so. If I do not write much, it is because I can not. As you have not this last plea, I see no reason why you should not continue as long as it is agreeable to yourself, and to all such as have any curiosity or judgment in the subject you choose to treat. By the way let me tell you (while it is fresh) that Lord Sandwich, who was lately dining at Cambridge, speaking (as I am told) handsomely of your book, said, it was pity you did not know that his cousin Manchester had a genealogy of Kings, which came down no lower than to Richard III, and at the end of it were two portraits of Richard and his son, in which that [146]
king appeared to be a handsome man. I tell you it as I heard it; perhaps you may think it worth inquiring into....

Mr. Boswell's book[40] I was going to recommend to you, when I received your letter: it has pleased and moved me strangely, all (I mean) that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time! The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, that any fool may write a most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity. Of Mr. Boswell's truth I have not the least suspicion, because I am sure he could invent nothing of this kind. The true title of this part of his work is, a Dialogue between a Green-Goose and a Hero.

IV

HIS FRIENDSHIP FOR BONSTETTEN[41]

Never did I feel, my dear Bonstetten, to what a tedious length the few short moments of our life may be extended by impatience and expectation, till you had left me; nor ever knew before with so strong a conviction how much this frail body sympathizes with the inquietude of the mind. I am grown old in the compass of less than three weeks, like the [147]
Sultan in the Turkish tales, that did but plunge his head into a vessel of water and take it out again, as the standers by affirmed, at the command of a Dervish, and found he had passed many years in captivity, and begot a large family of children.

The strength and spirits that now enable me to write to you, are only owing to your last letter a temporary gleam of sunshine. Heaven knows when it may shine again! I did not conceive till now, I own, what it was to lose you, nor felt the solitude and insipidity of my own condition before I possest the happiness of your friendship. I must cite another Greek writer to you, because it is much to my purpose; he is describing the character of a genius truly inclined to philosophy. "It includes," he says, "qualifications rarely united in one single mind, quickness of apprehension and a retentive memory, vivacity and application, gentleness and magnanimity"; to these he adds an invincible love of truth, and consequently of probity and justice. "Such a soul," continues he, "will be little inclined to sensual pleasures, and consequently temperate; a stranger to illiberality and avarice; being accustomed to the most extensive views of things, and sublimest contemplations, it will contract an habitual greatness, will look down with a kind of disregard on human life and on death; consequently, will possess the truest fortitude. [148] Such," says he, "is the mind born to govern the rest of mankind."

But these very endowments, so necessary to a soul formed for philosophy, are often its ruin, especially when joined to the external advantages of wealth, nobility, strength, and beauty; that is, if it light on a bad soil, and want its proper nurture, which nothing but an excellent education can bestow. In this case he is depraved by the public example, the assemblies of the people, the courts of justice, the theaters, that inspire it with false opinions, terrify it with false infamy, or elevate it with false applause; and remember, that extraordinary vices and extraordinary virtues are equally the produce of a vigorous mind: little souls are alike incapable of the one and the other.

If you have ever met with the portrait sketched out by Plato, you will know it again: for my part, to my sorrow I have had that happiness. I see the principal features, and I foresee the dangers with a trembling anxiety. But enough of this, I return to your letter. It proves at least, that in the midst of your new gaieties I still hold some place in your memory, and, what pleases me above all, it had an air of undissembled sincerity. Go on, my best and amiable friend, to shew me your heart simply and without the shadow of disguise, and leave me to weep over it, as I now do, no matter whether from joy or sorrow.

FOOTNOTES:

[37] From a letter to Thomas Wharton, dated "Stoke Pogis, September 18, 1754."

[38] Written on March 28, 1767. The tenderness of this brief letter of condolence will recall the inscription which Gray placed on the tomb of his own mother in Stoke Pogis church-yard—the tomb in which he himself was afterward buried "She was the careful, tender mother of many children," says the inscription, "only one of whom had the misfortune to survive her."

[39] From a letter to Horace Walpole, dated "Pembroke College, February 25, 1768."

[40] This refers to Boswell's visit to Corsica in 1766. The book he wrote was his "Journal of a Tour to Corsica, with Memoirs of Pascal Paoli."

[41] From a letter to Bonstetten, dated "Cambridge, April 12, 1770." Bonstetten was a Swiss philosopher and essayist who had formed a close friendship with Gray and many other eminent English men of culture. Bonstetten left England in March of the year in which this letter was written, Gray going with him as far as London, where he pointed out in the street the "great bear," Samuel Johnson, and saw Bonstetten safely into a coach bound for Dover.

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[149]

HORACE WALPOLE

Born in 1717, died in 1797; third son of Sir Robert Walpole, the Prime Minister; educated at Eton and Cambridge; traveled with Thomas Gray in 1739-41; entered Parliament in 1741; settled at Strawberry Hill in 1747; made fourth Earl of Orford in 1791; author of many books, but best known now for his letters.

I

HOGARTH[42]

Hogarth was born in the parish of St. Bartholomew, London, the son of a low tradesman, who bound him to a mean engraver of arms on plate; but before his time was expired he felt the impulse of genius, and felt it directed him to painting, tho little apprized at that time of the mode nature had intended he should pursue. His apprenticeship was no sooner expired than he entered into the academy in St. Martin's Lane, and studied drawing from the life, in which he never attained to great excellence. It was character, the passions, the soul, that his genius was given him to copy. In coloring he proved no greater a master; his force lay in expression, not in tints and chiaroscuro. At first he worked for booksellers, and designed and engraved plates for several books; and, which is extraordinary, no symptom of genius dawned in those plates. His "Hudibras" was the first of his works that [150] marked him as a man above the common; yet what made him then noticed now surprizes us, to find so little humor in an undertaking so congenial to his talents. On the success, however, of those plates, he commenced painter, a painter of portraits: the most ill-suited employment imaginable to a man whose turn certainly was not flattery, nor his talent adapted to look on vanity without a sneer. Yet his facility in catching a likeness, and the methods he chose of painting families and conversations in small, then a novelty, drew him prodigious business for some time. It did not last: either from his applying to the real bent of his disposition, or from his customers apprehending that a satirist was too formidable a confessor for the devotees of self-love. He had already dropt a few of his smaller prints on some reigning follies; but as the dates are wanting on most of them, I can not ascertain which, tho those on the South Sea and "Rabbit Woman" prove that he had early discovered his talent for ridicule, tho he did not then think of building his reputation or fortune on its powers.

His "Midnight Modern Conversation" was the first work that showed his command of character; but it was "The Harlot's Progress," published in 1729 or 1730, that established his fame. The pictures were scarce finished, and no sooner exhibited to the public, and the subscription opened, than above twelve hundred names were entered on his book. The familiarity of the subject and the propriety of the execution made it tasted by all ranks of people. Every engraver set himself to copy it, and thousands of imitations were dispersed all over the kingdom. It was made into a pantomime, and performed on the stage. The [151] "Rake's Progress," perhaps superior, had not so much success, from want of novelty; nor, indeed, is the print of "The Arrest" equal in merit to the others.

The curtain was now drawn aside, and his genius stood displayed in its full luster. From time to time he continued to give those works that should be immortal, if the nature of his art will allow it. Even the receipts for his subscriptions had wit in them. Many of his plates he engraved himself, and often expunged faces etched by his assistants when they had not done justice to his ideas.

Not content with shining in a path untrodden before, he was ambitious of distinguishing himself as a painter of history. But not only his coloring and drawing rendered him

unequal to the task; the genius that had entered so feelingly into the calamities and crimes of familiar life deserted him in a walk that called for dignity and grace. The burlesque turn of his mind mixt itself with the most serious subjects. In his "Danaë," the old nurse tries a coin of the golden shower with her teeth to see if it is true gold; in the "Pool of Bethesda," a servant of a rich ulcerated lady beats back a poor man that sought the same celestial remedy. Both circumstances are justly thought, but rather too ludicrous. It is a much more capital fault that "Danaë" herself is a mere nymph of Drury. He seems to have conceived no higher idea of beauty.

So little had he eyes to his own deficiencies, that he believed he had discovered the principle of grace. With the enthusiasm of a discoverer he cried, "Eureka!" This was his [152] famous line of beauty, the groundwork of his "Analysis," a book that has many sensible hints and observations, but that did not carry the conviction nor meet the universal acquiescence he expected. As he treated his contemporaries with scorn, they triumphed over this publication, and imitated him to expose him. Many wretched burlesque prints came out to ridicule his system. There was a better answer to it in one of the two prints that he gave to illustrate his hypothesis. In "The Ball," had he confined himself to such outlines as compose awkwardness and deformity, he would have proved half his assertion; but he has added two samples of grace in a young lord and lady that are strikingly stiff and affected. They are a Bath beau and a country beauty.

But this was the failing of a visionary. He fell afterward into a grosser mistake. From a contempt of the ignorant virtuosi of the age, and from indignation at the impudent tricks of picture-dealers, whom he saw continually recommending and vending vile copies to bubble collectors, and from having never studied, indeed having seen, few good pictures of the great Italian masters, he persuaded himself that the praises bestowed on those glorious works were nothing but the effects of prejudice. He talked this language till he believed it; and having heard it often asserted, as is true, that time gives a mellowness to colors and improves them, he not only denied the proposition, but maintained that pictures only grew black and worse by age, not distinguishing between the degrees in which the proposition might be true or false. He went further; he determined to rival the [153] ancients, and unfortunately chose one of the finest pictures in England as the object of his compensation. This was the celebrated "Sigismonda" of Sir Luke Schaub, now in the possession of the Duke of Newcastle, said to be painted by Correggio, probably by Furino, but no matter by whom. It is impossible to see the picture, or read Dryden's inimitable tale, and not feel that the same soul animated both. After many essays Hogarth at last produced his "Sigismonda," but no more like "Sigismonda" than I to Hercules. Hogarth's performance was more ridiculous than anything he had ever ridiculed. He set the price of £400 on it, and had it returned on his hands by the person for whom it was painted. He took subscriptions for a plate of it, but had the sense at last to suppress it. I make no more apology for this account than for the encomiums I have bestowed on him. Both are dictated by truth, and are the history of a great man's excellences and errors. Milton, it is said, preferred his "Paradise Regained" to his immortal poem.

The last memorable event of our artist's life was his quarrel with Mr. Wilkes; in which, if Mr. Hogarth did not commence direct hostilities on the latter, he at least obliquely gave the first offense by an attack on the friends and party of that gentleman. This conduct was the more surprizing, as he had all his life avoided dipping his pencil in political contests, and had early refused a very lucrative offer that was made to engage him in a set of prints against the head of a court party. Without entering into the merits of the cause, I shall only state the fact. In September, 1762, Mr. Hogarth published his print of *The Times*. It [154] was answered by Mr. Wilkes in a severe *North Briton*. On this the painter exhibited the caricature of the writer. Mr. Churchill, the poet, then engaged in the war, and wrote his epistle to Hogarth, not the brightest of his works, and in which the severest strokes fell on a defect that the painter had neither caused nor could amend—his age; and which, however, was neither remarkable nor decrepit, much less had it impaired his talents, as appeared by his having composed but six months before one of his most capital works, the satire on the Methodists. In revenge for this epistle, Hogarth caricatured Churchill

under the form of a canonical bear, with a club and a pot of porter—*Et vitulâ tu dignus et hic*. Never did two angry men of their abilities throw mud with less dexterity.

Mr. Hogarth, in the year 1730, married the only daughter of Sir James Thornhill, by whom he had no children. He died of a dropsy in his breast at his house in Leicester Fields, October 26, 1764.

II

THE WAR IN AMERICA[43]

In spite of all my modesty, I can not help thinking I have a little something of the prophet about me. At least we have not conquered America yet. I did not send you immediate word of our victory at Boston, because the success not only seemed very equivocal, but [155] because the conquerors lost three to one more than the vanquished. The last do not pique themselves upon modern good breeding, but level only at the officers, of whom they have slain a vast number. We are a little disappointed, indeed, at their fighting at all, which was not in our calculation. We knew we could conquer America in Germany, and I doubt had better have gone thither now for that purpose, as it does not appear hitherto to be quite so feasible in America itself. However, we are determined to know the worst, and are sending away all the men and ammunition we can muster. The Congress, not asleep, neither, have appointed a generalissimo, Washington, allowed a very able officer, who distinguished himself in the last war. Well, we had better have gone on robbing the Indies! it was a more lucrative trade.

III

THE DEATH OF GEORGE II[44]

The deaths of kings travel so much faster than any post, that I can not expect to tell you news, when I say your old master is dead. But I can pretty well tell you what I like best to be able to say to you on this occasion, that you are in no danger. Change will scarce reach to Florence when its hand is checked even in the capital. But I will move a little [156] regularly, and then you will form your judgment more easily.

This is Tuesday; on Friday night the King went to bed in perfect health, and rose so the next morning at his usual hour of six; he called for and drank his chocolate. At seven, his *valet de chambre* heard a groan. He ran in, and in a small room between the closet and bed-chamber he found the King on the floor, who had cut the right side of his face against the edge of a bureau, and who after a gasp expired. Lady Yarmouth was called, and sent for Princess Amelia; but they only told the latter that the King was ill and wanted her. She had been confined some days with a rheumatism, but hurried down, ran into the room without further notice, and saw her father extended on the bed. She is very purblind, and more than a little deaf. They had not closed his eyes; she bent down close to his face, and concluded he spoke to her, tho she could not hear him—guess what a shock when she found the truth.

She wrote to the Prince of Wales—but so had one of the *valets de chambre* first. He came to town, and saw the Duke [of Cumberland] and the Privy Council. He was extremely kind to the first—and in general has behaved with the greatest propriety, dignity, and decency. He read his speech to the Council with much grace, and dismissed the guards on

himself to wait on his grandfather's body. It is intimated, that he means to employ the same ministers, but with reserve to himself of more authority than has lately been in fashion. The Duke of York and Lord Bute are named of the Cabinet Council. The late [157] King's will is not yet opened. To-day everybody kissed hands at Leicester House, and this week, I believe, the King will go to St. James's. The body has been opened; the great ventricle of the heart had burst. What an enviable death! In the greatest period of the glory of this country, and of his reign, in perfect tranquillity at home, at seventy-seven, growing blind and deaf, to die without a pang, before any reverse of fortune, or any distasted peace, nay, but two days before a ship-load of bad news: could he have chosen such another moment?

The news is bad indeed! Berlin taken by capitulation, and yet the Austrians behaved so savagely that even Russians felt delicacy, were shocked, and checked them! Nearer home, the hereditary prince has been much beaten by Monsieur de Castries, and forced to raise the siege of Wesel, whither Prince Ferdinand had sent him most unadvisedly: we have scarce an officer unwounded. The secret expedition will now, I conclude, sail, to give an *éclat* to the new reign. Lord Albemarle does not command it, as I told you, nor Mr. Conway, tho both applied.

Nothing is settled about the Parliament; not even the necessary changes in the Household. Committees of council are regulating the mourning and the funeral. The town, which between armies, militia, and approaching elections, was likely to be a desert all the winter, is filled in a minute, but everything is in the deepest tranquillity. People stare; the only expression. The moment anything is declared, one shall not perceive the novelty of the reign. A nation without parties is soon a nation without curiosity.

FOOTNOTES:

[42] From the "Anecdotes of Painting in England."

[43] Letter dated "Strawberry Hill, August 3, 1775."

[44] Letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated "Arlington Street, October 28, 1760."

GILBERT WHITE [158]

Born in 1720, died in 1793; educated at Oxford and became a fellow of Oriel; later made curate at Selborne; his "Natural History of Selborne," published in 1789.

THE CHIMNEY-SWALLOW[45]

The house-swallow, or chimney-swallow, is undoubtedly the first comer of all the British *hirundines*; and appears in general on or about the 13th of April, as I have remarked from many years' observation. Not but now and then a straggler is seen much earlier: and in particular, when I was a boy I observed a swallow for a whole day together on a sunny warm Shrove Tuesday; which day could not fall out later than the middle of March, and often happened early in February.

It is worth remarking that these birds are seen first about lakes and mill-ponds; and it is also very particular, that if these early visitors happen to find frost and snow, as was the

case in the two dreadful springs of 1770 and 1771, they immediately withdraw for a time. A circumstance this, much more in favor of hiding than migration; since it is much more probable that a bird should retire to its hybernaculum just at hand, than return for a week or two to warmer latitudes.

The swallow, tho called the chimney-swallow, by no means builds altogether in chimneys, but often within barns and outhouses against the rafters; and so she did in Virgil's time: "Garrula quam tignis nidos suspendat hirundo" (the twittering swallow hangs its nest from the beams). [159]

In Sweden she builds in barns, and is called *Ladu swala*, the barn-swallow. Besides, in the warmer parts of Europe, there are no chimneys to houses, except they are English built: in these countries she constructs her nest in porches, and gateways, and galleries, and open halls.

Here and there a bird may affect some odd peculiar place; as we have known a swallow build down a shaft of an old well through which chalk had been formerly drawn up for the purpose of manure: but in general with us this *hirundo* breeds in chimneys, and loves to haunt those stacks where there is a constant fire—no doubt for the sake of warmth. Not that it can subsist in the immediate shaft where there is a fire; but prefers one adjoining to that of the kitchen, and disregards the perpetual smoke of the funnel, as I have often observed with some degree of wonder.

Five or six feet more down the chimney does this little bird begin to form her nest, about the middle of May: which consists, like that of the house-martin, of a crust or shell composed of dirt or mud, mixt with short pieces of straw to render it tough and permanent; with this difference, that whereas the shell of the martin is nearly hemispheric, that of the swallow is open at the top, and like half a deep ditch; this nest is lined with fine grasses, and feathers which are often collected as they float in the air. [160]

Wonderful is the address which this adroit bird shows all day long, in ascending and descending with security through so narrow a pass. When hovering over the mouth of the funnel, the vibration of her wings, acting on the confined air, occasions a rumbling like thunder. It is not improbable that the dam submits to this inconvenient situation so low in the shaft, in order to secure her broods from rapacious birds; and particularly from owls, which frequently fall down chimneys, perhaps in attempting to get at these nestlings.

The swallow lays from four to six white eggs, dotted with red specks; and brings out her first brood about the last week in June, or the first week in July. The progressive method by which the young are introduced into life is very amusing: first they emerge from the shaft with difficulty enough, and often fall down into the rooms below; for a day or so they are fed on the chimney-top, and then are conducted to the dead leafless bough of some tree, where, sitting in a row, they are attended with great assiduity, and may then be called perchers. In a day or two more they become fliers, but are still unable to take their own food; therefore they play about near the place where the dams are hawking for flies: and when a mouthful is collected, at a certain signal given, the dam and the nestling advance, rising toward each other, and meeting at an angle; the young one all the while uttering such a little quick note of gratitude and complacency, that a person must have paid very little regard for the wonders of nature that has not often remarked this feat. [161]

The dam betakes herself immediately to the business of a second brood as soon as she is disengaged from her first, which at once associates with the first broods of house-martins, and with them congregates, clustering on sunny roofs, towers and trees. This *hirundo* brings out her second brood toward the middle and end of August.

All summer long, the swallow is a most instructive pattern of unwearied industry and affection: for from morning to night, while there is a family to be supported, she spends the whole day in skimming close to the ground, and exerting the most sudden turns and quick evolutions. Avenues, and long walks under the hedges, and pasture-fields, and mown meadows where cattle graze, are her delight, especially if there are trees

interspersed; because in such spots insects most abound. When a fly is taken, a smart snap from her bill is heard, resembling the noise at the shutting of a watch-case; but the motion of the mandibles is too quick for the eye.

The swallow, probably the male bird, is the *excubitor* to house-martins and other little birds; announcing the approach of birds of prey. For as soon as a hawk appears, with a shrill alarming note he calls all the swallows and martins about him; who pursue in a body, and buffet and strike their enemy till they have driven him from the village; darting down from above on his back, and rising in a perpendicular line in perfect security. This bird will also sound the alarm, and strike at cats when they climb on the roofs of houses, or otherwise approach the nest. Each species of *hirundo* drinks as it flies along, sipping [162] the surface of the water; but the swallow alone in general washes on the wing, by dropping into a pool for many times together: in very hot weather house-martins and bank-martins also dip and wash a little.

The swallow is a delicate songster, and in soft sunny weather sings both perching and flying; on trees in a kind of concert, and on chimney-tops: it is also a bold flier, ranging to distant downs and commons even in windy weather, which the other species seems much to dislike; nay, even frequenting exposed seaport towns, and making little excursions over the salt water. Horsemen on the wide downs are often closely attended by a little party of swallows for miles together, which plays before and behind them, sweeping around and collecting all the skulking insects that are roused by the trampling of the horses' feet: when the wind blows hard, without this expedient, they are often forced to settle to pick up their lurking prey....

A certain swallow built for two years together on the handles of a pair of garden shears that were stuck up against the boards in an outhouse, and therefore must have her nest spoiled whenever that implement was wanted; and what is stranger still, another bird of the same species built its nest on the wings and body of an owl that happened by accident to hang dead and dry from the rafter of a barn. This owl, with the nest on its wings, and with eggs in the nest, was brought as a curiosity worthy of the most elegant private museum in Great Britain.

FOOTNOTES:

[45] From "The Natural History of Selborne," being a letter to the Hon. Daines Barrington.

ADAM SMITH [163]

Born in 1723, died in 1790; educated at Glasgow and Oxford; lecturer in Edinburgh in 1748; professor in Glasgow in 1751; became tutor to the Duke of Buccleuch in 1763; traveled on the Continent in 1764-66; lived afterwards in retirement at Kirkcaldy; became Commissioner of Customs in Edinburgh in 1778; elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow in 1787; his "Moral Sentiments" published in 1759; his "Wealth of Nations" in 1776.

I

OF AMBITION MISDIRECTED[46]

To attain to this envied situation, the candidates for fortune too frequently abandon the paths of virtue; for unhappily, the road which leads to the one, and that which leads to the other, lie sometimes in very opposite directions. But the ambitious man flatters himself that, in the splendid situation to which he advances, he will have so many means of commanding the respect and admiration of mankind, and will be enabled to act with such superior propriety and grace, that the luster of his future conduct will entirely cover or efface the foulness of the steps by which he arrived at that elevation. In many governments the candidates for the highest stations are above the law, and if they can attain the object of their ambition, they have no fear of being called to account for the means by which they acquired it. They often endeavor, therefore, not only by fraud and [164]
falsehood, the ordinary and vulgar arts of intrigue and cabal, but sometimes by the perpetration of the most enormous crimes, by murder and assassination, by rebellion and civil war, to supplant and destroy those who oppose or stand in the way of their greatness. They more frequently miscarry than succeed, and commonly gain nothing but the disgraceful punishment which is due to their crimes.

But tho they should be so lucky as to attain that wished-for greatness, they are always most miserably disappointed in the happiness which they expect to enjoy in it. It is not ease or pleasure, but always honor, of one kind or another, tho frequently an honor very ill understood, that the ambitious man really pursues. But the honor of his exalted station appears, both in his own eyes and in those of other people, polluted and defiled by the baseness of the means through which he rose to it. Tho by the profusion of every liberal expense; tho by excessive indulgence in every profligate pleasure—the wretched but usual resource of ruined characters; tho by the hurry of public business, or by the prouder and more dazzling tumult of war, he may endeavor to efface, both from his own memory and from that of other people, the remembrance of what he has done, that remembrance never fails to pursue him. He invokes in vain the dark and dismal powers of forgetfulness and oblivion. He remembers himself what he has done, and that remembrance tells him that other people must likewise remember it. Amidst all the gaudy pomp of the most ostentatious greatness, amidst the venal and vile adulation of the great and of the learned, [165]
amidst the more innocent tho more foolish acclamations of the common people, amidst all the pride of conquest and the triumph of successful war, he is still secretly pursued by the avenging furies of shame and remorse; and while glory seems to surround him on all sides, he himself, in his own imagination, sees black and foul infamy fast pursuing him, and every moment ready to overtake him from behind.

Even the great Cæsar, tho he had the magnanimity to dismiss his guards, could not dismiss his suspicions. The remembrance of Pharsalia still haunted and pursued him. When, at the request of the senate, he had the generosity to pardon Marcellus, he told that assembly that he was not unaware of the designs which were carrying on against his life; but that, as he had lived long enough both for nature and for glory, he was contented to die, and therefore despised all conspiracies. He had, perhaps, lived long enough for nature; but the man who felt himself the object of such deadly resentment, from those whose favor he wished to gain, and whom he still wished to consider as his friends, had certainly lived too long for real glory, or for all the happiness which he could ever hope to enjoy in the love and esteem of his equals.

II [166]

THE ADVANTAGES OF A DIVISION OF LABOR[47]

Observe the accommodation of the most common artificer or day-laborer in a civilized and thriving country, and you will perceive that the number of people, of whose industry a part, tho but a small part, has been employed in procuring him this accommodation, exceeds all computation. The woolen coat, for example, which covers the day-laborer, as coarse and rough as it may appear, is the product of the joint labor of a great multitude of workmen. The shepherd, the sorter of the wool, the wool-comber or carder, the dyer, the scribbler, the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, the dresser, with many others, must all join their different arts in order to complete even this homely production.

How many merchants and carriers, besides, must have been employed in transporting the materials from some of those workmen to others, who often live in a very distant part of the country! How much commerce and navigation in particular, how many ship-builders, sailors, sail-makers, rope-makers, must have been employed in order to bring together the different drugs made use of by the dyer, which often come from the remotest corners of the world! What a variety of labor, too, is necessary in order to produce the tools of the meanest of those workmen!

To say nothing of such complicated machines as the ship of the sailor, the mill of the [167]
fuller, or even the loom of the weaver, let us consider only what a variety of labor is requisite in order to form that very simple machine, the shears with which the shepherd clips the wool. The miner, the builder of the furnace for smelting the ore, the feller of the timber, the burner of the charcoal to be made use of in the smelting-house, the brick-maker, the bricklayer, the workmen who attend the furnace, the millwright, the forger, the smith, must all of them join their different arts in order to produce them.

Were we to examine in the same manner all the different parts of his dress and household furniture, the coarse linen shirt which he wears next his skin, the shoes which cover his feet, the bed which he lies on, and all the different parts which compose it, the kitchen-grate at which he prepares his victuals, the coals which he makes use of for that purpose, dug from the bowels of the earth, and brought to him, perhaps, by a long sea and a long land carriage, all the other utensils of his kitchen, all the furniture of his table, the knives and forks, the earthen or pewter plates upon which he serves up and divides his victuals, the different hands employed in preparing his bread and his beer, the glass window which lets in the heat and the light, and keeps out the wind and the rain, with all the knowledge and art requisite for preparing that beautiful and happy invention, without which these northern parts of the world could scarce have afforded a very comfortable habitation, together with the tools of all the different workmen employed in producing those [168]
different conveniences; if we examine, I say, all these things, and consider what a variety of labor is employed about each of them, we shall be sensible that, without the assistance and cooperation of many thousands, the very meanest person in a civilized country could not be provided, even according to what we very falsely imagine the easy and simple manner in which he is commonly accommodated. Compared, indeed, with the more extravagant luxury of the great, his accommodation must no doubt appear extremely simple and easy; and yet it may be true, perhaps, that the accommodation of a European prince does not always so much exceed that of an industrious and frugal peasant, as the accommodation of the latter exceeds that of many an African king, the absolute masters of the lives and liberties of ten thousand naked savages.

FOOTNOTES:

[46] From the "Theory of Moral Sentiments."

[47] From "The Wealth of Nations."

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[169]

SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE

Born in 1723, died in 1780; professor of Common Law at Oxford in 1758; justice in the Court of Common Pleas in 1770; published his "Commentaries" in 1765-68, eight editions appearing in his own lifetime, and innumerable ones since.

PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS IN FREE COUNTRIES[48]

In a land of liberty it is extremely dangerous to make a distinct order of the profession of arms. In absolute monarchies this is necessary for the safety of the prince, and arises from the main principle of their constitution, which is that of governing by fear; but in free states the profession of a soldier, taken singly and merely as a profession, is justly an object of jealousy. In these no man should take up arms, but with a view to defend his country and its laws; he puts not off the citizen when he enters the camp; but it is because he is a citizen, and would wish to continue so, that he makes himself for a while a soldier. The laws therefore and constitution of these kingdoms know no such state as that of a perpetual standing soldier, bred up to no other profession than that of war; and it was not till the reign of Henry VII that the kings of England had so much as a guard about their persons.

In the time of our Saxon ancestors, as appears from Edward the Confessor's laws, the [170] military force of this kingdom was in the hands of the dukes or heretochs, who were constituted through every province and county in the kingdom; being taken out of the principal nobility, and such as were most remarkable for being "*sapientes, fideles, et animosi*." Their duty was to lead and regulate the English armies, with a very unlimited power; "*prout eis visum fuerit, ad honorem coronæ et utilitatem regni*." And because of this great power they were elected by the people in their full assembly, or folkmote, in the manner as sheriffs were elected; following still that old fundamental maxim of the Saxon constitution, that where any officer was entrusted with such power, as if abused might tend to the oppression of the people, that power was delegated to him by the vote of the people themselves. So, too, among the ancient Germans, the ancestors of our Saxon forefathers, they had their dukes, as well as kings, with an independent power over the military, as the kings had over the civil state. The dukes were elective, the kings hereditary; for so only can be consistently understood that passage of Tacitus, "*reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute sumunt*"; in constituting their kings, the family or blood royal was regarded; in choosing their dukes or leaders, warlike merit; just as Cæsar relates of their ancestors in his time, that whenever they went to war, by way either of attack or defense, they elected leaders to command them. This large share of power, thus conferred by the people, tho intended to preserve the liberty of the subject, was perhaps unreasonably detrimental to the prerogative of the crown; and accordingly we find ill use [171] made of it by Edric, Duke of Mercia, in the reign of King Edmund Ironside, who, by his office of duke or heretoch, was entitled to a large command in the king's army, and by his repeated treacheries at last transferred the crown to Canute the Dane.

It seems universally agreed by all historians, that King Alfred first settled a national militia in this kingdom, and by his prudent discipline made all the subjects of his dominion soldiers; but we are unfortunately left in the dark as to the particulars of this his so celebrated regulation; tho, from what was last observed, the dukes seem to have been left in possession of too large and independent a power; which enabled Duke Harold on the death of Edward the Confessor, tho a stranger to the royal blood, to mount for a short space the throne of this kingdom, in prejudice of Edgar Atheling the rightful heir.

Upon the Norman Conquest the feudal law was introduced here in all its rigor, the whole of which is built on a military plan. I shall not now enter into the particulars of that constitution, which belongs more properly to the next part of our "Commentaries"; but shall only observe that, in consequence thereof, all the lands in the kingdom were divided into what were called knights' fees, in number above sixty thousand (1); and for every knight's fee a knight or soldier, *miles*, was bound to attend the king in his wars, for forty days in a year (2); in which space of time, before war was reduced to a science, the campaign was generally finished, and a kingdom either conquered or victorious. By this [172] means the king had, without any expense, an army of sixty thousand men always ready at his command. And accordingly we find one, among the laws of William the Conqueror, which in the king's name commands and firmly enjoins the personal attendance of all knights and others: "*quod habeant et teneant se semper in armis et equis, ut decet et oportet; et quod semper sint prompti et parati ad servitium suum integrum nobis explendum et peragendum, cum opus adfuerit, secundum quod debent feodis et tenementis suis de jure nobis facere*." This personal service in process of time degenerated into pecuniary commutations or aids, and at last the military part of the feudal system was abolished at the Restoration....

As the fashion of keeping standing armies, which was first introduced by Charles VII in France, 1445 A.D., has of late years universally prevailed over Europe (tho some of its potentates, being unable themselves to maintain them, are obliged to have recourse to richer powers, and receive subsidiary pensions for that purpose), it has also for many years past been annually judged necessary by our legislature, for the safety of the kingdom, the defense of the possessions of the crown of Great Britain, and the preservation of the balance of power in Europe, to maintain even in time of peace a standing body of troops, under the command of the crown; who are, however, *ipso facto* disbanded at the expiration of every year, unless continued by Parliament. And it was enacted by statute (10 W. III, c. 1) that not more than twelve thousand regular forces [173] should be kept on foot in Ireland, tho paid at the charge of that kingdom; which permission is extended by statute (8 Geo. III, c. 13) to 16,235 men, in time of peace.

To prevent the executive power from being able to oppress, says Baron Montesquieu,[49] it is requisite that the armies with which it is entrusted should consist of the people, and have the same spirit with the people; as was the case at Rome, till Marius new modeled the legions by enlisting the rabble of Italy, and laid the foundation of all the military tyranny that ensued. Nothing, then, according to these principles, ought to be more guarded against in a free state, than making the military power, when such a one is necessary to be kept on foot, a body too distinct from the people. Like ours, it should be wholly composed of natural subjects; it ought only to be enlisted for a short and limited time; the soldiers also should live intermixt with the people; no separate camp, no barracks, no inland fortresses should be allowed. And perhaps it might be still better if, by dismissing a stated number, and enlisting others at every renewal of their term, a circulation could be kept up between the army and the people, and the citizen and the soldier be mere intimately connected together.

To keep this body of troops in order, an annual act of Parliament likewise passes, "to punish mutiny and desertion, and for the better payment of the army and their quarters." This regulates the manner in which they are to be dispersed among the several innkeepers [174] and victualers throughout the kingdom, and establishes a law martial for their government. By this, among other things, it is enacted that if any officer or soldier shall excite, or join any mutiny, or, knowing of it, shall not give notice to the commanding officer; or shall desert, or list in any other regiment, or sleep upon his post, or leave it before he is relieved, or hold correspondence with a rebel or enemy, or strike or use violence to his superior officer, or shall disobey his lawful commands; such offender shall suffer such punishment a court martial shall inflict, tho it extend to death itself.

However expedient the most strict regulations may be in time of actual war, yet in times of profound peace a little relaxation of military rigor would not, one should hope, be productive of much inconvenience. And upon this principle, tho by our standing laws

(still remaining in force, tho not attended to), desertion in time of war is made felony, without benefit of clergy, and the offense is triable by a jury and before justices at the common law; yet, by our militia laws before mentioned, a much lighter punishment is inflicted for desertion in time of peace. So, by the Roman law also, desertion in time of war was punished with death, but more mildly in time of tranquillity. But our Mutiny Act makes no such distinction; for any of the faults above mentioned are, equally at all times, punishable with death itself, if a court martial shall think proper.

This discretionary power of the court martial is indeed to be guided by the directions of the crown; which, with regard to military offenses, has almost an absolute legislative [175] power. "His Majesty," says the act, "may form articles of war, and constitute courts martial, with power to try any crime by such articles, and inflict penalties by sentence or judgment of the same." A vast and most important trust! an unlimited power to create crimes, and annex to them any punishments, not extending to life or limb! These are indeed forbidden to be inflicted, except for crimes declared to be so punishable by this act; which crimes we have just enumerated, and among which we may observe that any disobedience to lawful commands is one. Perhaps in some future revision of this act, which is in many respects hastily penned, it may be thought worthy the wisdom of Parliament to ascertain the limits of military subjection, and to enact express articles of war for the government of the army, as is done for the government of the navy; especially as, by our constitution, the nobility and the gentry of the kingdom, who serve their country as militia officers, are annually subjected to the same arbitrary rule during their time of exercise.

One of the greatest advantages of our English law is that not only the crimes themselves which it punishes, but also the penalties which it inflicts, are ascertained and notorious; nothing is left to arbitrary discretion; the king by his judges dispenses what the law has previously ordained, but is not himself the legislator. How much therefore is it to be regretted that a set of men, whose bravery has so often preserved the liberties of their country, should be reduced to a state of servitude in the midst of a nation of free men! for [176] Sir Edward Coke[50] will inform us that it is one of the genuine marks of servitude, to have the law, which is our rule of action, either concealed or precarious; "*misera est servitus ubi jus est vagum aut incognitum*." Nor is this the state of servitude quite consistent with the maxims of sound policy observed by other free nations. For the greater the general liberty is which any state enjoys, the more cautious has it usually been in introducing slavery in any particular order or profession. These men, as Baron Montesquieu observes, seeing the liberty which others possess, and which they themselves are excluded from, are apt (like eunuchs in the eastern seraglios) to live in a state of perpetual envy and hatred toward the rest of the community, and indulge a malignant pleasure in contributing to destroy those privileges to which they can never be admitted. Hence have many free states, by departing from this rule, been endangered by the revolt of their slaves; while in absolute and despotic governments, where no real liberty exists, and consequently no invidious comparisons can be formed, such incidents are extremely rare. Two precautions are therefore advised to be observed in all prudent and free governments: 1. To prevent the introduction of slavery at all; or, 2. If it be already introduced, not to entrust those slaves with arms; who will then find themselves an overmatch for the freemen. Much less ought the soldiery to be an exception to the people in general.

FOOTNOTES:

[48] From the "Commentaries on the Laws of England."

[49] Author of "The Spirit of the Laws."

[50] Noted as jurist and as the author of comments on Littleton's "Tenures," a book commonly known as "Coke Upon Littleton." The great blot on his noble reputation is the brutality with which he prosecuted Sir Walter Raleigh.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

[177]

Born in Ireland in 1728, died in 1774; educated at Trinity College, Dublin; studied medicine in Edinburgh; traveled on the Continent, chiefly on foot, in 1755-56; became a writer for periodicals in London in 1757; published "The Present State of Polite Learning" in 1759, "The Citizen of the World" in 1762; "The Traveler" in 1765; "The Vicar of Wakefield" in 1766; "The Deserted Village" in 1770.

I

THE AMBITIONS OF THE VICAR'S FAMILY[51]

I now began to find that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awakened that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. Our windows again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face. The sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed that rising too early would hurt her daughters' eyes, that working after dinner would redden their noses, and she convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead therefore of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new-modeling their old gauzes, or flourishing upon catgut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance, and the [178] whole conversation ran upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses.

But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gipsy come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sibyl no sooner appeared than my girls came running to me for a shilling apiece, to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth, I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I loved to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling, tho for the honor of the family it must be observed that they never went without money themselves, as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each to keep in their pockets, but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closeted up with the fortune-teller for some time, I knew by their looks upon their returning that they had been promised something great. "Well, my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, has the fortune-teller given thee a pennyworth?" "I protest, papa," says the girl, "I believe she deals with somebody that is not right, for she positively declared that I am to be married to a squire in less than a twelvemonth!" "Well now, Sophy, my child," said I, "and what sort of a husband are you to have?" "Sir," replied she, "I am to have a lord soon after my sister has married the squire." "How," cried I, "is that all you are to have for your two shillings? Only a lord and a squire for two shillings! You fools, I could have promised you a prince and a nabob for half the money!" [179]

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects: we now began to think ourselves designed by the stars to something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur....

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition. In the first case we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we called up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted that

the Squire was in love with my daughter, she was actually so with him, for they persuaded her into the passion. In this agreeable interval my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morning with great solemnity and exactness. It was one night a coffin and crossbones, the sign of an approaching wedding; at another time she imagined her daughter's pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign of their being shortly stuffed with gold. The girls themselves had their omens. They felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle; purses bounced from the fire, and true-love knots lurked in the bottom of every teacup.

Toward the end of the week we received a card from the town ladies, in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in [180] close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendor the next day. In the evening they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege.

After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus: "I fancy, Charles my dear, we shall have a great deal of good company at our church tomorrow." "Perhaps we may, my dear," returned I; "tho you need be under no uneasiness about that; you shall have a sermon whether there be or not." "That is what I expect," returned she; "but I think, my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as possible, for who knows what may happen?" "Your precautions," replied I, "are highly commendable. A decent behavior and appearance in church is what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene." "Yes," cried she, "I know that; but I mean we should go there in as proper a manner as possible; not altogether like the scrubs about us." "You are quite right, my dear," returned I; "and I was going to make the very same proposal. The proper manner of going is to go there as early as possible, to have time for meditation before the service begins." "Phoo, Charles!" interrupted she; "all that is very true, but not what I would be at. I mean we should go there genteelly. You know the church is two miles off, and I protest I don't like to see my daughters trudging up to their pew all blowzed and red with walking, and [181] looking for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, my proposal is this: there are our two plow-horses, the colt that has been in our family these nine years, and his companion Blackberry that has scarcely done an earthly thing this month past. They are both grown fat and lazy. Why should not they do something as well as we? And let me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little they will cut a very tolerable figure."

To this proposal I objected that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed and the colt wanted a tail; that they had never been broke to the rein, but had a hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition, but as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival, but not finding them come as I expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family.

I therefore walked back to the horse-way, which was five miles around, tho the foot-way was but two, and when I got about half-way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward toward the church; my son, my wife, and the two little ones exalted upon [182] one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next, the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows

nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. They were just recovering from this dismal situation when I found them; but perceiving everything safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it would give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

II

SAGACITY IN INSECTS[52]

Animals in general are sagacious in proportion as they cultivate society. The elephant and the beaver show the greatest signs of this when united; but when man intrudes into their communities they lose all their spirit of industry and testify but a very small share of that sagacity for which, when in a social state, they are so remarkable. [183]

Among insects, the labors of the bee and the ant have employed the attention and admiration of the naturalist; but their whole sagacity is lost upon separation, and a single bee or ant seems destitute of every degree of industry, is the most stupid insect imaginable, languishes for a time in solitude, and soon dies.

Of all the solitary insects I have ever remarked, the spider is the most sagacious; and its actions, to me who have attentively considered them, seem almost to exceed belief. This insect is formed by nature for a state of war, not only upon other insects, but upon each other. For this state nature seems perfectly well to have formed it. Its head and breast are covered with a strong natural coat of mail, which is impenetrable to the attempts of every other insect, and its belly is enveloped in a soft, pliant skin, which eludes the sting even of a wasp. Its legs are terminated by strong claws, not unlike those of a lobster; and their vast length, like spears, serve to keep every assailant at a distance.

Not worse furnished for observation than for an attack or a defense, it has several eyes, large, transparent, and covered with a horny substance, which, however, does not impede its vision. Besides this, it is furnished with a forceps above the mouth, which serves to kill or secure the prey already caught in its claws or its net.

Such are the implements of war with which the body is immediately furnished; but its net to entangle the enemy seems what it chiefly trusts to, and what it takes most pains to render as complete as possible. Nature has furnished the body of this little creature with a [184] glutinous liquid, which, proceeding from the anus, it spins into thread, coarser or finer, as it chooses to contract or dilate its sphincter. In order to fix its thread when it begins to weave, it emits a small drop of its liquid against the wall, which hardening by degrees, serves to hold the thread very firmly. Then receding from its first point, as it recedes the thread lengthens; and when the spider has come to the place where the other end of the thread should be fixt, gathering up with its claws the thread which would otherwise be too slack, it is stretched tightly and fixt in the same manner to the wall as before.

In this manner it spins and fixes several threads parallel to each other, which, so to speak serve as the warp to the intended web. To form the woof, it spins in the same manner its thread, transversely fixing one end to the first thread that was spun, and which is always the strongest of the whole web, and the other to the wall. All these threads being newly spun, are glutinous and therefore stick to each other wherever they happen to touch; and in those parts of the web most exposed to be torn, our natural artist strengthens them, by doubling the threads sometimes sixfold.

Thus far naturalists have gone in the description of this animal; what follows is the result of my own observation upon that species of the insect called a house spider. I perceived about four years ago a large spider in one corner of my room, making its web; and tho the maid frequently leveled her fatal broom against the labors of the little animal, I had the

good fortune then to prevent its destruction; and I may say it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded. [185]

In three days the web was with incredible diligence completed; nor could I avoid thinking that the insect seemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traversed it round, examined the strength of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter, was another and a much larger spider, which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhausted all its stock in former labors of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbor. Soon, then, a terrible encounter ensued, in which the invader seemed to have the victory, and the laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor using every art to draw the enemy from his stronghold. He seemed to go off, but quickly returned; and when he found all arts vain, began to demolish the new web without mercy. This brought on another battle, and, contrary to my expectations, the laborious spider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagonist.

Now, then, in peaceable possession of what was justly its own, it waited three days with the utmost impatience, repairing the breaches of its web, and taking no sustenance that I could perceive. At last, however, a large blue fly fell into the snare, and struggled hard to get loose. The spider gave it leave to entangle itself as much as possible, but it seemed to be too strong for the cobweb. I must own I was greatly surprized when I saw the spider immediately sally out, and in less than a minute weave a new net around its captive, by [186] which the motion of its wings was stopt; and when it was fairly hampered in this manner, it was seized and dragged into the hole.

In this manner it lived in a precarious state; and nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week. I once put a wasp into the net; but when the spider came out in order to seize it as usual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with, it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage so formidable an antagonist. When the wasp was at liberty, I expected the spider would have set about repairing the breaches that were made in its net, but those it seems were irreparable; wherefore the cobweb was now entirely forsaken, and a new one begun, which was completed in the usual time.

I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a single spider could furnish; wherefore I destroyed this, and the insect set about another. When I destroyed the other also its whole stock seemed entirely exhausted, and it could spin no more. The arts it made use of to support itself, now deprived of its great means of subsistence, were indeed surprizing. I have seen it roll up its legs like a ball and lie motionless for hours together, but cautiously watching all the time. When a fly happened to approach sufficiently near, it would dart out all at once, and often seize its prey.

Of this life, however, it soon began to grow weary, and resolved to invade the possession of some other spider, since it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighboring fortification with great vigor, and at first was as vigorously repulsed. Not [187] daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay siege to another's web for three days, and at length, having killed the defendant, actually took possession. When smaller flies happen to fall into the snare, the spider does not sally out at once, but very patiently waits till it is sure of them; for upon his immediately approaching, the terror of his appearance might give the captive strength sufficient to get loose; the manner then is to wait patiently till by ineffectual and impotent struggles the captive has wasted all its strength, and then it becomes a certain and easy conquest.

The insect I am now describing lived three years; every year it changed its skin and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first it dreaded my approach to its web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand; and upon my touching any part of the web, would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defense or an attack.

To complete this description, it may be observed that the male spiders are much less than the female, and that the latter are oviparous. When they come to lay, they spread a part of their web under the eggs, and then roll them up carefully, as we roll up things in a cloth, and thus hatch them in their hole. If disturbed in their holes they never attempt to escape without carrying this young brood, in their forceps, away with them, and thus frequently are sacrificed to their paternal affection. [188]

As soon as ever the young ones leave their artificial covering, they begin to spin, and almost sensibly seem to grow bigger. If they have the good fortune, when even but a day old, to catch a fly, they fall to with good appetites; but they live sometimes three or four days without any sort of sustenance, and yet still continue to grow larger, so as every day to double their former size. As they grow old, however, they do not still continue to increase, but their legs only continue to grow longer; and when a spider becomes entirely stiff with age and unable to seize its prey, it dies at length of hunger.

III

A CHINAMAN'S VIEW OF LONDON[53]

Think not, O thou guide of my youth! that absence can impair my respect, or interposing trackless deserts blot your reverend figure from my memory. The further I travel I feel the pain of separation with stronger force; those ties that bind me to my native country and you are still unbroken. By every remove I only drag a greater length of chain.

Could I find aught worth transmitting from so remote a region as this to which I have wandered I should gladly send it; but, instead of this, you must be contented with a renewal of my former professions and an imperfect account of a people with whom I am [189] as yet but superficially acquainted. The remarks of a man who has been but three days in the country can only be those obvious circumstances which force themselves upon the imagination. I consider myself here as a newly created being introduced into a new world; every object strikes with wonder and surprize. The imagination, still unsated, seems the only active principle of the mind. The most trifling occurrences give pleasure till the gloss of novelty is worn away. When I have ceased to wonder, I may possibly grow wise; I may then call the reasoning principle to my aid, and compare those objects with each other, which were before examined without reflection.

Behold me then in London, gazing at the strangers, and they at me; it seems they find somewhat absurd in my figure; and had I been never from home, it is possible I might find an infinite fund of ridicule in theirs; but by long traveling I am taught to laugh at folly alone, and to find nothing truly ridiculous but villainy and vice.

When I had quitted my native country, and crossed the Chinese wall, I fancied every deviation from the customs and manners of China was a departing from nature. I smiled at the blue lips and red foreheads of the Tonguese; and could hardly contain when I saw the Daures dress their heads with horns. The Ostiacs powdered with red earth; and the Calmuck beauties, tricked out in all the finery of sheepskin, appeared highly ridiculous: but I soon perceived that the ridicule lay not in them, but in me; that I falsely condemned [190] others for absurdity because they happened to differ from a standard originally founded in prejudice or partiality.

I find no pleasure therefore in taxing the English with departing from nature in their external appearance, which is all I yet know of their character: it is possible they only endeavor to improve her simple plan, since every extravagance in dress proceeds from a desire of becoming more beautiful than nature made us; and this is so harmless a vanity that I not only pardon but approve it. A desire to be more excellent than others is what

actually makes us so; and as thousands find a livelihood in society by such appetites, none but the ignorant inveigh against them.

You are not insensible, most reverend Fum Hoam, what numberless trades, even among the Chinese, subsist by the harmless pride of each other. Your nose-borers, feet-swathers, tooth-stainers, eyebrow-pluckers would all want bread should their neighbors want vanity. These vanities, however, employ much fewer hands in China than in England; and a fine gentleman or a fine lady here, drest up to the fashion, seems scarcely to have a single limb that does not suffer some distortions from art.

To make a fine gentleman, several trades are required, but chiefly a barber. You have undoubtedly heard of the Jewish champion whose strength lay in his hair. One would think that the English were for placing all wisdom there. To appear wise nothing more is requisite here than for a man to borrow hair from the heads of all his neighbors and clap it like a bush on his own; the distributors of law and physic stick on such quantities that it [191] is almost impossible, even in idea, to distinguish between the head and the hair.

Those whom I have been now describing affect the gravity of the lion; those I am going to describe more resemble the pert vivacity of smaller animals. The barber, who is still master of the ceremonies, cuts their hair close to the crown, and then with a composition of meal and hog's lard plasters the whole in such a manner as to make it impossible to distinguish whether the patient wears a cap or a plaster; but, to make the picture more perfectly striking, conceive the tail of some beast, a greyhound's tail, or a pig's tail, for instance, appended to the back of the head, and reaching down to that place where tails in other animals are generally seen to begin; thus betailed and bepowdered, the man of taste fancies he improves in beauty, dresses up his hard-featured face in smiles, and attempts to look hideously tender. Thus equipped, he is qualified to make love, and hopes for success more from the powder on the outside of his head than the sentiments within.

Yet when I consider what sort of a creature the fine lady is to whom he is supposed to pay his addresses, it is not strange to find him thus equipped in order to please. She is herself every whit as fond of powder, and tails, and hog's lard, as he. To speak my secret sentiments, most reverend Fum, the ladies here are horribly ugly; I can hardly endure the sight of them; they no way resemble the beauties of China: the Europeans have quite a different idea of beauty from us. When I reflect on the small-footed perfections of an [192] Eastern beauty, how is it possible I should have eyes for a woman whose feet are ten inches long? I shall never forget the beauties of my native city of Nanfew. How very broad their faces! how very short their noses! how very little their eyes! how very thin their lips! how very black their teeth! the snow on the tops of Bao is not fairer than their cheeks; and their eyebrows are small as the line by the pencil of Quamsi. Here a lady with such perfections would be frightful; Dutch and Chinese beauties, indeed, have some resemblance, but English women are entirely different; red cheeks, big eyes, and teeth of a most odious whiteness, are not only seen here, but wished for; and then they have such masculine feet, as actually serve some for walking!

Yet uncivil as Nature has been, they seem resolved to outdo her in unkindness; they use white powder, blue powder, and black powder; for their hair, and a red powder for the face on some particular occasions.

They like to have the face of various colors, as among the Tatars of Koreki, frequently sticking on with spittle, little black patches on every part of it, except on the tip of the nose, which I have never seen with a patch. You'll have a better idea of their manner of placing these spots, when I have finished the map of an English face patched up to the fashion, which shall shortly be sent to increase your curious collection of paintings, medals, and monsters.

But what surprizes more than all the rest is what I have just now been credibly informed by one of this country. "Most ladies here," says he, "have two faces; one face to sleep in, [193] and another to show in company. The first is generally reserved for the husband and family at home; the other put on to please strangers abroad. The family face is often

indifferent enough, but the outdoor one looks something better; this is always made at the toilet, where the looking-glass and toadeater sit in council, and settle the complexion of the day."

I can't ascertain the truth of this remark; however, it is actually certain that they wear more clothes within doors than without, and I have seen a lady, who seemed to shudder at a breeze in her own apartment, appear half-naked in the streets. Farewell.

FOOTNOTES:

[51] From "The Vicar of Wakefield."

[52] From "The Bee, Being Essays on the Most Interesting Subjects," and published in 1759. Of these essays eight had been previously published as weekly contributions.

[53] Letter No. III in "The Citizen of the World," the writer being a Chinaman.

EDMUND BURKE [194]

Born in Ireland in 1729, died is 1797; educated at Trinity College, Dublin; elected to Parliament in 1766; made his famous speech on American affairs in 1774; became Paymaster-general and Privy Counselor in 1782; conducted the impeachment trial of Warren Hastings in 1787-95; published "Natural Society" in 1756; "The Sublime and Beautiful" in 1756; "The Present Discontent" in 1770; "Reflections on the Revolution in France" in 1790.

I

THE PRINCIPLES OF GOOD TASTE[54]

On a superficial view we may seem to differ very widely from each other in our reasonings, and no less in our pleasures; but notwithstanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent than real, it is probable that the standard both of reason and taste is the same in all human creatures. For if there were not some principles of judgment as well as of sentiment common to all mankind, no hold could possibly be taken either on their reason or their passions sufficient to maintain the ordinary correspondence of life. It appears indeed to be generally acknowledged that with regard to truth and falsehood there is something fixt. We find people in their disputes continually appealing to certain tests and standards, which are allowed on all sides, and are supposed to be established in our common nature.

But there is not the same obvious concurrence in any uniform or settled principles which [195] relate to taste. It is even commonly supposed that this delicate and aerial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, can not be properly tried by any test, nor regulated by any standard. There is so continual a call for the exercise of the reasoning faculty, and it is so much strengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reason seem to be tacitly settled amongst the most ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude science and reduced those maxims into a system. If taste has not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the laborers

were few or negligent; for to say the truth, there are not the same interesting motives to impel us to fix the one which urge us to ascertain the other.

And after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters, their difference is not attended with the same important consequences; else I make no doubt but that the logic of taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason. And indeed, it is very necessary, at the entrance into such an inquiry as our present, to make this point as clear as possible; for if taste has no fixt principles, if the imagination is not affected according to some invariable and certain laws, our labor is like to be employed to very little purpose; as it must be judged a useless, if not an absurd undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to set up for a legislator of whims and fancies. [196]

The term taste, like all other figurative terms, is not extremely accurate; the thing which we understand by it is far from a simple and determinate idea in the minds of most men, and it is therefore liable to uncertainty and confusion. I have no great opinion of a definition, the celebrated remedy for the cure of this disorder. For when we define, we seem in danger of circumscribing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of a limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our inquiry by the strict laws to which we have submitted at our setting out.

> *... Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem,*
> *Unde pudor proferre pedem vetet aut operis lex.*

A definition may be very exact, and yet go but a very little way toward informing us of the nature of the thing defined; but let the virtue of a definition be what it will, in the order of things, it seems rather to follow than to precede our inquiry, of which it ought to be considered as the result. It must be acknowledged that the methods of disquisition and teaching may be sometimes different, and on very good reason undoubtedly; but for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew; it tends to set the [197] reader himself in the track of invention, and to direct him into those paths in which the author has made his own discoveries, if he should be so happy as to have made any that are valuable.

But to cut off all pretense for caviling, I mean by the word Taste no more than that faculty or those faculties of the mind which are affected with, or which form a judgment of, the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think the most general idea of that word, and what is the least connected with any particular theory. And my point in this inquiry is, to find whether there are any principles on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them. And such principles of taste I fancy there are, however paradoxical it may seem to those who on a superficial view imagine that there is so great a diversity of tastes, both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more determinate.

All the natural powers in man, which I know, that are conversant about external objects are the senses, the imagination, and the judgment. And first with regard to the senses. We do and we must suppose, that as the conformation of their organs are nearly or altogether the same in all men, so the manner of perceiving external objects is in all men the same, or with little difference. We are satisfied that what appears to be light to one eye appears light to another; that what seems sweet to one palate is sweet to another; that what is dark and bitter to this man is likewise dark and bitter to that; and we conclude in the same [198] manner of great and little, hard and soft, hot and cold, rough and smooth; and indeed of all the natural qualities and affections of bodies. If we suffer ourselves to imagine that their senses present to different men different images of things this skeptical proceeding

will make every sort of reasoning on every subject vain and frivolous, even that skeptical reasoning itself which had persuaded us to entertain a doubt concerning the agreement of our perceptions.

But as there will be little doubt that bodies present similar images to the whole species, it must necessarily be allowed that the pleasures and the pains which every object excites in one man, it must raise in all mankind, whilst it operates, naturally, simply, and by its proper powers only; for if we deny this, we must imagine that the same cause operating in the same manner, and on subjects of the same kind, will produce different effects, which would be highly absurd. Let us first consider this point in the sense of taste, and the rather as the faculty in question has taken its name from that sense. All men are agreed to call vinegar sour, honey sweet, and aloes bitter; and as they are all agreed in finding these qualities in those objects, they do not in the least differ concerning their effects with regard to pleasure and pain. They all concur in calling sweetness pleasant, and sourness and bitterness unpleasant.

Here there is no diversity in their sentiments; and that there is not appears fully from the consent of all men in the metaphors which are taken from the sense of taste. A sour temper, bitter expressions, bitter curses, a bitter fate, are terms well and strongly [199] understood by all. And we are altogether as well understood when we say a sweet disposition, a sweet person, a sweet condition, and the like. It is confest that custom and some other causes have made many deviations from the natural pleasures or pains which belong to these several tastes; but then the power of distinguishing between the natural and the acquired relish remains to the very last. A man frequently comes to prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar, and the flavor of vinegar to that of milk; but this makes no confusion in tastes, whilst he is sensible that the tobacco and vinegar are not sweet, and whilst he knows that habit alone has reconciled his palate to these alien pleasures. Even with such a person we may speak, and with sufficient precision, concerning tastes. But should any man be found who declares that to him tobacco has a taste like sugar, and that he can not distinguish between milk and vinegar; or that tobacco and vinegar are sweet, milk bitter, and sugar sour; we immediately conclude that the organs of this man are out of order and that his palate is utterly vitiated. We are as far from conferring with such a person upon tastes as from reasoning concerning the relations of quantity with one who should deny that all the parts together were equal to the whole. We do not call a man of this kind wrong in his notions, but absolutely mad. Exceptions of this sort, in either way, do not at all impeach our general rule, nor make us conclude that men have various principles concerning the relations of quantity or the taste of things. So that when it is said taste can not be disputed, it can only mean that no one can strictly answer what [200] pleasure or pain some particular man may find from the taste of some particular thing. This indeed can not be disputed; but we may dispute, and with sufficient clearness too, concerning the things which are naturally pleasing or disagreeable to the sense. But when we talk of any peculiar or acquired relish, then we must know the habits, the prejudices, or the distempers of this particular man, and we must draw our conclusion from those.

This agreement of mankind is not confined to the taste solely. The principle of pleasure derived from sight is the same in all. Light is more pleasing than darkness. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are serene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when everything makes a different appearance. I never remember that anything beautiful, whether a man, a beast, a bird, or a plant, was ever shown, tho it were to a hundred people, that they did not all immediately agree that it was beautiful, tho some might have thought that it fell short of their expectation, or that other things were still finer. I believe no man thinks a goose to be more beautiful than a swan, or imagines that what they call a Friesland hen excels a peacock. It must be observed, too, that the pleasures of the sight are not nearly so complicated and confused and altered by unnatural habits and associations as the pleasures of the taste are; because the pleasures of the sight more commonly acquiesce in themselves, and are not so often altered by conditions which are independent of the sight itself.

But things do not spontaneously present themselves to the palate as they do to the sight; they are generally applied to it, either as food or as medicine; and from the qualities which they possess for nutritive or medicinal purposes, they often form the palate by degrees, and by force of these associations. Thus opium is pleasing to Turks on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen, as it diffuses a torpor and pleasing stupefaction. Fermented spirits please our common people, because they banish care and all consideration of future or present evils. All of these would lie absolutely neglected if their properties had originally gone no further than the taste; but all these, together with tea and coffee, and some other things, have passed from the apothecary's shop to our tables, and were taken for health long before they were thought of for pleasure. The effect of the drug has made us use it frequently; and frequent use, combined with the agreeable effect, has made the taste itself at last agreeable. But this does not in the least perplex our reasoning, because we distinguish to the last the acquired from the natural relish. In describing the taste of an unknown fruit, you would scarcely say that it had a sweet and pleasant flavor like tobacco, opium, or garlic, altho you spoke to those who were in the constant use of these drugs, and had great pleasure in them. [201]

There is in all men a sufficient remembrance of the original natural causes of pleasure to enable them to bring all things offered to their senses to that standard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it. Suppose one who had so vitiated his palate as to take more pleasure in the taste of opium than in that of butter or honey to be presented with a bolus of squills; there is hardly any doubt but that he would prefer the butter or honey to this nauseous morsel, or to any other bitter drug to which he had not been accustomed; which proves that his palate was naturally like that of other men in all things, that it is still like the palate of other men in many things, and only vitiated in some particular points. For in judging of any new thing, even of a taste similar to that which he has been formed by habit to like, he finds his palate affected in the natural manner and on the common principles. Thus the pleasure of all senses, of the sight, and even of the taste, that most ambiguous of the senses, is the same in all, high and low, learned and unlearned. [202]

Besides the ideas, with their annexed pains and pleasures, which are presented by the sense the mind of man possesses a sort of creative power of its own; either in representing at pleasure the images of things in the order and manner in which they were received by the senses, or in combining those images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called imagination; and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention, and the like. But it must be observed that the power of the imagination is incapable of producing anything absolutely new; it can only vary the disposition of those ideas which it has received from the senses. Now the imagination is the most extensive province of pleasure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our passions that are connected with them; and whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with these commanding ideas, by force of any original natural impression, must have the same power pretty equally over all men. For since the imagination is only the representation of the senses, it can only be pleased or displeased with the images, from the same principle on which the sense is pleased or displeased with the realities; and consequently there must be just as close an agreement in the imaginations as in the senses of men. A little attention will convince us that this must of necessity be the case. [203]

But in the imaginations, besides the pain or pleasure arising from the properties of the natural object, a pleasure is perceived from the resemblance which the imitation has to the original; the imagination, I conceive, can have no pleasure but what results from one or other of these causes. And these causes operate pretty uniformly upon all men, because they operate by principles in nature, and which are not derived from any particular habits or advantages. Mr. Locke very justly and finely observes of wit that it is chiefly conversant in tracing resemblances; he remarks at the same time that the business of judgment is rather in finding differences. It may perhaps appear, on this supposition, that there is no material distinction between the wit and the judgment, as they both seem to result from different operations of the same faculty of comparing.

But in reality, whether they are or are not dependent on the same power of the mind, they differ so very materially in many respects that a perfect union of wit and judgment is one of the rarest things in the world. When two distinct objects are unlike to each other, it is [204] only what we expect; things are in their common way, and therefore they make no impression on the imagination; but when two distinct objects have a resemblance, we are struck, we attend to them, and we are pleased. The mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and satisfaction in tracing resemblances than in searching for differences; because by making resemblances we produce new images; we unite, we create, we enlarge our stock: but in making distinctions we offer no food at all to the imagination; the task itself is more severe and irksome, and what pleasure we derive from it is something of a negative and indirect nature. A piece of news is told me in the morning; this, merely as a piece of news, as a fact added to my stock, gives me some pleasure. In the evening I find there was nothing in it. What do I gain by this but the dissatisfaction to find that I had been imposed upon?

Hence it is that men are much more naturally inclined to belief than to incredulity. And it is upon this principle that the most ignorant and barbarous nations have frequently excelled in similitudes, comparisons, metaphors, and allegories, who have been weak and backward in distinguishing and sorting their ideas. And it is for a reason of this kind that Homer and the Oriental writers, tho very fond of similitudes, and tho they often strike out such as are truly admirable, seldom take care to have them exact; that is, they are taken with the general resemblance, they paint it strongly, and they take no notice of the [205] difference which may be found between the things compared.

Now, as the pleasure of resemblance is that which principally flatters the imagination, all men are nearly equal in this point, as far as their knowledge of the things represented or compared extends. The principle of this knowledge is very much accidental, as it depends upon experience and observation, and not on the strength or weakness of any natural faculty; and it is from this difference in knowledge that what we commonly, tho with no great exactness, call a difference in taste proceeds. A man to whom sculpture is new sees a barber's block, or some ordinary piece of statuary; he is immediately struck and pleased, because he sees something like a human figure; and, entirely taken up with this likeness, he does not at all attend to its defects. No person, I believe, at the first time of seeing a piece of imitation ever did. Some time after, we suppose that this novice lights upon a more artificial work of the same nature; he now begins to look with contempt on what he admired at first; not that he admired it even then for its unlikeness to a man, but for that general tho inaccurate resemblance which it bore to the human figure. What he admired at different times in these so different figures is strictly the same; and tho his knowledge is improved, his taste is not altered. Hitherto his mistake was from a want of knowledge in art, and this arose from his inexperience; but he may be still deficient from a want of knowledge in nature. For it is possible that the man in question may stop here, and that the masterpiece of a great hand may please him no more than the middling [206] performance of a vulgar artist; and this not for want of better or higher relish, but because all men do not observe with sufficient accuracy on the human figure to enable them to judge properly of an imitation of it.

And that the critical taste does not depend upon a superior principle in men, but upon superior knowledge, may appear from several instances. The story of the ancient painter and the shoemaker is very well known. The shoemaker set the painter right with regard to some mistakes he had made in the shoe of one of his figures, and which the painter, who had not made such accurate observations on shoes, and was content with a general resemblance, had never observed. But this was no impeachment to the taste of the painter; it only showed some want of knowledge in the art of making shoes. Let us imagine that an anatomist had come into the painter's working-room. His piece is in general well done, the figure in question in a good attitude, and the parts well adjusted to their various movements; yet the anatomist, critical in his art, may observe the swell of some muscle not quite just in the peculiar action of the figure. Here the anatomist observes what the painter had not observed; and he passes by what the shoemaker had remarked.

II

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THE LETTER TO A NOBLE LORD[55]

I was not, like his Grace of Bedford, swaddled, and rocked, and dandled into a legislator —*Nitor in adversum* is the motto for a man like me. I possest not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts, that recommend men to the favor and protection of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts by imposing on the understanding of the people. At every step of my progress in life—for in every step was I traversed and opposed—and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to shew my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honor of being useful to my country by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws, and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home. Otherwise, no rank, no toleration even for me. I had no arts but manly arts. On them I have stood, and, please God, in spite of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, to the last gasp will I stand....

I know not how it has happened, but it really seems that, while his Grace was meditating his well-considered censure upon me, he fell into a sort of sleep. Homer nods, and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams—even his golden dreams—are apt to be ill- [208] pieced and incongruously put together, his Grace preserved his idea of reproach to me, but took the subject-matter from the crown-grants to his own family. This is "the stuff of which his dreams are made." In that way of putting things together, his Grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the house of Russell were so enormous as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and while "he lies floating many a rood," he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray—everything of him and about him is from the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favor?

I really am at a loss to draw any sort of parallel between the public merits of his Grace, by which he justifies the grants he holds, and these services of mine, on the favorable construction of which I have obtained what his Grace so much disapproves. In private life, I have not at all the honor of acquaintance with the noble Duke. But I ought to presume, and it costs me nothing to do so, that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. But as to public service, why, truly, it would not be more ridiculous for me to compare myself in rank, in fortune, in splendid descent, in youth, strength, or figure, with the Duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his [209] services and my attempts to be useful to my country. It would not be gross adulation, but uncivil irony, to say that he has any public merit of his own, to keep alive the idea of the services by which his vast landed pensions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal; his are derivative. It is his ancestor, the original pensioner, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit, which makes his Grace so very delicate and exceptious about the merit of all other grantees of the crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I should have said: "'Tis his estate; that's enough. It is his by law; what have I to do with it or its history?" He would naturally have said on his side: "'Tis this man's fortune. He is as good now as my ancestor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old pensions: he is an old man with very young pensions—that's all."

Why will his Grace, by attacking me, force me reluctantly to compare my little merit with that which obtained from the crown those prodigies of profuse donation by which he tramples on the mediocrity of humble and laborious individuals?... Since the new grantees have war made on them by the old, and that the word of the sovereign is not to

be taken, let us turn our eyes to history, in which great men have always a pleasure in contemplating the heroic origin of their house.

The first peer of the name, the first purchaser of the grants, was a Mr. Russell, a person of an ancient gentleman's family, raised by being a minion of Henry VIII. As there generally is some resemblance of character to create these relations, the favorite was in all likelihood much such another as his master. The first of those immoderate grants was not taken from the ancient demesne of the crown, but from the recent confiscation of the ancient nobility of the land. The lion having sucked the blood of his prey, threw the offal carcass to the jackal in waiting. Having tasted once the food of confiscation, the favorites became fierce and ravenous. This worthy favorite's first grant was from the lay nobility. The second, infinitely improving on the enormity of the first, was from the plunder of the church. In truth, his Grace is somewhat excusable for his dislike to a grant like mine, not only in its quantity, but in its kind, so different from his own. [210]

Mine was from a mild and benevolent sovereign; his, from Henry VIII. Mine had not its fund in the murder of any innocent person of illustrious rank, or in the pillage of any body of unoffending men; his grants were from the aggregate and consolidated funds of judgments iniquitously legal, and from possessions voluntarily surrendered by the lawful proprietors with the gibbet at their door.

The merit of the grantee whom he derives from was that of being a prompt and greedy instrument of a leveling tyrant, who opprest all descriptions of his people, but who fell with particular fury on everything that was great and noble. Mine has been in endeavoring to screen every man, in every class, from oppression, and particularly in defending the high and eminent, who in the bad times of confiscating princes, confiscating chief-governors, or confiscating demagogs, are the most exposed to jealousy, avarice, and envy. [211]

The merit of the original grantee of his Grace's pensions was in giving his hand to the work, and partaking the spoil with a prince who plundered a part of the national church of his time and country. Mine was in defending the whole of the national church of my own time and my own country, and the whole of the national churches of all countries, from the principles and the examples which lead to ecclesiastical pillage, thence to a contempt of all prescriptive titles, thence to the pillage of all property, and thence to universal desolation.

The merit of the origin of his Grace's fortune was in being a favorite and chief adviser to a prince who left no liberty to his native country. My endeavor was to obtain liberty for the municipal country in which I was born, and for all descriptions and denominations in it. Mine was to support, with unrelaxing vigilance, every right, every privilege, every franchise, in this my adopted, my dearer, and more comprehensive country; and not only to preserve those rights in this chief seat of empire, but in every nation, in every land, in every climate, language, and religion in the vast domain that still is under the protection, and the larger that was once under the protection, of the British crown.

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III

ON THE DEATH OF HIS SON[56]

Had it pleased God to continue to me the hopes of succession, I should have been, according to my mediocrity, and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a sort of founder of a family; I should have left a son, who, in all the points in which personal merit can be viewed, in science, in erudition, in genius, in taste, in honor, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment and every liberal accomplishment, would not have shewn

himself inferior to the Duke of Bedford, or to any of those whom he traces in his line. His Grace very soon would have wanted all plausibility in his attack upon that provision which belonged more to mine than to me. He would soon have supplied every deficiency, and symmetrized every disproportion. It would not have been for that successor to resort to any stagnant wasting reservoir of merit in me, or in any ancestry. He had in himself a salient living spring of generous and manly action. Every day he lived, he would have repurchased the bounty of the crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had [213] received. He was made a public creature, and had no enjoyment whatever but in the performance of some duty. At this exigent moment the loss of a finished man is not easily supplied.

But a Disposer, whose power we are little able to resist, and whose wisdom it behooves us not at all to dispute, has ordained it in another manner, and—whatever my querulous weakness might suggest—a far better. The storm has gone over me, and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stript of all my honors; I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth! There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognize the divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But while I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate men. The patience of Job is proverbial. After some of the convulsive struggles of our irritable nature, he submitted himself, and repented in dust and ashes. But even so, I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity, those ill-natured neighbors of his who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and economical lectures on his misery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my lord, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honor in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury; it is a privilege; it is an indulgence for those who are at their ease. But we are all of us made to shun disgrace, as we are made to shrink from pain, and poverty, and disease. It is an instinct; and under the [214] direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me are gone before me; they who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation—which ever must subsist in memory—that act of piety which he would have performed to me; I owe it to him to shew, that he was not descended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.

IV

MARIE ANTOINETTE[57]

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well) and that she bears all the succeeding days, that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and her courage; that like her she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last [215] disgrace, and that if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in—glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to

contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honor and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leapt from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever. Never, never more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defense of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage [216] while it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness.

FOOTNOTES:

[54] From "The Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful."

[55] Written in 1796. The occasion for this celebrated letter was an attack on Burke by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale in connection with his pension. The attacks were made from their places in the House of Lords.

[56] Burke's son was Richard Burke, who died on August 2, 1790. He was 32 years of age. The blow shattered Burke's ambition. He himself died in 1797. One other son, Christopher, had been horn to Burke, but he died in childhood. Burke's domestic life was otherwise exceptionally happy. He was noted among his contemporaries for his "orderly and amiable domestic habits."

[57] From the "Reflections on the Revolution in France."

WILLIAM COWPER [217]

Born in 1731, died in 1800; son of a clergyman; educated at Westminster School; admitted to the bar in 1754, but melancholia unfitted him for practise; temporarily confined in an asylum in 1763; afterward lived in private families, being subject to repeated attacks of mental disorder tending to suicide, ending in permanent insanity; published "The Task" in 1785, a translation of Homer in 1791.

I

OF KEEPING ONE'S SELF EMPLOYED[58]

I have neither long visits to pay nor to receive, nor ladies to spend hours in telling me that which might be told in five minutes; yet often find myself obliged to be an economist of time, and to make the most of a short opportunity. Let our station be as retired as it may, there is no want of playthings and avocations, nor much need to seek them, in this world of ours. Business, or what presents itself to us under that imposing character, will find us

out even in the stillest retreat, and plead its importance, however trivial in reality, as a just demand upon our attention.

It is wonderful how by means of such real or seeming necessities my time is stolen away. I have just time to observe that time is short, and by the time I have made the observation time is gone.

I have wondered in former days at the patience of the antediluvian world, that they could [218] endure a life almost millenary, and with so little variety as seems to have fallen to their share. It is probable that they had much fewer employments than we. Their affairs lay in a narrower compass; their libraries were indifferently furnished; philosophical researches were carried on with much less industry and acuteness of penetration, and fiddles perhaps were not even invented. How then could seven or eight hundred years of life be supported? I have asked this question formerly, and been at a loss to resolve it; but I think I can answer it now. I will suppose myself born a thousand years before Noah was born or thought of. I rise with the sun; I worship; I prepare my breakfast; I swallow a bucket of goat's milk and a dozen good sizable cakes. I fasten a new string to my bow, and my youngest boy, a lad of about thirty years of age, having played with my arrows till he has stript off all the feathers, I find myself obliged to repair them. The morning is thus spent in preparing for the chase, and it is become necessary that I should dine. I dig up my roots; I wash them; boil them; I find them not done enough, I boil them again; my wife is angry; we dispute; we settle the point; but in the mean time the fire goes out, and must be kindled again. All this is very amusing.

I hunt; I bring home the prey; with the skin of it I mend an old coat, or I make a new one. By this time the day is far spent; I feel myself fatigued, and retire to rest. Thus, what with tilling the ground and eating the fruit of it, hunting, and walking, and running, and [219] mending old clothes, and sleeping and rising again, I can suppose an inhabitant of the primeval world so much occupied as to sigh over the shortness of life, and to find, at the end of many centuries, that they had all slipt through his fingers and were passing away like a shadow. What wonder then that I, who live in a day of so much greater refinement, when there is so much more to be wanted and wished, and to be enjoyed, should feel myself now and then pinched in point of opportunity, and at some loss for leisure to fill four sides of a sheet like this?

II

ON JOHNSON'S TREATMENT OF MILTON[59]

I have been well entertained with Johnson's biography, for which I thank you: with one exception, and that a swinging one, I think he has acquitted himself with his usual good sense and sufficiency. His treatment of Milton is unmerciful to the last degree. A pensioner is not likely to spare a republican, and the Doctor, in order, I suppose, to convince his royal patron of the sincerity of his monarchical principles, has belabored that great poet's character with the most industrious cruelty. As a man, he has hardly left [220] him the shadow of one good quality. Churlishness in his private life, and a rancorous hatred of everything royal in his public, are the two colors with which he has smeared all the canvas. If he had any virtues, they are not to be found in the Doctor's picture of him, and it is well for Milton that some sourness in his temper is the only vice with which his memory has been charged; it is evident enough that if his biographer could have discovered more, he would not have spared him.

As a poet, he has treated him with severity enough, and has plucked one or two of the most beautiful feathers out of his Muse's wing, and trampled them under his great foot. He has passed sentence of condemnation upon Lycidas, and has taken occasion, from that

charming poem, to expose and ridicule (what is indeed ridiculous enough) the childish prattlement of pastoral compositions, as if Lycidas was the prototype and pattern of them all. The liveliness of the descriptions, the sweetness of the numbers, the classical spirit of antiquity that prevails in it, go for nothing. I am convinced, by the way, that he has no ear for poetical numbers, or that it was stopt by prejudice against the harmony of Milton's. Was there ever anything so delightful as the music of the Paradise Lost? It is like that of a fine organ; has the fullest and the deepest tones of majesty with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute: variety without end, and never equaled, unless perhaps by Virgil. Yet the Doctor has little or nothing to say upon this copious theme, but talks something about the unfitness of the English language for blank verse, and how apt it is, [221] in the mouths of some readers, to degenerate into declamation. Oh! I could thrash his old jacket till I made his pension jingle in his pockets.

III

ON THE PUBLICATION OF HIS BOOKS[60]

In the press, and speedily will be published, in one volume octavo, price three shillings, Poems,[61] by William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq. You may suppose, by the size of the publication, that the greatest part of them have never been long kept secret, because you yourself have never seen them; but the truth is, that they are most of them, except what you have in your possession, the produce of the last winter. Two-thirds of the compilation will be occupied by four pieces, the first of which sprung up in the month of December, and the last of them in the month of March. They contain, I suppose, in all about two thousand and five hundred lines; are known, or are to be known in due time, by the names of Table-Talk, The Progress of Error, Truth, Expostulation. Mr. Newton writes a preface, and Johnson is the publisher. The principal, I may say the only reason why I never mentioned to you, till now, an affair which I am just going to make known to all [222] the world (if that Mr. All-the-world should think it worth his knowing) has been this—that, till within these few days, I had not the honor to know it myself. This may seem strange, but it is true; for, not knowing where to find underwriters who would choose to insure them, and not finding it convenient to a purse like mine to run any hazard, even upon the credit of my own ingenuity, I was very much in doubt for some weeks whether any bookseller would be willing to subject himself to an ambiguity that might prove very expensive in case of a bad market. But Johnson has heroically set all peradventures at defiance, and takes the whole charge upon himself. So out I come. I shall be glad of my Translations from Vincent Bourne in your next frank. My muse will lay herself at your feet immediately on her first public appearance....

If[62] a writer's friends have need of patience, how much more the writer! Your desire to see my muse in public, and mine to gratify you, must both suffer the mortification of delay. I expected that my trumpeter would have informed the world by this time of all that is needful for them to know upon such an occasion; and that an advertising blast, blown through every newspaper, would have said, "The poet is coming." But man, especially man that writes verse, is born to disappointments, as surely as printers and booksellers are born to be the most dilatory and tedious of all creatures. The plain English of this magnificent preamble is, that the season of publication is just elapsed, that [223] the town is going into the country every day, and that my book can not appear till they return—that is to say, not till next winter. This misfortune, however, comes not without its attendant advantage: I shall now have, what I should not otherwise have had, an opportunity to correct the press myself; no small advantage upon any occasion, but especially important where poetry is concerned! A single erratum may knock out the brains of a whole passage, and that perhaps which, of all others, the unfortunate poet is the most proud of. Add to this, that now and then there is to be found in a printing-house

a presumptuous intermeddler, who will fancy himself a poet too, and what is still worse, a better than he that employs him. The consequence is, that with cobbling, and tinkering, and patching on here and there a shred of his own, he makes such a difference between the original and the copy, that an author can not know his own work again. Now, as I choose to be responsible for nobody's dulness but my own, I am a little comforted when I reflect that it will be in my power to prevent all such impertinence; and yet not without your assistance. It will be quite necessary that the correspondence between me and Johnson should be carried on without the expense of postage, because proof-sheets would make double or treble letters, which expense, as in every instance it must occur twice, first when the packet is sent, and again when it is returned, would be rather inconvenient to me, who, you perceive, am forced to live by my wits, and to him, who hopes to get a little matter no doubt by the same means. Half a dozen franks therefore to me, and [224] totidem to him, will be singularly acceptable, if you can, without feeling it in any respect a trouble, procure them for me—Johnson, Bookseller, St. Paul's Churchyard....

The writing of so long a poem[63] is a serious business; and the author must know little of his own heart who does not in some degree suspect himself of partiality to his own production; and who is he that would not be mortified by the discovery that he had written five thousand lines in vain? The poem, however, which you have in hand will not of itself make a volume so large as the last, or as a bookseller would wish. I say this, because when I had sent Johnson five thousand verses, he applied for a thousand more. Two years since I began a piece which grew to the length of two hundred, and there stopt. I have lately resumed it, and I believe, shall finish it. But the subject is fruitful and will not be comprized in a smaller compass than seven or eight hundred verses. It turns on the question whether an education at school or at home be preferable, and I shall give the preference to the latter. I mean that it shall pursue the track of the former—that is to say, it shall visit Stock in its way to publication. My design also is to inscribe it to you. But you must see it first; and if, after having seen it, you should have any objection, tho it should be no bigger than the tittle of an i, I will deny myself that pleasure, and find no fault with your refusal.

I have not been without thoughts of adding

"John Gilpin" at the tail of all. He has made a good deal of noise in the world, and [225] perhaps it may not be amiss to show, that, tho I write generally with a serious intention, I know how to be occasionally merry. The critical reviewers charged me with an attempt at humor. John having been more celebrated upon the score of humor than most pieces that have appeared in modern days, may serve to exonerate me from the imputation; but in this article I am entirely under your judgment, and mean to be set down by it. All these together will make an octavo like the last. I should have told you that the piece which now employs me is rime. I do not intend to write any more blank. It is more difficult than rime, and not so amusing in the composition. If, when you make the offer of my book to Johnson, he should stroke his chin, and look up to the ceiling and cry "Humph!"—anticipate him, I beseech you, at once, by saying—"that you know I should be sorry that he should undertake for me to his own disadvantage, or that my volume should be in any degree prest upon him. I make him the offer merely because I think he would have reason to complain of me if I did not." But that punctilio once satisfied, it is a matter of indifference to me what publisher sends me forth.

FOOTNOTES:

[58] Letter to the Rev. John Newton, dated Olney, November 30, 1783.

[59] Letter to the Rev. William Unwin, dated "October 31, 1779."

[60] Letter to the Rev. William Unwin, dated "Olney, May 1, 1781."

[61] His first volume of verse.

[62] This paragraph is from another letter to Unwin, written three weeks later—May 23, 1781.

[63] This letter, addrest to Unwin, and dated "October 30, 1784," refers to Cowper's poem "The Task."

EDWARD GIBBON [226]

Born in 1737, died in 1794; educated at Oxford, but was not graduated; became a Catholic, but soon renounced that faith; sent by his father to Lausanne, Switzerland, for instruction by a Calvinist minister in 1753; there met and fell in love with, but did not marry, Susanne Curchod; served in the militia, becoming a colonel in 1759-70; traveled in France and Italy in 1763-65; elected to Parliament in 1764; settled permanently in Lausanne in 1783; published the first volume of his "Decline and Fall" in 1776, and the last in 1778; wrote also "Memoirs of My Life and Writings."

I

THE ROMANCE OF HIS YOUTH[64]

I hesitate, from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry and is interwoven with the texture of French manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and tho my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment.

The personal attractions of Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content, with a small salary and laborious duty, in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays de Vaud from the county of Burgundy. In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal and even learned education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. [227]

The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honorably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion; and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity: but on my return to England, I soon discovered that my [228]

father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle I yielded to my fate: I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself; and my love subsided in friendship and esteem.

The minister of Crassy soon afterward died; his stipend died with him; his daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother; but in her lowest distress she maintained a spotless reputation, and a dignified behavior. A rich banker of Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth, as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker,[65] the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy.

II

[229]

THE INCEPTION AND COMPLETION OF HIS "DECLINE AND FALL"[66]

It was at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind. But my original plan was circumscribed to the decay of the city, rather than of the empire: and, tho my reading and reflections began to point toward that object, some years elapsed, and several avocations intervened, before I was seriously engaged in the execution of that laborious work....

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a berceau, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my [230] pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.

I will add two facts which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five, quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes excepting those of the author and the printer: the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.

III

THE FALL OF ZENOBIA[67]

(271 A.D.)

Aurelian had no sooner secured the person and provinces of Tetricus, than he turned his arms against Zenobia, the celebrated queen of Palmyra[68] and the East. Modern Europe has produced several illustrious women who have sustained with glory the weight of empire; nor is our own age destitute of such distinguished characters.

But if we except the doubtful achievements of Semiramis, Zenobia is perhaps the only [231] female whose superior genius broke through the servile indolence imposed on her sex by the climate and manners of Asia. She claimed her descent from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, equaled in beauty her ancestor Cleopatra, and far surpassed that princess in chastity and valor.

Zenobia was esteemed the most lovely as well as the most heroic of her sex. She was of a dark complexion (for in speaking of a lady these trifles become important). Her teeth were of a pearly whiteness, and her large black eyes sparkled with uncommon fire, tempered by the most attractive sweetness. Her voice was strong and harmonious. Her manly understanding was strengthened and adorned by study. She was not ignorant of the Latin tongue, but possest in equal perfection the Greek, the Syriac, and the Egyptian languages. She had drawn up for her own use an epitome of Oriental history, and familiarly compared the beauties of Homer and Plato under the tuition of the sublime Longinus.

This accomplished woman gave her hand to Odenathus, who, from a private station, raised himself to the dominion of the East. She soon became the friend and companion of a hero. In the intervals of war, Odenathus passionately delighted in the exercise of hunting; he pursued with ardor the wild beasts of the desert—lions, panthers, and bears; and the ardor of Zenobia in that dangerous amusement was not inferior to his own. She had inured her constitution to fatigue, disdained the use of a covered carriage, generally appeared on horseback in a military habit, and sometimes marched several miles on foot [232] at the head of the troops. The success of Odenathus was in a great measure ascribed to her incomparable prudence and fortitude. Their splendid victories over the Great King, whom they twice pursued as far as the gates of Ctesiphon,[69] laid the foundations of their united fame and power. The armies which they commanded, and the provinces which they had saved, acknowledged not any other sovereigns than their invincible chiefs. The Senate and people of Rome revered a stranger who had avenged their captive emperor, and even the insensible son of Valerian accepted Odenathus for his legitimate colleague....

When Aurelian passed over into Asia against an adversary whose sex alone could render her an object of contempt, his presence restored obedience to the province of Bithynia, already shaken by the arms and intrigues of Zenobia. Advancing at the head of his legions, he accepted the submission of Ancyra, and was admitted into Tyana, after an obstinate siege, by the help of a perfidious citizen. The generous tho fierce temper of Aurelian abandoned the traitor to the rage of the soldiers: a superstitious reverence induced him to treat with lenity the countrymen of Apollonius the philosopher. Antioch was deserted on his approach, till the Emperor, by his salutary edicts, recalled the fugitives, and granted a general pardon to all who from necessity rather than choice had been engaged in the service of the Palmyrenian Queen. The unexpected mildness of such [233] a conduct reconciled the minds of the Syrians, and as far as the gates of Emesa the wishes of the people seconded the terror of his arms.

Zenobia would have ill deserved her reputation, had she indolently permitted the Emperor of the West to approach within a hundred miles of her capital. The fate of the East was decided in two great battles, so similar in almost every circumstance that we can scarcely distinguish them from each other, except by observing that the first was fought near Antioch and the second near Emesa. In both the Queen of Palmyra animated the

armies by her presence, and devolved the execution of her orders on Zabdas, who had already signalized his military talents by the conquest of Egypt. The numerous forces of Zenobia consisted for the most part of light archers, and of heavy cavalry clothed in complete steel. The Moorish and Illyrian horse of Aurelian were unable to sustain the ponderous charge of their antagonists. They fled in real or affected disorder, engaged the Palmyrenians in a laborious pursuit, harassed them by a desultory combat, and at length discomfited this impenetrable but unwieldy body of cavalry. The light infantry, in the mean time, when they had exhausted their quivers, remaining without protection against a closer onset, exposed their naked sides to the swords of the legions. Aurelian had chosen these veteran troops, who were usually stationed on the Upper Danube, and whose valor had been severely tried in the Alemannic war. After the defeat of Emesa, Zenobia found it impossible to collect a third army. As far as the frontier of Egypt, the nations subject to her empire had joined the standard of the conqueror, who detached [234] Probus, the bravest of his generals, to possess himself of the Egyptian provinces. Palmyra was the last resource of the widow of Odenathus. She retired within the walls of her capital, made every preparation for a vigorous resistance, and declared, with the intrepidity of a heroine, that the last moment of her reign and of her life should be the same.

Amid the barren deserts of Arabia, a few cultivated spots rise like islands out of the sandy ocean. Even the name of Tadmor, or Palmyra, by its signification in the Syriac as well as in the Latin language, denoted the multitude of palm-trees which afforded shade and verdure to that temperate region. The air was pure, and the soil, watered by some invaluable springs, was capable of producing fruits as well as corn. A place possest of such singular advantages, and situated at a convenient distance between the Gulf of Persia and the Mediterranean, was soon frequented by the caravans which conveyed to the nations of Europe a considerable part of the rich commodities of India. Palmyra insensibly increased into an opulent and independent city, and connecting the Roman and the Parthian monarchies by the mutual benefits of commerce was suffered to observe a humble neutrality, till at length after the victories of Trajan the little republic sunk into the bosom of Rome, and flourished more than one hundred and fifty years in the subordinate tho honorable rank of a colony. It was during that peaceful period, if we may judge from a few remaining inscriptions, that the wealthy Palmyrenians constructed those temples, palaces, and porticoes of Grecian architecture whose ruins, scattered over an [235] extent of several miles, have deserved the curiosity of our travelers. The elevation of Odenathus and Zenobia appeared to reflect new splendor on their country, and Palmyra for a while stood forth the rival of Rome: but the competition was fatal, and ages of prosperity were sacrificed to a moment of glory....

The firmness of Zenobia was supported by the hope that in a very short time famine would compel the Roman army to repass the desert, and by the reasonable expectation that the kings of the East, and particularly the Persian monarch, would arm in the defense of their most natural ally. But fortune and the perseverance of Aurelian overcame every obstacle. The death of Sapor, which happened about this time, distracted the counsels of Persia, and the inconsiderable succors that attempted to relieve Palmyra were easily intercepted either by the arms or the liberality of the Emperor. From every part of Syria a regular succession of convoys safely arrived in the camp, which was increased by the return of Probus with his victorious troops from the conquest of Egypt. It was then that Zenobia resolved to fly. She mounted the fleetest of her dromedaries, and had already reached the banks of the Euphrates, about sixty miles from Palmyra, when she was overtaken by the pursuit of Aurelian's light horse, seized, and brought back a captive to the feet of the Emperor. Her capital soon afterward surrendered, and was treated with unexpected lenity.

When the Syrian Queen was brought into the presence of Aurelian he sternly asked her, [236] How she had presumed to rise in arms against the emperors of Rome! The answer of Zenobia was a prudent mixture of respect and firmness: "Because I disdained to consider as Roman emperors an Aureolus or a Gallienus. You alone I acknowledge as my conqueror and my sovereign." But as female fortitude is commonly artificial, so it is

seldom steady or consistent. The courage of Zenobia deserted her in the hour of trial; she trembled at the angry clamors of the soldiers, who called aloud for her immediate execution, forgot the generous despair of Cleopatra which she had proposed as her model, and ignominiously purchased life by the sacrifice of her fame and her friends. It was to their counsels, which governed the weakness of her sex, that she imputed the guilt of her obstinate resistance; it was on their heads that she directed the vengeance of the cruel Aurelian. The fame of Longinus,[70] who was included among the numerous and perhaps innocent victims of her fear, will survive that of the Queen who betrayed or the tyrant who condemned him. Genius and learning were incapable of moving a fierce unlettered soldier, but they had served to elevate and harmonize the soul of Longinus. Without uttering a complaint he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy mistress, and bestowing comfort on his afflicted friends....

But, however in the treatment of his unfortunate rivals Aurelian might indulge his pride, he behaved toward them with a generous clemency which was seldom exercised by the ancient conquerors. Princes who without success had defended their throne or freedom, were frequently strangled in prison as soon as the triumphal pomp ascended the Capitol. These usurpers, whom their defeat had convicted of the crime of treason, were permitted to spend their lives in affluence and honorable repose. The Emperor presented Zenobia with an elegant villa at Tibur, or Tivoli, about twenty miles from the capital; the Syrian queen insensibly sunk into a Roman matron, her daughters married into noble families and her race was not yet extinct in the fifth century. [237]

IV

ALARIC'S ENTRY INTO ROME[71]

(410 A.D.)

At the hour of midnight the Salarian gate was silently opened, and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet. Eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the imperial city which had subdued and civilized so considerable a part of mankind was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia.

The proclamation of Alaric, when he forced his entrance into a vanquished city, discovered, however, some regard for the laws of humanity and religion. He encouraged his troops boldly to seize the rewards of valor, and to enrich themselves with the spoils of a wealthy and effeminate people; but he exhorted them at the same time to spare the lives of the unresisting citizens, and to respect the churches of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul as holy and inviolable sanctuaries. Amidst the horrors of a nocturnal tumult, several of the Christian Goths displayed the fervor of a recent conversion; and some instances of their uncommon piety and moderation are related, and perhaps adorned, by the zeal of ecclesiastical writers. [238]

While the Barbarians roamed through the city in quest of prey, the humble dwelling of an aged virgin who had devoted her life to the service of the altar was forced open by one of the powerful Goths. He immediately demanded, tho in civil language, all the gold and silver in her possession; and was astonished at the readiness with which she conducted him to a splendid hoard of massy plate of the richest materials and the most curious workmanship. The Barbarian viewed with wonder and delight this valuable acquisition, till he was interrupted by a serious admonition addrest to him in the following words: "These," said she, "are the consecrated vessels belonging to St. Peter; if you presume to touch them, the sacrilegious deed will remain on your conscience. For my part, I dare not keep what I am unable to defend." The Gothic captain, struck with reverential awe,

dispatched a messenger to inform the King of the treasure which he had discovered, and [239]
received a peremptory order from Alaric that all the consecrated plate and ornaments should be transported, without damage or delay, to the church of the Apostle.

From the extremity, perhaps, of the Quirinal hill, to the distant quarter of the Vatican, a numerous detachment of Goths, marching in order of battle through the principal streets, protected with glittering arms the long train of their devout companions, who bore aloft on their heads the sacred vessels of gold and silver; and the martial shouts of the Barbarians were mingled with the sound of religious psalmody. From all the adjacent houses a crowd of Christians hastened to join this edifying procession; and a multitude of fugitives, without distinction of age, or rank, or even of sect, had the good fortune to escape to the secure and hospitable sanctuary of the Vatican. The learned work "Concerning the City of God" was professedly composed by St. Augustine to justify the ways of Providence in the destruction of the Roman greatness. He celebrates with peculiar satisfaction this memorable triumph of Christ, and insults his adversaries by challenging them to produce some similar example of a town taken by storm, in which the fabulous gods of antiquity had been able to protect either themselves or their deluded votaries.

In the sack of Rome, some rare and extraordinary examples of Barbarian virtue have been deservedly applauded. But the holy precincts of the Vatican and the Apostolic churches could receive a very small proportion of the Roman people; many thousand warriors, more especially of the Huns who served under the standard of Alaric, were [240]
strangers to the name, or at least to the faith of Christ; and we may suspect without any breach of charity or candor that in the hour of savage license, when every passion was inflamed and every restraint was removed, the precepts of the gospel seldom influenced the behavior of the Gothic Christians. The writers the best disposed to exaggerate their clemency have freely confest that a cruel slaughter was made of the Romans, and that the streets of the city were filled with dead bodies, which remained without burial during the general consternation. The despair of the citizens was sometimes converted into fury; and whenever the Barbarians were provoked by opposition, they extended the promiscuous massacre to the feeble, the innocent and the helpless. The private revenge of forty thousand slaves was exercised without pity or remorse; and the ignominious lashes which they had formerly received were washed away in the blood of the guilty or obnoxious families. The matrons and virgins of Rome were exposed to injuries more dreadful, in the apprehension of chastity, than death itself....

The want of youth, or beauty, or chastity protected the greatest part of the Roman women from the danger of a rape. But avarice is an insatiate and universal passion, since the enjoyment of almost every object that can afford pleasure to the different tastes and tempers of mankind may be procured by the possession of wealth. In the pillage of Rome, a just preference was given to gold and jewels, which contain the greatest value in the smallest compass and weight; but after these portable riches had been removed by the [241]
more diligent robbers, the palaces of Rome were rudely stript of their splendid and costly furniture. The sideboards of massy plate, and the variegated wardrobes of silk and purple, were irregularly piled in the wagons that always followed the march of a Gothic army. The most exquisite works of art were roughly handled or wantonly destroyed; many a statue was melted for the sake of the precious materials; and many a vase, in the division of the spoil, was shivered into fragments by the stroke of a battle-ax. The acquisition of riches served only to stimulate the avarice of the rapacious Barbarians, who proceeded by threats, by blows, and by tortures to force from their prisoners the confession of hidden treasure. Visible splendor and expense were alleged as the proof of a plentiful fortune; the appearance of poverty was imputed to a parsimonious disposition; and the obstinacy of some misers, who endured the most cruel torments before they would discover the secret object of their affection, was fatal to many unhappy wretches, who expired under the lash for refusing to reveal their imaginary treasures.

The edifices of Rome, tho the damage has been much exaggerated, received some injury from the violence of the Goths. At their entrance through the Salarian gate, they fired the

adjacent houses to guide their march and to distract the attention of the citizens; the flames, which encountered no obstacle in the disorder of the night, consumed many private and public buildings; and the ruins of the palace of Sallust remained, in the age of Justinian, a stately monument of the Gothic conflagration. Yet a contemporary historian has observed that fire could scarcely consume the enormous beams of solid brass, and [242] that the strength of man was insufficient to subvert the foundations of ancient structures. Some truth may possibly be concealed in his devout assertion that the wrath of Heaven supplied the imperfections of hostile rage, and that the proud Forum of Rome, decorated with the statues of so many gods and heroes, was leveled in the dust by the stroke of lightning.

V

THE DEATH OF HOSEIN[72]

Hosein served with honor against the Christians in the siege of Constantinople. The primogeniture of the line of Hashem, and the holy character of the grandson of the apostle, had centered in his person, and he was at liberty to prosecute his claim against Yezid, the tyrant of Damascus, whose vices he despised, and whose title he had never deigned to acknowledge. A list was secretly transmitted from Cufa to Medina, of one hundred and forty thousand Moslems, who profest their attachment to his cause, and who were eager to draw their swords so soon as he should appear on the banks of the Euphrates.

Against the advice of his wisest friends, he resolved to trust his person and family in the [243] hands of a perfidious people. He traversed the desert of Arabia with a timorous retinue of women and children; but as he approached the confines of Irak,[73] he was alarmed by the solitary or hostile face of the country, and suspected either the defection or ruin of his party. His fears were just; Obeidollah, the governor of Cufa, had extinguished the first sparks of an insurrection; and Hosein, in the plain of Kerbela, was encompassed by a body of five thousand horse, who intercepted his communication with the city and the river. He might still have escaped to a fortress in the desert, that had defied the power of Cæsar[74] and Chosroes,[75] and confided in the fidelity of the tribe of Tai, which would have armed ten thousand warriors in his defense. In a conference with the chief of the enemy, he proposed the option of three honorable conditions; that he should be allowed to return to Medina, or be stationed in a frontier garrison against the Turks, or safely conducted to the presence of Yezid.[76] But the commands of the caliph, or his lieutenant, were stern and absolute; and Hosein was informed that he must either submit as a captive and a criminal to the commander of the faithful, or expect the consequences of his rebellion. "Do you think," replied he, "to terrify me with death?" And during the short respite of a night, he prepared with calm and solemn resignation to encounter his fate. He [244] checked the lamentations of his sister Fatima, who deplored the impending ruin of his house. "Our trust," said Hosein, "is in God alone. All things, both in heaven and earth, must perish and return to their Creator. My brother, my father, my mother, were better than me, and every Mussulman has an example in the prophet." He prest his friends to consult their safety by a timely flight; they unanimously refused to desert or survive their beloved master; and their courage was fortified by a fervent prayer and the assurance of paradise.

On the morning of the fatal day, he mounted on horseback, with his sword in one hand and Koran in the other: his generous band of martyrs consisted only of thirty-two horse and forty foot; but their flanks and rear were secured by the tentropes, and by a deep trench which they had filled with lighted fagots, according to the practise of the Arabs. The enemy advanced with reluctance; and one of their chiefs deserted, with thirty

followers, to claim the partnership of inevitable death. In every close onset, or single combat, the despair of the Fatimites was invincible; but the surrounding multitudes galled them from a distance with a cloud of arrows, and the horses and men were successively slain: a truce was allowed on both sides for the hour of prayer; and the battle at length expired by the death of the last of the companions of Hosein. Alone, weary, and wounded, he seated himself at the door of his tent. As he tasted a drop of water, he was pierced in the mouth with a dart; and his son and nephew, two beautiful youths were killed in his arms. He lifted his hands to heaven, they were full of blood, and he uttered a funeral prayer for the living and the dead. [245]

In a transport of despair his sister issued from the tent, and adjured the general of the Cufians that he would not suffer Hosein to be murdered before his eyes; a tear trickled down his venerable beard; and the boldest of his soldiers fell back on every side as the dying hero threw himself among them. The remorseless Shamer, a name detested by the faithful, reproached their cowardice; and the grandson of Mohammed was slain with three and thirty strokes of lances and swords. After they had trampled on his body, they carried his head to the castle of Cufa, and the inhuman Obeidollah struck him on the mouth with a cane. "Alas!" exclaimed an aged Mussulman, "on these lips have I seen the lips of the apostle of God!" In a distant age and climate the tragic scene of the death of Hosein will awaken the sympathy of the coldest reader. On the annual festival of his martyrdom, in the devout pilgrimage to his sepulcher, his Persian votaries abandon their souls to the religious frenzy of sorrow and indignation.

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VI

THE CAUSES OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CITY OF ROME[77]

In the last days of Pope Eugenius the Fourth, two of his servants, the learned Poggius[78] and a friend, ascended the Capitoline Hill, reposed themselves among the ruins of columns and temples, and viewed from that commanding spot the wide and various prospect of desolation. The place and the object gave ample scope for moralizing on the vicissitudes of fortune, which spares neither man nor the proudest of his works, which buries empires and cities in a common grave; and it was agreed that in proportion to her former greatness the fall of Rome was the more awful and deplorable:

"Her primeval state, such as she might appear in a remote age, when Evander entertained the stranger of Troy, has been delineated by the fancy of Virgil. This Tarpeian Rock was then a savage and solitary thicket; in the time of the poet it was crowned with the golden roofs of a temple; the temple is overthrown, the gold has been pillaged, the wheel of fortune has accomplished her revolution, and the sacred ground is again disfigured with [247] thorns and brambles. The hill of the Capitol, on which we sit, was formerly the head of the Roman Empire, the citadel of the earth, the terror of kings; illustrated by the footsteps of so many triumphs, enriched with the spoils and tributes of so many nations. This spectacle of the world, how is it fallen! how changed! how defaced! The path of victory is obliterated by vines, and the benches of the senators are concealed by a dunghill. Cast your eyes on the Palatine Hill, and seek among the shapeless and enormous fragments the marble theater, the obelisks, the colossal statues, the porticoes of Nero's palace; survey the other hills of the city,—the vacant space is interrupted only by ruins and gardens. The Forum of the Roman people, where they assembled to enact their laws and elect their magistrates, is now inclosed for the cultivation of pot-herbs, or thrown open for the reception of swine and buffaloes. The public and private edifices that were founded for eternity lie prostrate, naked, and broken, like the limbs of a mighty giant; and the ruin is

the more visible, from the stupendous relics that have survived the injuries of time and fortune."...

After a diligent inquiry, I can discern four principal causes of the ruin of Rome, which continued to operate in a period of more than a thousand years. I. The injuries of time and nature. II. The hostile attacks of the Barbarians and Christians. III. The use and abuse of the materials. And IV. The domestic quarrels of the Romans.

I. The art of man is able to construct monuments far more permanent than the narrow span of his own existence; yet these monuments, like himself, are perishable and frail; and in the boundless annals of time his life and his labors must equally be measured as a fleeting moment. Of a simple and solid edifice it is not easy, however, to circumscribe the duration. As the wonder of ancient days, the Pyramids attracted the curiosity of the ancients: a hundred generations, the leaves of autumn, have dropt into the grave; and after the fall of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies, the Cæsars and caliphs, the same Pyramids stand erect and unshaken above the floods of the Nile. A complex figure of various and minute parts is more accessible to injury and decay; and the silent lapse of time is often accelerated by hurricanes and earthquakes, by fires and inundations. The air and earth have doubtless been shaken, and the lofty turrets of Rome have tottered from their foundations, but the seven hills do not appear to be placed on the great cavities of the globe; nor has the city in any age been exposed to the convulsions of nature which in the climate of Antioch, Lisbon, or Lima, have crumbled in a few moments the works of ages in the dust. Fire is the most powerful agent of life and death.... [248]

From her situation, Rome is exposed to the danger of frequent inundations. Without excepting the Tiber, the rivers that descend from either side of the Apennine have a short and irregular course; a shallow stream in the summer heats; an impetuous torrent when it is swelled in the spring or winter by the fall of rain and the melting of the snows. When the current is repelled from the sea by adverse winds, when the ordinary bed is [249] inadequate to the weight of waters, they rise above the banks and overspread without limits or control the plains and cities of the adjacent country. Soon after the triumph of the first Punic war, the Tiber was increased by unusual rains; and the inundation, surpassing all former measure of time and place, destroyed all the buildings that were situate below the hills of Rome. According to the variety of ground, the same mischief was produced by different means; and the edifices were either swept away by the sudden impulse, or dissolved and undermined by the long continuance of the flood. Under the reign of Augustus the same calamity was renewed: the lawless river overturned the palaces and temples on its banks; and after the labors of the Emperor in cleansing and widening the bed that was incumbered with ruins, the vigilance of his successors was exercised by similar dangers and designs. The project of diverting into new channels the Tiber itself, or some of the dependent streams, was long opposed by superstition and local interests; nor did the use compensate the toil and costs of the tardy and imperfect execution. The servitude of rivers is the noblest and most important victory which man has obtained over the licentiousness of nature; and if such were the ravages of the Tiber under a firm and active government, what could oppose, or who can enumerate, the injuries of the city after the fall of the Western Empire? A remedy was at length produced by the evil itself: the accumulation of rubbish and the earth that has been washed down from the hills is supposed to have elevated the plain of Rome fourteen or fifteen feet [250] perhaps above the ancient level: and the modern city is less accessible to the attacks of the river.

II. The crowd of writers of every nation who impute the destruction of the Roman monuments to the Goths and the Christians, have neglected to inquire how far they were animated by a hostile principle, and how far they possest the means and the leisure to satiate their enmity. In the preceding volumes of this history I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion; and I can only resume in a few words their real or imaginary connection with the ruin of ancient Rome. Our fancy may create or adopt a pleasing romance: that the Goths and Vandals sallied from Scandinavia, ardent to avenge the flight of Odin, to break the chains and to chastise the oppressors of mankind; that they wished

to burn the records of classic literature, and to found their national architecture on the broken members of the Tuscan and Corinthian orders. But in simple truth, the Northern conquerors were neither sufficiently savage nor sufficiently refined to entertain such aspiring ideas of destruction and revenge. The shepherds of Scythia and Germany had been educated in the armies of the empire, whose discipline they acquired and whose weakness they invaded; with the familiar use of the Latin tongue, they had learned to reverence the name and titles of Rome; and tho incapable of emulating, they were more inclined to admire than to abolish the arts and studies of a brighter period.

In the transient possession of a rich and unresisting capital, the soldiers of Alaric and [251]
Genseric were stimulated by the passions of a victorious army; amidst the wanton indulgence of lust or cruelty, portable wealth was the object of their search; nor could they derive either pride or pleasure from the unprofitable reflection that they had battered to the ground the works of the consuls and Cæsars. Their moments were indeed precious: the Goths evacuated Rome on the sixth, the Vandals on the fifteenth day, and tho it be far more difficult to build than to destroy, their hasty assault would have made a slight impression on the solid piles of antiquity. We may remember that both Alaric and Genseric affected to spare the buildings of the city; that they subsisted in strength and beauty under the auspicious government of Theodoric; and that the momentary resentment of Totila was disarmed by his own temper and the advice of his friends and enemies. From these innocent Barbarians the reproach may be transferred to the Catholics of Rome. The statues, altars, and houses of the demons were an abomination in their eyes; and in the absolute command of the city, they might labor with zeal and perseverance to erase the idolatry of their ancestors. The demolition of the temples in the East affords to *them* an example of conduct, and to *us* an argument of belief; and it is probable that a portion of guilt or merit may be imputed with justice to the Roman proselytes. Yet their abhorrence was confined to the monuments of heathen superstition; and the civil structures that were dedicated to the business or pleasure of society might be preserved without injury or scandal. The change of religion was accomplished not by a [252]
popular tumult, but by the decrees of the emperors, of the Senate, and of time. Of the Christian hierarchy, the bishops of Rome were commonly the most prudent and least fanatic; nor can any positive charge be opposed to the meritorious act of saving and converting the majestic structure of the Pantheon.

III. The value of any object that supplies the wants or pleasures of mankind is compounded of its substance and its form, of the materials and the manufacture. Its price must depend on the number of persons by whom it may be acquired and used; on the extent of the market; and consequently on the ease or difficulty of remote exportation according to the nature of the commodity, its local situation, and the temporary circumstances of the world. The Barbarian conquerors of Rome usurped in a moment the toil and treasure of successive ages; but except the luxuries of immediate consumption, they must view without desire all that could not be removed from the city in the Gothic wagons or the fleet of the Vandals. Gold and silver were the first objects of their avarice; as in every country, and in the smallest compass, they represent the most ample command of the industry and possessions of mankind. A vase or a statue of those precious metals might tempt the vanity of some Barbarian chief; but the grosser multitude, regardless of the form, was tenacious only of the substance, and the melted ingots might be readily divided and stamped into the current coin of the empire. The less active or less fortunate robbers were reduced to the baser plunder of brass, lead, iron, and copper: whatever had [253]
escaped the Goths and Vandals was pillaged by the Greek tyrants; and the Emperor Constans in his rapacious visit stript the bronze tiles from the roof of the Pantheon.

The edifices of Rome might be considered as a vast and various mine: the first labor of extracting the materials was already performed; the metals were purified and cast; the marbles were hewn and polished; and after foreign and domestic rapine had been satiated, the remains of the city, could a purchaser have been found, were still venal. The monuments of antiquity had been left naked of their precious ornaments; but the Romans would demolish with their own hands the arches and walls, if the hope of profit could surpass the cost of the labor and exportation. If Charlemagne had fixt in Italy the seat of

the Western Empire, his genius would have aspired to restore, rather than to violate, the works of the Cæsars: but policy confined the French monarch to the forests of Germany; his taste could be gratified only by destruction; and the new palace of Aix-la-Chapelle was decorated with the marbles of Ravenna and Rome. Five hundred years after Charlemagne, a king of Sicily, Robert—the wisest and most liberal sovereign of the age—was supplied with the same materials by the easy navigation of the Tiber and the sea; and Petrarch sighs an indignant complaint that the ancient capital of the world should adorn from her own bowels the slothful luxury of Naples.

But these examples of plunder or purchase were rare in the darker ages; and the Romans, [254]
alone and unenvied, might have applied to their private or public use the remaining structures of antiquity, if in their present form and situation they had not been useless in a great measure to the city and its inhabitants. The walls still described the old circumference, but the city had descended from the seven hills into the Campus Martius; and some of the noblest monuments which had braved the injuries of time were left in a desert, far remote from the habitations of mankind....

IV. I have reserved for the last the most potent and forcible cause of destruction, the domestic hostilities of the Romans themselves. Under the dominion of the Greek and French emperors, the peace of the city was disturbed by accidental tho frequent seditions: it is from the decline of the latter, from the beginning of the tenth century, that we may date the licentiousness of private war, which violated with impunity the laws of the Code and the gospel, without respecting the majesty of the absent sovereign or the presence and person of the vicar of Christ.

In a dark period of five hundred years, Rome was perpetually afflicted by the sanguinary quarrels of the nobles and the people, the Guelphs and Ghibelines, the Colonna and Ursini; and if much has escaped the knowledge and much is unworthy of the notice, of history, I have exposed in the two preceding chapters the causes and effects of the public disorders. At such a time, when every quarrel was decided by the sword and none could trust their lives or properties to the impotence of law, the powerful citizens were armed for safety, or offense, against the domestic enemies whom they feared or hated. Except [255]
Venice alone, the same dangers and designs were common to all the free republics of Italy; and the nobles usurped the prerogative of fortifying their houses and erecting strong towers that were capable of resisting a sudden attack. The cities were filled with these hostile edifices; and the example of Lucca, which contained three hundred towers, her law which confined their height to the measure of four-score feet, may be extended with suitable latitude to the more opulent and populous states. The first step of the senator Brancaleone in the establishment of peace and justice, was to demolish (as we have already seen) one hundred and forty of the towers of Rome; and in the last days of anarchy and discord, as late as the reign of Martin the Fifth, forty-four still stood in one of the thirteen or fourteen regions of the city.

To this mischievous purpose the remains of antiquity were most readily adapted: the temples and arches afforded a broad and solid basis for the new structures of brick and stone; and we can name the modern turrets that were raised on the triumphal monuments of Julius Cæsar, Titus, and the Antonines. With some slight alterations, a theater, an amphitheater, a mausoleum, was transformed into a strong and spacious citadel. I need not repeat that the mole of Adrian has assumed the title and form of the castle of St. Angelo; the Septizonium of Severus was capable of standing against a royal army; the sepulcher of Metella has sunk under its outworks; the theaters of Pompey and Marcellus were occupied by the Savelli and Orsini families; and the rough fortress has been [256]
gradually softened to the splendor and elegance of an Italian palace.

The fame of Julius the Second, Leo the Tenth, and Sixtus the Fifth is accompanied by the superior merit of Bramante and Fontana, of Raphael and Michael Angelo; and the same munificence which had been displayed in palaces and temples was directed with equal zeal to revive and emulate the labors of antiquity. Prostrate obelisks were raised from the ground and erected in the most conspicuous places; of the eleven aqueducts of the Cæsars

and consuls, three were restored; the artificial rivers were conducted over a long series of old, or of new arches, to discharge into marble basins a flood of salubrious and refreshing waters: and the spectator, impatient to ascend the steps of St. Peter's, is detained by a column of Egyptian granite, which rises between two lofty and perpetual fountains to the height of one hundred and twenty feet. The map, the description, the monuments of ancient Rome have been elucidated by the diligence of the antiquarian and the student; and the footsteps of heroes, the relics, not of superstition but of empire, are devoutly visited by a new race of pilgrims from the remote and once savage countries of the North.

FOOTNOTES:

[64] From the "Memoirs."

[65] She has now an even greater title to remembrance, as the mother of Madame de Stäel.

[66] From the "Memoirs."

[67] From "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

[68] Palmyra, of which only imposing ruins of the Roman period now remain, was situated on an oasis in a desert east of Syria. Its foundation is ascribed to Solomon. Palmyra had commercial importance as a center of the caravan trade of the East.

[69] A city of Mesopotamia, on the Tigris, twenty miles south-east of Babylon.

[70] The Greek philosopher, author of the famous essay "On Sublimity," who was Zenobia's counselor and the instructor of her children.

[71] From "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Alaric was king of the West Goths. He died in the year Rome was sacked, and was buried with vast treasure in the bed of the river Busento.

[72] From Chapter 50 of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Hosein was a grandson of Mohammed, founder of the faith that bears his name.

[73] Babylonia.

[74] The Roman emperor still retained the title of Cæsar.

[75] Chosroes is better known in our day as Phusrau, one of the kings of Persia.

[76] The reputed founder of the Mohammedan sect called Yezidis.

[77] From the final chapter of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

[78] A Tuscan author and antiquarian, born in 1381, died in 1495; at one time secretary of the papal curia; author of a history of Florence, but chiefly remembered for having recovered works in Roman literature, including eight orations of Cicero.

END OF VOLUME IV.

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