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## HAWTHORNE AND HIS MOSESSES.

BY A VIRGINIAN SPENDING JULY IN VERMONT.

A PAPERED chamber in a fine old farm-house, a mile from any other dwelling, and dipped to the eaves in foliage—surrounded by mountains, old woods, and Indian ponds,—this, surely, is the place to write of Hawthorne. Some charm is in this northern air, for love and duty seem both impelling to the task. A man of a deep and noble nature has seized me in this seclusion. His wild, witch-voice rings through me; or, in softer cadences, I seem to hear it in the songs of the hill-side birds that sing in the larch trees at my window.

Would that all excellent books were foundlings, without father or mother, that so it might be we could glorify them, without including their ostensible authors! Nor would any true man take exception to this; least of all, he who writes, "When the Artist rises high enough to achieve the Beautiful, the symbol by which he makes it perceptible to mortal senses becomes of little value in his eyes, while his spirit possesses itself in the enjoyment of the reality."

But more than this. I know not what would be the right name to put on the title-page of an excellent book; but this I feel, that the names of all fine authors are fictitious ones, far more so than that of Junius; simply standing, as they do, for the mystical, ever-eluding spirit of all beauty, which ubiquitously possesses men of genius. Purely imaginative as this fancy may appear, it nevertheless seems to receive some warranty from the fact, that on a personal interview no great author has ever come up to the idea of his reader. But that dust of which our bodies are composed, how can it fitly express the nobler intelligences among us? With reverence be it spoken, that not even in the case of one deemed more than man, not even in our Saviour, did his visible frame betoken anything of the augustness of the nature within. Else, how could those Jewish eyewitnesses fail to see heaven in his glance!

It is curious how a man may travel along a country road, and yet miss the grandest or sweetest of prospects by reason of an intervening hedge, so like all other hedges, as in no way to hint of the wide landscape beyond. So has it been with me concerning the enchanting landscape in the soul of this Hawthorne, this most excellent Man of Mosses.

His "Old Manse" has been written now four years, but I never read it till a day or two since. I had seen it in the book-stores—heard of it often—even had it recommended to me by a tasteful friend, as a rare, quiet book, perhaps too deserving of popularity to be popular. But there are so many books called "excellent," and so much unpopular merit, that amid the thick stir of other things, the hint of my tasteful friend was disregarded; and for four years the Mosses on the Old Manse never refreshed me with their perennial green. It may be, however, that all this while the book, likewise, was only improving in flavor and body. At any rate, it so chanced that this long procrastination eventuated in a happy result. At breakfast the other day, a mountain girl, a cousin of mine, who for the last two weeks has every morning helped me to strawberries and raspberries, which, like the roses and pearls in the fairy tale, seemed to fall into the saucer from those strawberry-beds, her cheeks—this delightful creature, this charming Cherry says to me—"I see you spend your mornings in the haymow; and yesterday I found there 'Dwight's Travels in New England.' Now I have something far better than that, something more congenial to our summer on these hills. Take these raspberries, and then I will give you some moss." "Moss!" said I. "Yes, and you must take it to the barn with you, and good-by to 'Dwight.'"

With that she left me, and soon returned with a volume, verdantly bound, and garnished with a curious frontispiece in green; nothing less than a fragment of real moss, cunningly pressed to a fly-leaf. "Why, this," said I, spilling my raspberries, "this is the 'Mosses from an Old Manse.'" "Yes," said cousin Cherry, "yes, it is that flowery Hawthorne." "Hawthorne and Mosses," said I, "no more: it is morning: it is July in the country: and I am off for the barn."

Stretched on that new mown clover, the hill-side breeze blowing over me through the wide barn-door, and soothed by the hum of the bees in the meadows around, how magically stole over me this Mossy Man! and how amply, how bountifully, did he redeem that delicious promise to his guests in the Old Manse, of whom it is written—"Others could give them pleasure, or amusement, or instruction—these could be picked up anywhere—but it was for me to give them rest. Rest, in a life of trouble! What better could be done for weary and world-worn spirits? What better could be done for anybody, who came within our magic circle, than to throw the spell of a magic spirit over him?" So all that day, half-buried in the new clover, I watched this Hawthorne's "Assyrian dawn, and Paphian sunset and moonrise, from the summit of our Eastern Hill."

The soft ravishments of the man spun me round about in a web of dreams, and when the book was closed, when the spell was over, this wizard dismissed me with but misty reminiscences, as if I had been dreaming of him."

What a wild moonlight of contemplative humor bathes that Old Manse!—the rich and rare distilment of a spicy and slowly-oozing heart. No rollicking rudeness, no gross fun

fed on fat dinners, and bred in the lees of wine,—but a humor so spiritually gentle, so high, so deep, and yet so richly relishable, that it were hardly inappropriate in an angel. It is the very religion of mirth; for nothing so human but it may be advanced to that. The orchard of the Old Manse seems the visible type of the fine mind that has described it—those twisted and contorted old trees, "that stretch out their crooked branches, and take such hold of the imagination, that we remember them as humorists and odd-fellows." And then, as surrounded by these grotesque forms, and hushed in the noon-day repose of this Hawthorne's spell, how aptly might the still fall of his ruddy thoughts into your soul be symbolized by "the thump of a great apple, in the stillest afternoon, falling without a breath of wind, from the mere necessity of perfect ripeness!" For no less ripe than ruddy are the apples of the thoughts and fancies in this sweet Man of Mosses—

"Buds and Bird-voices"—

What a delicious thing is that! "Will the world ever be so decayed, that Spring may not renew its greenness?" And the "Fire-Worship." Was ever the hearth so glorified into an altar before? The mere title of that piece is better than any common work in fifty folio volumes. How exquisite is this—"Nor did it lessen the charm of his soft, familiar courtesy and helpfulness, that the mighty spirit, were opportunity offered him, would run riot through the peaceful house, wrap its inmates in his terrible embrace, and leave nothing of them save their whitened bones. This possibility of mad destruction only made his domestic kindness the more beautiful and touching. It was so sweet of him, being endowed with such power, to dwell, day after day, and one long, lonesome night after another, on the dusky hearth, only now and then betraying his wild nature, by thrusting his red tongue out of the chimney-top! True, he had done much mischief in the world, and was pretty certain to do more, but his warm heart atoned for all; He was kindly to the race of man."

But he has still other apples, not quite so ruddy, though full as ripe;—apples, that have been left to wither on the tree, after the pleasant autumn gathering is past. The sketch of "The Old Apple-Dealer" is conceived in the subtlest spirit of sadness; he whose "subdued and nerveless boyhood prefigured his abortive prime, which, likewise, contained within itself the prophecy and image of his lean and torpid age." Such touches as are in this piece cannot proceed from any common heart. They argue such a depth of tenderness, such a boundless sympathy with all forms of being, such an omnipresent love, that we must needs say that this Hawthorne is here almost alone in his generation,—at least, in the artistic manifestation of these things. Still more. Such touches as these,—and many, very many similar ones, all through his chapters—furnish clues whereby we enter a little way into the intricate, profound heart where they originated. And we see that suffering, some time or other and in some shape or other,—this only can enable any man to depict it in others. All over him, Hawthorne's

melancholy rests like an Indian-summer, which, though bathing a whole country in one softness, still reveals the distinctive hue of every towering hill and each far-winding vale.

But it is the least part of genius that attracts admiration. Where Hawthorne is known, he seems to be deemed a pleasant writer, with a pleasant style,—a sequestered, harmless man, from whom any deep and weighty thing would hardly be anticipated—a man who means no meanings. But there is no man, in whom humor and love, like mountain peaks, soar to such a rapt height as to receive the irradiations of the upper skies;—there is no man in whom humor and love are developed in that high form called genius; no such man can exist without also possessing, as the indispensable complement of these, a great, deep intellect, which drops down into the universe like a plummet. Or, love and humor are only the eyes through which such an intellect views this world. The great beauty in such a mind is but the product of its strength. What, to all readers, can be more charming than the piece entitled “Monsieur du Miroir,” and to a reader at all capable of fully fathoming it, what, at the same time, can possess more mystical depth of meaning?—yes, there he sits and looks at me,—this “shape of mystery,” this “identical Monsieur du Miroir.” “Methinks I should tremble now, were his wizard power of gliding through all impediments in search of me, to place him suddenly before my eyes.”

How profound, nay appalling, is the moral evolved by the Earth’s Holocaust; where—beginning with the hollow follies and affectations of the world,—all vanities and empty theories and forms are, one after another, and by an admirably graduated, growing comprehensiveness, thrown into the allegorical fire, till, at length, nothing is left but the all-engendering heart of man; which remaining still unconsumed, the great conflagration is naught.

Of a piece with this, is the “Intelligence Office,” a wondrous symbolizing of the secret workings in men’s souls. There are other sketches still more charged with ponderous import.

“The Christmas Banquet,” and “The Bosom Serpent,” would be fine subjects for a curious and elaborate analysis, touching the conjectural parts of the mind that produced them. For spite of all the Indian-summer sunlight on the hither side of Hawthorne’s soul, the other side—like the dark half of the physical sphere—is shrouded in a blackness, ten times black. But this darkness but gives more effect to the ever-moving dawn, that for ever advances through it, and circumnavigates his world. Whether Hawthorne has simply availed himself of this mystical blackness as a means to the wondrous effects he makes it to produce in his lights and shades; or whether there really lurks in him, perhaps unknown to himself, a touch of Puritanic gloom,—this, I cannot altogether tell. Certain it is, however, that this great power of blackness in him derives its force from its appeals to that Calvinistic sense of Innate Depravity and Original Sin, from whose visitations, in some shape or other, no deeply thinking mind is always and wholly free. For, in certain moods, no man can weigh this world without throwing in something, somehow like Original Sin, to strike the uneven balance. At all events, perhaps no writer has ever wielded this terrific thought with greater terror than this same harmless Hawthorne. Still more: this black conceit pervades him through

and through. You may be witched by his sunlight,—transported by the bright gildings in the skies he builds over you; but there is the blackness of darkness beyond; and even his bright gildings but fringe and play upon the edges of thunder-clouds. In one word, the world is mistaken in this Nathaniel Hawthorne. He himself must often have smiled at its absurd misconception of him. He is immeasurably deeper than the plummets of the mere critic. For it is not the brain that can test such a man; it is only the heart. You cannot come to know greatness by inspecting it; there is no glimpse to be caught of it, except by intuition; you need not ring it, you but touch it, and you find it is gold.

Now, it is that blackness in Hawthorne, of which I have spoken, that so fixes and fascinates me. It may be, nevertheless, that it is too largely developed in him. Perhaps he does not give us a ray of his light for every shade of his dark. But however this may be, this blackness it is that furnishes the infinite obscure of his back-ground,—that background, against which Shakspeare plays his grandest conceits, the things that have made for Shakspeare his loftiest but most circumscribed renown, as the profoundest of thinkers. For by philosophers Shakspeare is not adored as the great man of tragedy and comedy.—“Off with his head; so much for Buckingham!” This sort of rant, interlined by another hand, brings down the house,—those mistaken souls, who dream of Shakspeare as a mere man of Richard-the-Third humps and Macbeth daggers. But it is those deep far-away things in him; those occasional flashings-forth of the intuitive Truth in him; those short, quick probings at the very axis of reality;—these are the things that make Shakspeare, Shakspeare. Through the mouths of the dark characters of Hamlet, Timon, Lear, and Iago, he craftily says, or sometimes insinuates the things which we feel to be so terribly true, that it were all but madness for any good man, in his own proper character, to utter, or even hint of them. Tormented into desperation, Lear, the frantic king, tears off the mask, and speaks the same madness of vital truth. But, as I before said, it is the least part of genius that attracts admiration. And so, much of the blind, unbridled admiration that has been heaped upon Shakspeare, has been lavished upon the least part of him. And few of his endless commentators and critics seem to have remembered, or even perceived, that the immediate products of a great mind are not so great as that undeveloped and sometimes undevelopable yet dimly-discernible greatness, to which those immediate products are but the infallible indicies. In Shakspeare’s tomb lies infinitely more than Shakspeare ever wrote. And if I magnify Shakspeare, it is not so much for what he did do as for what he did not do, or refrained from doing. For in this world of lies, Truth is forced to fly like a scared white doe in the woodlands; and only by cunning glimpses will she reveal herself, as in Shakspeare and other masters of the great Art of Telling the Truth,—even though it be covertly and by snatches.

But if this view of the all-popular Shakspeare be seldom taken by his readers, and if very few who extol him have ever read him deeply, or perhaps, only have seen him on the tricky stage (which alone made, and is still making him his mere mob renown)—if few men have time, or patience, or palate, for the spiritual truth as it is in that great genius;—it is then no matter of surprise, that in a contemporaneous age, Nathaniel Hawthorne is a

man as yet almost utterly mistaken among men. Here and there, in some quiet armchair in the noisy town, or some deep nook among the noiseless mountains, he may be appreciated for something of what he is. But unlike Shakspeare, who was forced to the contrary course by circumstances, Hawthorne (either from simple disinclination, or else from inaptitude) refrains from all the popularizing noise and show of broad farce and blood-besmeared tragedy; content with the still, rich utterance of a great intellect in repose, and which sends few thoughts into circulation, except they be arterialized at his large warm lungs, and expanded in his honest heart.

Nor need you fix upon that blackness in him, if it suit you not. Nor, indeed, will all readers discern it; for it is, mostly, insinuated to those who may best understand it, and account for it; it is not obtruded upon every one alike.

Some may start to read of Shakspeare and Hawthorne on the same page. They may say, that if an illustration were needed, a lesser light might have sufficed to elucidate this Hawthorne, this small man of yesterday. But I am not willingly one of those who, as touching Shakspeare at least, exemplify the maxim of Rochefoucault, that “we exalt the reputation of some, in order to depress that of others”—who, to teach all noble-souled aspirants that there is no hope for them, pronounce Shakspeare absolutely unapproachable. But Shakspeare has been approached. There are minds that have gone as far as Shakspeare into the universe. And hardly a mortal man, who, at some time or other, has not felt as great thoughts in him as any you will find in Hamlet. We must not inferentially malign mankind for the sake of any one man, whoever he may be. This is too cheap a purchase of contentment for conscious mediocrity to make. Besides, this absolute and unconditional adoration of Shakspeare has grown to be a part of our Anglo-Saxon superstitions. The Thirty-Nine articles are now Forty. Intolerance has come to exist in this matter. You must believe in Shakspeare’s unapproachability, or quit the country. But what sort of a belief is this for an American, a man who is bound to carry republican progressiveness into Literature as well as into Life? Believe me, my friends, that men, not very much inferior to Shakspeare, are this day being born on the banks of the Ohio. And the day will come when you shall say, Who reads a book by an Englishman that is a modern? The great mistake seems to be, that even with those Americans who look forward to the coming of a great literary genius among us, they somehow fancy he will come in the costume of Queen Elizabeth’s day; be a writer of dramas founded upon old English history or the tales of Boccaceo. Whereas, great geniuses are parts of the times, they themselves are the times, and possess a correspondent coloring. It is of a piece with the Jews, who, while their Shiloh was meekly walking in their streets, were still praying for his magnificent coming; looking for him in a chariot, who was already among them on an ass. Nor must we forget that, in his own lifetime, Shakspeare was not Shakspeare, but only Master William Shakspeare of the shrewd, thriving, business firm of Condell, Shakspeare & Co., proprietors of the Globe Theatre in London; and by a courtly author, of the name of Chettle, was looked at as an “upstart crow,” beautified “with other birds’ feathers.” For, mark it well, imitation is often the first charge brought against real originality. Why this is so, there is not space

to set forth here. You must have plenty of sea-room to tell the Truth in; especially when it seems to have an aspect of newness, as America did in 1492, though it was then just as old, and perhaps older than Asia, only those sagacious philosophers, the common sailors, had never seen it before, swearing it was all water and moonshine there.

(To be concluded next week.)

#### REVIEWS.

##### SOCIALISM AND THE NEW CHRISTIANITY.

*Hints toward Reforms*, in Lectures, Addresses, and other writings. By Horace Greeley.

[SECOND PAPER.]

In previous remarks credit was given to the author of the "Hints" for moral and conservative instincts to which others of the same school are in a great measure strangers. And yet this very trait, however honorable to him personally, is often the cause of most inconsistent and illogical reasoning. It is continually leading to a system of checks and balances, and to the introduction of caveats of which the more thorough reformers feel no need. The French Socialists have far more liberty in this respect than some of their American brethren. The latter cannot avoid occasionally rendering homage to the ideas and language of conservatism. Talk as they will about the "whining and pinning upholder of old abuses," they are conscious in their very souls that the description is a falsehood and a caricature. They cannot help feeling, too, that unmixed radicalism is essentially ordinary and commonplace. It might, indeed, be none the less worthy of support, simply on that account; but then, in its plain and homely aspect, it does not come quite up to their ideas of the transcendent or the profound. It is something too easy of comprehension—not from its beautiful simplicity, but from the manifest one-sidedness of all its ideas. Its sheer animalism has so little to do with any of the higher qualities of the head or the heart,—it has so little recognition of those necessarily varied relations out of which alone can grow not only a political science for the intellect, but also those social virtues which are essential to any right discipline of the affections,—that they are often driven to assume something of a higher and more conserving order. It requires so little, either of mind or soul, to find fault with every present institution of society, and to repeat over the same stereotyped phrases respecting progress and destinies, that they sometimes get ashamed of their naked position, and would fain disguise it now and then by an affectation of conservative language. Hence it is that those who would be thought their best writers, can seldom conclude one of their lectures on radical reform without some compliment to what they would call a "just conservatism," an expression almost as definite and significant as the familiar phrase, a "judicious tariff." They would assume to be "mediators, interpreters, reconcilers." Hence they would be conservatives too, but after a fashion of their own. They are high-souled eclectics. They have found out the before unknown *via media*. They have, at last, elaborated a most profound distinction—something like the famous transcendental *at-one-ment* in theology—and which is to reconcile all seemingly opposite polarities. They are conservative of all that is good; they are destruetives in respect to all that is evil. They are for the progress of all that is right; they would oppose the advance of all that is wrong. Very

safe positions truly! The world had never thought of this before. But may we not respectfully ask those who are fond of talking in this very definite strain,—Did they ever know a man who would not subscribe to the doctrine in either aspect of it? Did they ever know a man who would not profess, and with some degree of that poor virtue we call sincerity, to be in favor of the melioration of humanity, the conservation of good, and the destruction of evil; that is, according to his "*understanding of the constitution*" of things?

The objection, then, to this kind of language is, that it does not bring us a hair's-breadth nearer to any truth than we were before. The great question—is what really good? what is evil? what are the means to attain the one and avoid the other? what is happiness? what is *well-being*? how far are these identical, and in what respects do they differ?—all these most important and fundamental queries have no light whatever cast upon them; and, what is stranger still, our judicious conservatives, or more philosophical radicals, never seem in the least stumbled by the thought, that unless these ideas are first settled or referred to some fixed and supreme standard, nothing is or can be settled: all else on the subject of society, or reform, or progress, is but beating the air. It is astonishing how many pages may be occupied with a grandiloquent haranguing on these topics: all, too, in very good English; all in what seems to be the most appropriate and nervous diction, on which no one can fix the charge of absolute nonsense; and sometimes even coming up to what is called the best style of *fine writing*, and yet no real progress in thought, or speculative truth, or practical wisdom. Page after page the reader has been entertained, interested, and, at times, enraptured: yet, somehow, when he soberly turns himself to gather up the results, he finds he has retained nothing; he has learned nothing but what he and every other man well knew before, namely, that this is a very strange world, very full of evil, and that if men would everywhere act disinterestedly, and get above their own earthiness and sensuality, in other words, above themselves, and "elevate their higher natures," and try to meliorate the condition of the world, still condition would certainly be very much meliorated. In respect, however, to the nature of the good and the evil and the best kinds of melioration, and the best means of effecting it, he would get more *definite*, if not more "*expansive*" ideas from one chapter of the Bible, or from one head of some old sermon, or even from one page of Bunyan's "Pilgrim," or "Holy War," than from all the lectures on the ideal of humanity that have appeared since the days of Rousseau.

Such affectation of a sort of semi-conservative language may, in this way, seem wonderfully liberal: it may appear to come from some very elevated position, and yet the writer or speaker who employs it may, after all, find nothing in society worth conserving. Still he is a conservative. He claims, forsooth, to be your *real* conservative, in distinction from that spurious sort who have a love of evil, especially old evil, *per se*. He is peculiar, very peculiar in this, that he is for conserving all that is good and right; but this good, if we may take his account of things, nowhere exists. The Church is full of hypocrisy and selfishness: it has lost sight of its mission; it has no faith! no generous self-trust in humanity. And yet this humanity, too, in some other parts of our reformer's picture you will find presented in darker colors than ever came from the gloomy imagination of the sternest theologian. No

men so delight, at times, in slandering and blackening our race as your social regenerators, especially one of the sentimental class. The theologian of the old school maintains the doctrine of *total depravity* in a sober and scriptural sense; the philosophical reformer professes to abhor the term as a gross libel on our humanity, and yet goes far beyond him in the pictures he delights to draw of human wickedness. With the former it is a term of *extent*; with the latter, the idea (however much he may reject the expression) is one of *intensity*. By the theologian, the much misunderstood and much abused phrase is employed in opposition to *partial*, to denote the fact of *universality*, or of depravity in *all* men, and, to some degree, in *every* natural act of *every* man. It spreads over all our nature, it affects all our lives; it tinges more or less all our thoughts and emotions, or every act and exercise of the soul.

We are not evil one day and holy the next, as some of "the Pelagians do vainly talk," but *totally* depraved; that is, *every* thing is imperfect, everything, when compared with the divine law of perfect purity, is wrong, is impure, is sinful, however innocent and even commendable it might appear when judged by a lower human standard. "We are all gone astray like lost sheep"—"we are all of us very far gone from original righteousness, and of *our own natures* inclined to evil." But this old doctrine of total depravity does not make out man to be a fiend. Hence, when rightly viewed, it becomes, by its very universality, the most overflowing fountain of all humane and kindly feelings,—the great and available argument for universal brotherhood, because its hold upon the human soul is a *sympathy* (*συμπάθεια*) of nature, of condition, of a common fall, of a common danger, and a common salvation, instead of being that cold and arid, yet inflating thing, an abstract philanthropy. Our reformer, however, loves to contemplate human depravity only in one direction, and then rather in regard to *intensity* than *extent*. When he forgets his consistency and humanity in his zeal for denunciation and caricature, the pictures he draws are likenesses, not of men (not even the worst men), but of devils. Augustine, and Calvin, and Baxter, make no approach in this respect to Sue and Dickens. Nothing, too, can be more hideously distorted. Our liberal philanthropist pronounces the severest and most hopeless of condemnations on human nature, because he always finds the more intense depravity just in those circumstances where we would have expected, and rightfully expected, the most efficient influences for good. The church is full of it; the family, the home, is but a school of corruption (see Hints, pp. 60, 61); the legislator, the magistrate, the judge on the sacred seat of justice; all are depraved, exceedingly depraved, selfish, *rindictive*, whilst arraigned criminals are comparatively pure—they are the victims of false circumstances, they are affected by a depravity which is not *in* them but *out* of them; that is, outside of their souls; or, in other words, in the conformation of their skulls, or something still more exterior, in the nature of things and of society around them.

The book of Hints, for example, has been commended as abounding in hope for humanity; and yet we know of but five volumes of the size from which we could find more material for an argument to prove the utter hopelessness of all attempts at substantial human improvement. The only rational conclusion from premises most abundantly furnished in this book would be, that humanity, even in its

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HAWTHORNE AND HIS MOSES. By a Virginian spending July in Vermont. (Concluded.)

REVIEWS.—THE WORKS OF MONTAIGNE.

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DE QUINCEY'S CONFESSIONS AND SUSPIRIA

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SEVERAL DAYS IN BERKSHIRE,  
(From an "Esteemed Correspondent.")

## INTRODUCTORY.

FEELING the weight of brick and mortar somewhat oppressively, at the high point of the thermometer the other day, we determined, on a sudden thought, to reverse the proceedings of Sinbad, and throwing off the load, to become in our own proper person the Young Man of the Mountains of Berkshire. The path to such an achievement is not difficult: step in upon a little platform in Canal Street, and off upon a little platform at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and the thing is done. But a word or two by the way. We must certainly take an observation of New York City as we pass through,—a compliment due, from our constant citizenship. It lies and grows, with house on house, square on square, steeple on steeple, almost as fast as rail cars can run. The speed of its spread is more like that of the shadow of a summer cloud than the slow reality of stone and timber. No stoppages being allowed to the New Haven train, we take a long slide, like a gigantic skater, thirty miles away to Greenwich, the blossomy bushes by the roadside flying past like the ocean-foam. Farm houses and red-roofed granaries are mere toys, and we are compelled to shut our eyes to escape the belief that we have let go of all earthly fastenings, and are launched upon infinite space, without an anchor. The country through which we glide is warm and sunny: cattle are in the meadows; dogs and poultry about the doors. The air strengthens: the outline of objects is somewhat harder and bolder; the land-scape has a severe look; there are no dogs to be seen by the garden-gates, no flocks nor herds in the wayside fields. We are travelling northward, and with a glorious look-out water-ward at Bridgeport, we skim across the line, and shoot into the valley of the Housatonic. Through the car windows we have a rapid succession of cabinet pictures, with woodland, meadow, fringed streams, and blue mountain-sides. The stations are called rapidly: one only leaves a durable recollection in a half huckleberry pie, devoured with the panting of the locomotive to be away. Night comes on, and we know that we are in the region of the mountain-pine, by the shower of cinders which tumbles from the smoke-pipe, and dances about the wake of the train like so many of Mother Carey's chickens (suggests an ocean friend) about the track of a ship on the high

seas. We meet a tall gentleman in the ears, whom we remember singing the praises of this Berkshire Valley, in a New York omnibus on a hot day, some half a dozen years ago. He is determined we shall see it aright, and at once arranges an admirable excursion in the neighborhood of the Mountain of the Monument, at an early day. A mysterious feeling, that we are travelling among mountains and along bushy streams by night, creeps upon us. We are constantly straining our eyes, under learned direction of the finger, to catch the top of a distant celebrity, or seize upon a splendid view; but to our fatigued city vision, these glories are utterly unattainable, and we sit calmly till Pittsfield is cried, and we are at our chosen terminus.

We tarry over night at the Berkshire Hotel—pay our charges, press-men though we are, like honest men, in the morning, and with an after-breakfast stroll along a village road, our welcomer in Berkshire, a retired Sea-Dog, New Neptune by name, comes down from the mountains, a mile or two away, and trots us up to our Lodgment at a square, old Country House, where we propose to sojourn for a week. It is not necessary to say much of this tenement, except that it stands like a broad-brimmed patriarchal old gentleman in the very heart of the hills, calmly surveying a wide horizon, in the nature of a panorama, "got up" for his especial delight and contemplation. Old Broad-Hall is a glorious fellow, and we could chant his claims and enjoyments through a long summer day—the Benevolence, Beauty, Worth, Wit, Genius—to say nothing of the ancient Family Portraits and a small bottle of tea (reserved by an ancestor of the house) from the dumpage in Boston Harbor. There are fairies, too, in that mountain—say what you will of cold New England, void of imagination—one at least; genuine as any in the old story-books—for we were scarcely arrived, and realizing as we stand forth for a comprehensive view of the region, that it was here that Bryant wrote down his desire as one

"Whose part, in all the pomp that fills  
The circuit of the summer hills—  
Is—that his grave is green;"

when Fairy Belt, the sorceress of the scene, whirled us away in well-provided carriages for an afternoon excursion to Pontiac Lake, some seven miles westward—a gallant ride—over hill and down dale—in the course of which Fairy Belt was on tip-toe on the country-wagon seat at least forty times, calling the attention of us in the rearward coach to all sorts of landscapes, gorges, rills, rivulets, pond-views—and Berkshire heavens without number hid away in the distance. And now we begin to observe that all the roads in that region, in their variety and winding ease, are laid out expressly for pleasure-travel—and not for the ordinary freightage of truck and produce—an infinite change and number of byways and sequestered paths. We have seen sloops, ships, steam-boats, launched in our time—but of all extraordinary launches since Noah's Ark, the embarkation of a fishing-boat on West Lake, hard-by, with the Lady of Kentucky at the helm, was the queerest. The very fish lurking below couldn't bite for laughing in their sleeves. Back to Broad-

Hall: a calm night's rest: a Sunday of delicious beauty, in which we dream all day long of New York, as some ancient and passed-away nightmare—lying under trees—lounging in the door-way—gossiping—and coming through this delightful new experience of country-life, we reach Monday morning—the day appointed for the Mountain of the Monument: a day, as the reader shall see, memorable among all the days of the calendar, but we must pause here for breath, and take a fresh start.

## HAWTHORNE AND HIS MOSES.

BY A VIRGINIAN SPENDING JULY IN VERMONT.

[Concluded from the last number.]

Now I do not say that Nathaniel of Salem is a greater than William of Avon, or as great. But the difference between the two men is by no means immeasurable. Not a very great deal more, and Nathaniel were verily William.

This, too, I mean, that if Shakespeare has not been equalled, give the world time, and he is sure to be surpassed, in one hemisphere or the other. Nor will it at all do to say, that the world is getting grey and grizzled now, and has lost that fresh charm which she wore of old, and by virtue of which the great poets of past times made themselves what we esteem them to be. Not so. The world is as young to-day as when it was created; and this Vermont morning dew is as wet to my feet, as Eden's dew to Adam's. Nor has nature been all over ransacked by our progenitors, so that no new charms and mysteries remain for this latter generation to find. Far from it. The trillith part has not yet been said; and all that has been said, but multiplies the avenues to what remains to be said. It is not so much paucity as superabundance of material that seems to incapacitate modern authors.

Let America, then, prize and cherish her writers; yea, let her glorify them. They are not so many in number as to exhaust her good-will. And while she has good kith and kin of her own, to take to her bosom, let her not lavish her embraces upon the household of an alien. For believe it or not, England, after all, is in many things an alien to us. China has more bonds of real love for us than she. But even were there no strong literary individualities among us, as there are some dozens at least, nevertheless, let America first praise mediocrities even, in her own children, before she praises (for everywhere, merit demands acknowledgment from every one) the best excellence in the children of any other land. Let her own authors, I say, have the priority of appreciation. I was much pleased with a hot-headed Carolina cousin of mine, who once said,—"If there were no other American to stand by, in literature, why, then, I would stand by Pop Emmons and his 'Frederiad,' and till a better epic came along, swear it was not very far behind the Iliad." Take away the words, and in spirit he was sound.

Not that American genius needs patronage in order to expand. For that explosive sort of stuff will expand though screwed up in a vice, and burst it, though it were triple steel. It is for the nation's sake, and not for her authors' sake, that I would have America be heedful of the increasing greatness among her

writers. For how great the shame, if other nations should be before her, in crowning her heroes of the pen! But this is almost the case now. American authors have received more just and discriminating praise (however loftily and ridiculously given, in certain cases) even from some Englishmen, than from their own countrymen. There are hardly five critics in America; and several of them are asleep. As for patronage, it is the American author who now patronizes his country, and not his country him. And if at times some among them appeal to the people for more recognition, it is not always with selfish motives, but patriotic ones.

It is true, that but few of them as yet have evinced that decided originality which merits great praise. But that graceful writer, who perhaps of all Americans has received the most plaudits from his own country for his productions,—that very popular and amiable writer, however good and self-reliant in many things, perhaps owes his chief reputation to the self-acknowledged imitation of a foreign model, and to the studied avoidance of all topics but smooth ones. But it is better to fail in originality, than to succeed in imitation. He who has never failed somewhere, that man cannot be great. Failure is the true test of greatness. And if it be said, that continual success is a proof that a man wisely knows his powers,—it is only to be added, that, in that case, he knows them to be small. Let us believe it, then, once for all, that there is no hope for us in these smooth, pleasing writers that know their powers. Without malice, but to speak the plain fact, they but furnish an appendix to Goldsmith, and other English authors. And we want no American Goldsmiths: nay, we want no American Miltos. It were the vilest thing you could say of a true American author, that he were an American Tompkins. Call him an American and have done, for you cannot say a nobler thing of him. But it is not meant that all American writers should studiously cleave to nationality in their writings; only this, no American writer should write like an Englishman or a Frenchman; let him write like a man, for then he will be sure to write like an American. Let us away with this leaven of literary flunkeyism towards England. If either must play the flunkey in this thing, let England do it, not us. While we are rapidly preparing for that political supremacy among the nations which prophetically awaits us at the close of the present century, in a literary point of view, we are deplorably unprepared for it; and we seem studious to remain so. Hitherto, reasons might have existed why this should be; but no good reason exists now. And all that is requisite to amendment in this matter, is simply this: that while fully acknowledging all excellence everywhere, we should refrain from unduly lauding foreign writers, and, at the same time, duly recognise the meritorious writers that are our own;—those writers who breathe that unshackled, democratic spirit of Christianity in all things, which now takes the practical lead in this world, though at the same time led by ourselves—us Americans. Let us boldly contention all imitation, though it comes to us graceful and fragrant as the morning; and foster all originality, though at first it be crabbed and ugly as our own pine knots. And if any of our authors fail, or seem to fail, then, in the words of my Carolina cousin, let us clap him on the shoulder, and back him against all Europe for his second round. The truth is, that in one point of view, this matter of a national literature has come to such a pass with us, that in some sense we must turn bul-

lies, else the day is lost, or superiority so far beyond us, that we can hardly say it will ever be ours.

And now, my countrymen, as an excellent author of your own flesh and blood,—an imitating, and, perhaps, in his way, an imitable man—whom better can I commend to you, in the first place, than Nathaniel Hawthorne. He is one of the new, and far better generation of your writers. The smell of your beeches and hemlocks is upon him; your own broad prairies are in his soul; and if you travel away inland into his deep and noble nature, you will hear the far roar of his Niagara. Give not over to future generations the glad duty of acknowledging him for what he is. Take that joy to yourself, in your own generation; and so shall he feel those grateful impulses on him, that may possibly prompt him to the full flower of some still greater achievement in your eyes. And by confessing him you thereby confess others; you brace the whole brotherhood. For genius, all over the world, stands hand in hand, and one shock of recognition runs the whole circle round.

In treating of Hawthorne, or rather of Hawthorne in his writings (for I never saw the man; and in the chances of a quiet plantation life, remote from his haunts, perhaps never shall): in treating of his works, I say, I have thus far omitted all mention of his "Twice told Tales," and "Scarlet Letter." Both are excellent, but full of such manifold, strange, and diffusive beauties, that time would all but fail me to point the half of them out. But there are things in those two books, which, had they been written in England a century ago, Nathaniel Hawthorne had utterly displaced many of the bright names we now revere on authority. But I am content to leave Hawthorne to himself, and to the infallible finding of posterity; and however great may be the praise I have bestowed upon him, I feel that in so doing I have more served and honored myself, than him. For, at bottom, great excellence is praise enough to itself; but the feeling of a sincere and appreciative love and admiration towards it, this is relieved by utterance; and warm, honest praise, ever leaves a pleasant flavor in the mouth; and it is an honorable thing to confess to what is honorable in others.

But I cannot leave my subject yet. No man can read a fine author, and relish him to his very bones while he reads, without subsequently fancying to himself some ideal image of the man and his mind. And if you rightly look for it, you will almost always find that the author himself has somewhere furnished you with his own picture. For poets (whether in prose or verse), being painters of nature, are like their brethren of the pencil, the true portrait-painters, who, in the multitude of likenesses to be sketched, do not invariably omit their own; and in all high instances, they paint them without any vanity, though at times with a lurking something that would take several pages to properly define.

I submit it, then, to those best acquainted with the man personally, whether the following is not Nathaniel Hawthorne:—and to himself, whether something involved in it does not express the temper of his mind,—that lasting temper of all true, candid men—a seeker, not a finder yet:—

"A man now entered, in neglected attire, with the aspect of a thinker, but somewhat too rough-hewn and brawny for a scholar. His face was full of sturdy vigor, with some finer and keener attribute beneath; though harsh at first, it was tempered with the glow of a large, warm heart,

which had force enough to heat his powerful intellect through and through. He advanced to the Intelligencer, and looked at him with a glance of such stern sincerity, that perhaps few secrets were beyond its scope.

"I seek for Truth," said he."

Twenty-four hours have elapsed since writing the foregoing. I have just returned from the hay-mow, charged more and more with love and admiration of Hawthorne. For I have just been gleaning through the Mosses, picking up many things here and there that had previously escaped me. And I found that but to glean after this man, is better than to be in the harvest of others. To be frank (though, perhaps, rather foolish) notwithstanding what I wrote yesterday of these Mosses, I had not then culled them all; but had, nevertheless, been sufficiently sensible of the subtle essence in them, as to write as I did. To what infinite height of loving wonder and admiration I may yet be borne, when by repeatedly banqueting on these Mosses I shall have thoroughly incorporated their whole stuff into my being,—that, I cannot tell. But already I feel that this Hawthorne has dropped germinous seeds into my soul. He expands and deepens down, the more I contemplate him; and further and further, shoots his strong New England roots into the hot soil in my Southern soul.

By careful reference to the "Table of Contents," I now find that I have gone through all the sketches; but that when I yesterday wrote, I had not at all read two particular pieces, to which I now desire to call special attention,—"A Select Party," and "Young Goodman Brown." Here, be it said to all those whom this poor fugitive scrawl of mine may tempt to the perusal of the "Mosses," that they must on no account suffer themselves to be trifled with, disappointed, or deceived by the triviality of many of the titles to these sketches. For in more than one instance, the title utterly belies the piece. It is as if rustic demijohns containing the very best and costliest of Falernian and Tokay, were labelled "Cider," "Perry," and "Elder-berry wine." The truth seems to be, that like many other geniuses, this Man of Mosses takes great delight in hoodwinking the world,—at least, with respect to himself. Personally, I doubt not that he rather prefers to be generally esteemed but a so-so sort of author; being willing to reserve the thorough and acute appreciation of what he is, to that party most qualified to judge—that is, to himself. Besides, at the bottom of their natures, men like Hawthorne, in many things, deem the plaudits of the public such strong presumptive evidence of mediocrity in the object of them, that it would in some degree render them doubtful of their own powers, did they hear much and vociferous braying concerning them in the public pastures. True, I have been braying myself (if you please to be witty enough to have it so), but then I claim to be the first that has so brayed in this particular matter; and therefore, while pleading guilty to the charge, still claim all the merit due to originality.

But with whatever motive, playful or profound, Nathaniel Hawthorne has chosen to entitle his pieces in the manner he has, it is certain that some of them are directly calculated to deceive—egregiously deceive, the superficial skimmer of pages. To be downright and candid once more, let me cheerfully say, that two of these titles did dolefully dupe no less an eager-eyed reader than myself; and that, too, after I had been impressed with a sense of the great depth and breadth of this American

man. "Who in the name of thunder" (as the country-people say in this neighborhood), "who in the name of thunder, would anticipate any marvel in a piece entitled 'Young Goodman Brown?'" You would of course suppose that it was a simple little tale, intended as a supplement to "Goody Two Shoes." Whereas, it is deep as Dante; nor can you finish it, without addressing the author in his own words—"It is yours to penetrate, in every bosom, the deep mystery of sin." And with Young Goodman, too, in allegorical pursuit of his Puritan wife, you cry out in your anguish:

"Faith!" shouted Goodman Brown, in a voice of agony and desperation; and the echoes of the forest mocked him, crying—Faith! Faith? as if bewildered wretches were seeking her all through the wilderness."

Now this same piece, entitled "Young Goodman Brown," is one of the two that I had not all read yesterday; and I allude to it now, because it is, in itself, such a strong positive illustration of that blackness in Hawthorne, which I had assumed from the mere occasional shadows of it, as revealed in several of the other sketches. But had I previously perused "Young Goodman Brown," I should have been at no pains to draw the conclusion, which I came to at a time when I was ignorant that the book contained one such direct and unqualified manifestation of it.

The other piece of the two referred to, is entitled "A Select Party," which, in my first simplicity upon originally taking hold of the book, I fancied must treat of some pumpkin-pie party in old Salem, or some chowder-party on Cape Cod. Whereas, by all the gods of Peegee, it is the sweetest and sublimest thing that has been written since Spenser wrote. Nay, there is nothing in Spenser that surpasses it, perhaps nothing that equals it. And the test is this: read any canto in "The Faery Queen," and then read "A Select Party," and decide which pleases you most,—that is, if you are qualified to judge. Do not be frightened at this; for when Spenser was alive, he was thought of very much as Hawthorne is now,—was generally accounted just such a "gentle" harmless man. It may be, that to common eyes, the sublimity of Hawthorne seems lost in his sweetness,—as perhaps in that same "Select Party" of his; for whom he has builded so august a dome of sunset clouds, and served them on richer plate than Belshazzar when he banqueted his lords in Babylon.

But my chief business now, is to point out a particular page in this piece, having reference to an honored guest, who under the name of "The Master Genius," but in the guise of a young man of poor attire, with no insignia of rank or acknowledged eminence, is introduced to the man of Fancy, who is the giver of the feast. Now, the page having reference to this "Master Genius," so happily expresses much of what I yesterday wrote, touching the coming of the literary Shiloh of America, that I cannot but be charmed by the coincidence; especially, when it shows such a parity of ideas, at least in this one point, between a man like Hawthorne and a man like me.

And here, let me throw out another conceit of mine touching this American Shiloh, or "Master Genius," as Hawthorne calls him. May it not be, that this commanding mind has not been, is not, and never will be, individually developed in any one man! And would it, indeed, appear so unreasonable to suppose, that this great fulness and overflowing may be, or may be destined to be, shared by a plurality of men of genius? Surely, to take the

very greatest example on record, Shakspere cannot be regarded as in himself the concretion of all the genius of his time; nor as so immeasurably beyond Marlow, Webster, Ford, Beaumont, Jonson, that these great men can be said to share none of his power? For one, I conceive that there were dramatists in Elizabeth's day, between whom and Shakspere the distance was by no means great. Let any one, hitherto little acquainted with those neglected old authors, for the first time read them thoroughly, or even read Charles Lamb's Specimens of them, and he will be amazed at the wondrous ability of those Anaks of men, and shocked at this renewed example of the fact, that Fortune has more to do with fame than merit,—though, without merit, lasting fame there can be none.

Nevertheless, it would argue too ill of my country were this maxim to hold good concerning Nathaniel Hawthorne, a man, who already, in some few minds, has shed "such a light, as never illuminates the earth save when a great heart burns as the household fire of a grand intellect."

The words are his,—"in the Select Party;" and they are a magnificent setting to a coincident sentiment of my own, but ramblingly expressed yesterday, in reference to himself. Gainsay it who will, as I now write, I am Posterity speaking by proxy—and after times will make it more than good, when I declare, that the Ameriean, who up to the present day has evinced, in literature, the largest brain with the largest heart, that man is Nathaniel Hawthorne. Moreover, that whatever Nathaniel Hawthorne may hereafter write, "The Mosses from an Old Manse" will be ultimately accounted his master-piece. For there is a sure, though a secret sign in some works which proves the culmination of the powers (only the developable ones, however) that produced them. But I am by no means desirous of the glory of a prophet. I pray Heaven that Hawthorne may yet prove me an impostor in this prediction. Especially, as I somehow cling to the strange fancy, that, in all men, hiddenly reside certain wondrous, occult properties—as in some plants and minerals—which by some happy but very rare accident (as bronze was discovered by the melting of the iron and brass at the burning of Corinth) may chance to be called forth here on earth; not entirely waiting for their better discovery in the more congenital, blessed atmosphere of heaven.

Once more—for it is hard to be finite upon an infinite subject, and all subjects are infinite. By some people this entire serawl of mine may be esteemed altogether unnecessary, inasmuch as years ago (they may say) "we found out the rich and rare stuff in this Hawthorne, whom you now parade forth, as if only yourself were the discoverer of this Portuguese diamond in our literature." But even granting all this—and adding to it, the assumption that the books of Hawthorne have sold by the five thousand,—what does that signify? They should be sold by the hundred thousand; and read by the million; and admired by every one who is capable of admiration.

TRUTH considered in itself, and in the effects natural to it, may be conceived as a gentle spring or water-source, warm from the genial earth, and breathing up into the snowdrift that is piled over and around its outlet. It turns the obstacle into its own form and character, and as it makes its way increases its stream. And should it be arrested in its course by a chilling season, it suffers delay, not loss, and waits only for a change in the wind to awaken and again roll onwards.—Coleridge.

## REVIEWS.

### THE WORKS OF MONTAIGNE.

*The Works of Michael De Montaigne; comprising his Essays, Letters, and Journey through Germany and Italy. With Notes from all the Commentators, Biographical and Bibliographical Notices, &c., &c.* By William Hazlitt. Phila.: J. W. Moore.

POPULAR judgment, and the testimony of critics, have long ago given a high and secure place in literature to the writings of Montaigne; and even in this day of books, they deserve to be in every library. Were we to say much in his praise, we should have to repeat the very judicious remarks from Hazlitt, Hallam, and the Retrospective and Westminster Reviews, appended to this very convenient edition. Our own judgment of him would not much differ. A man of wonderfully cheerful and serene temperament was he, little clouded with passion or prejudice, and hence his opinions are safe and healthy. Having a natural horror of vice, and heart unbiased by avarice or ambition, with a judgment seldom at variance with his feelings, loving, as every healthy moral nature will do, the religious system in which he was reared, yet not blind to some of its follies, his own aim was to go through life peacefully and contentedly, and to extract what cheerful philosophy he could for the comfort of others. Indisposed, if not inadequate to profound abstract thought, by a constitutional indolence, his opinions are rather inductions and intuitions than deductions. Hence he is an author good to be studied by minds of a more logical character,—than which, there is no class more likely to be biased away from the truth. For men who work their intellects incessantly are likely to miss many things which come into the minds of those who are more passive under the spontaneous exercise of their faculties. The greatest men whom the world has seen, who are the true guides of the race, are those who have united great discursive power to a calm watchfulness for intuitions, and extreme development of imagination. And while purely logical minds are those who carry science on in its progress towards truth, they are by no means as safe, whence to derive practical principles, as those which are not thus always pursuing one direction, but wait, serenely to drink in the revelations from the outer and inner worlds: if such a mind is united to a right heart, it will interpret itself, nature, and life rightly. Such a mind was Montaigne's; and while he cannot be placed in the rank with those whose appearances have been the true great events in the world's history, who have been implicitly followed by crowds of those who must have somebody, or something, implicitly to follow, he is one whose writings may safely be thrown into the world as full of sound and healthy judgments. Seldom, too, will readers be instructed more entertainingly. They will find an infinity of anecdotes from contemporary, and ancient, and remote sources, illustrating every subject. And those who do not habitually read ancient classic authors, and yet would get a notion with what sort of matter they are filled, will find their curiosity amply satisfied in Montaigne. This is not the least of the merits of the book for many readers,—that they may have without trouble a bird's-eye view of ancient life, philosophy, and manners: for Montaigne, being a pioneer in his country's literature, was familiar with such authors, as few or none are now.

As an illustration of Montaigne's cheerful temperament in life, and of the likelihood of