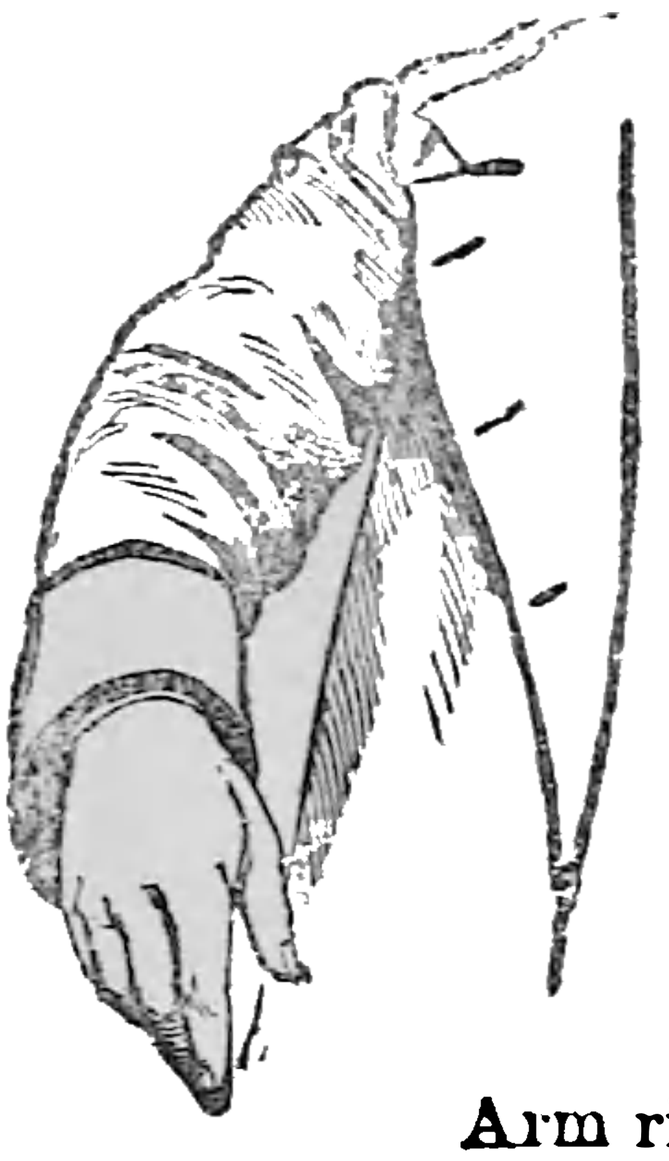


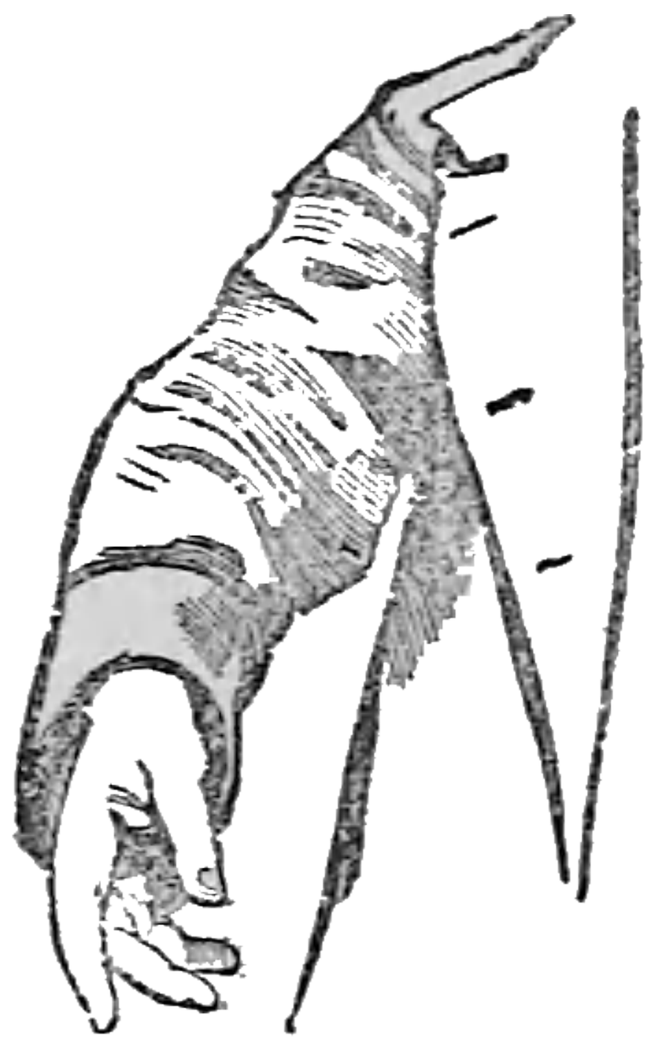
www.forgottenbooks.com

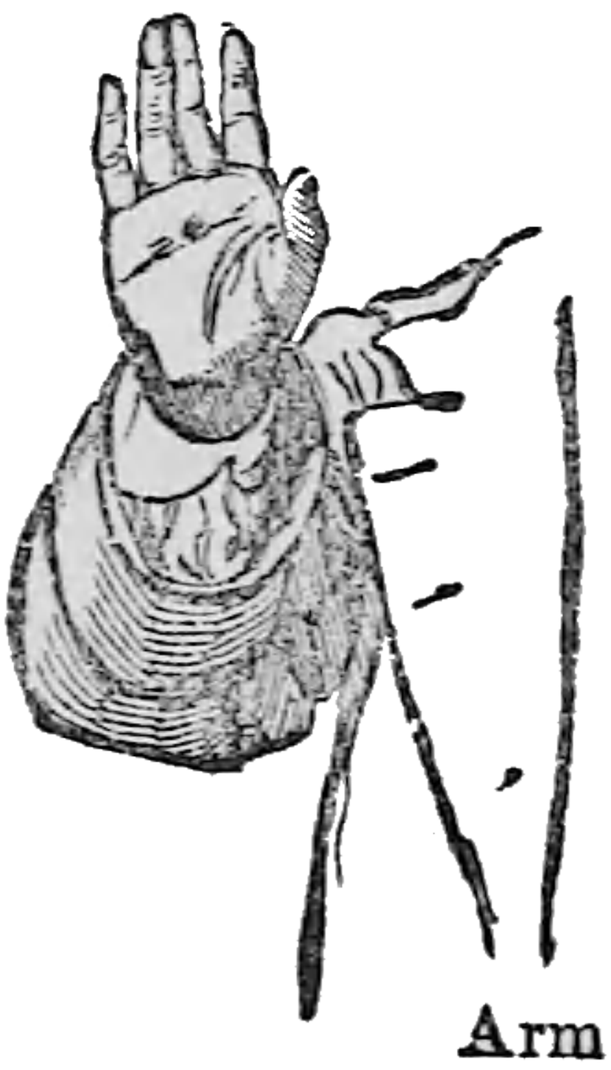
Copyright © 2016 FB &c Ltd.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE HAND AND ARM IN MOTION.—(See Par. 104-6, and Page vi.)



Arm rising— Hand hanging downwards.

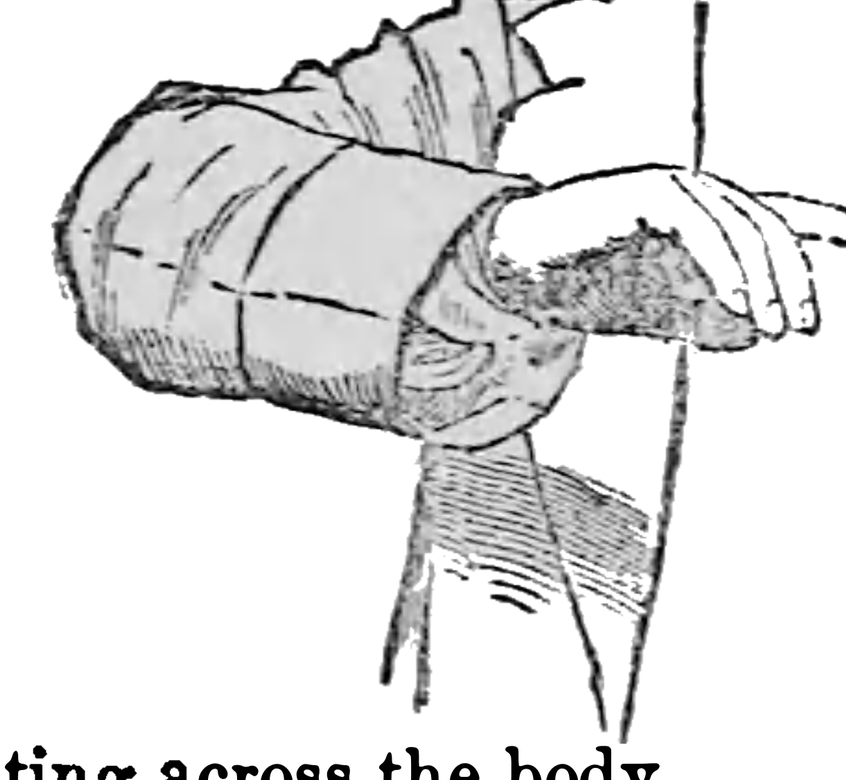


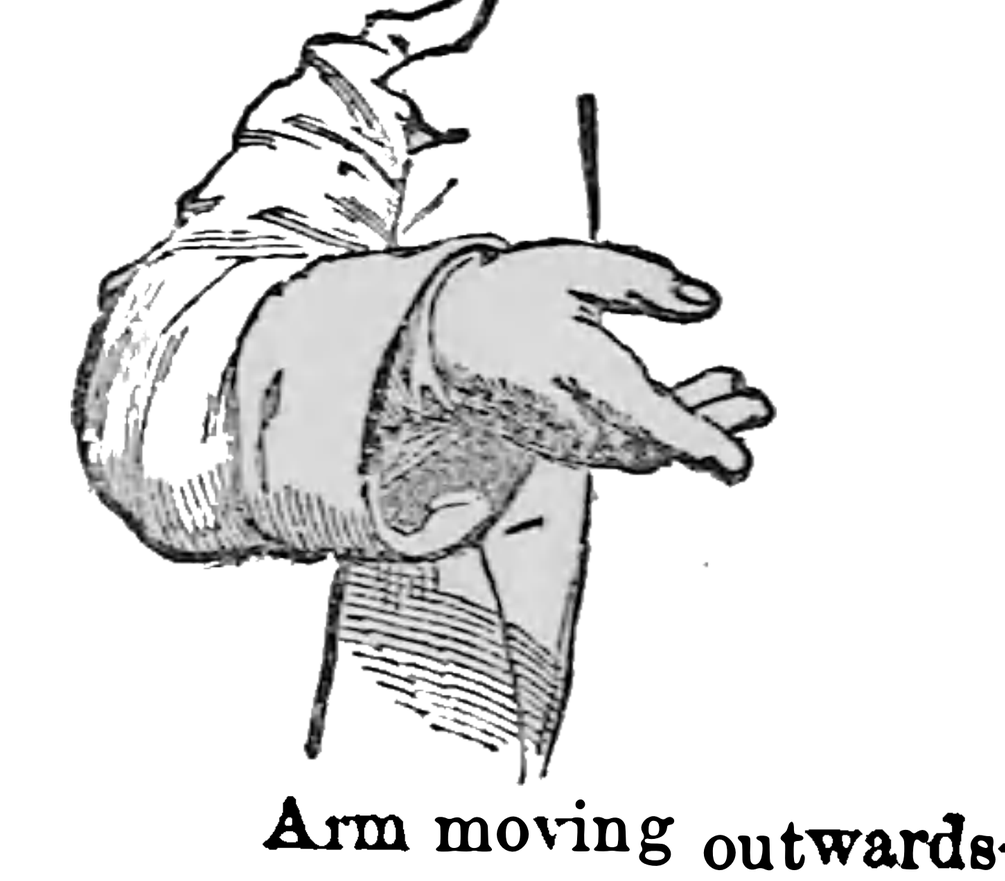


Arm falling—Hand pointing upwards.



Arm moving outwards—Hand pointing across the body.





BELL'S

STANDARD ELOCUTIONIST.

PRINCIPLES AND EXERCISES,

(FROM "ELOCUTIONARY MANUAL;")

FOLLOWED BY A COPIOUS SELECTION OF

EXTRACTS IN PROSE AND POETRY,

CLASSIFIED AND ADAPTED FOR

READING AND RECITATION.

BY

DAVID CHARLES BELL,

PROFESSOR OF ELOCUTION AND ENGLISH LITERATURE, DUBLIN,

Author of "The Theory of Elocution," "The Class-Book of Poetry," &c., &c.

AND

ALEXANDER MELVILLE BELL, F.E.I.S., &c.,

LATE LECTURER ON ELOCUTION IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON,

Inventor of "Visible Speech," &c., &c.

Seventy-second Thousand.

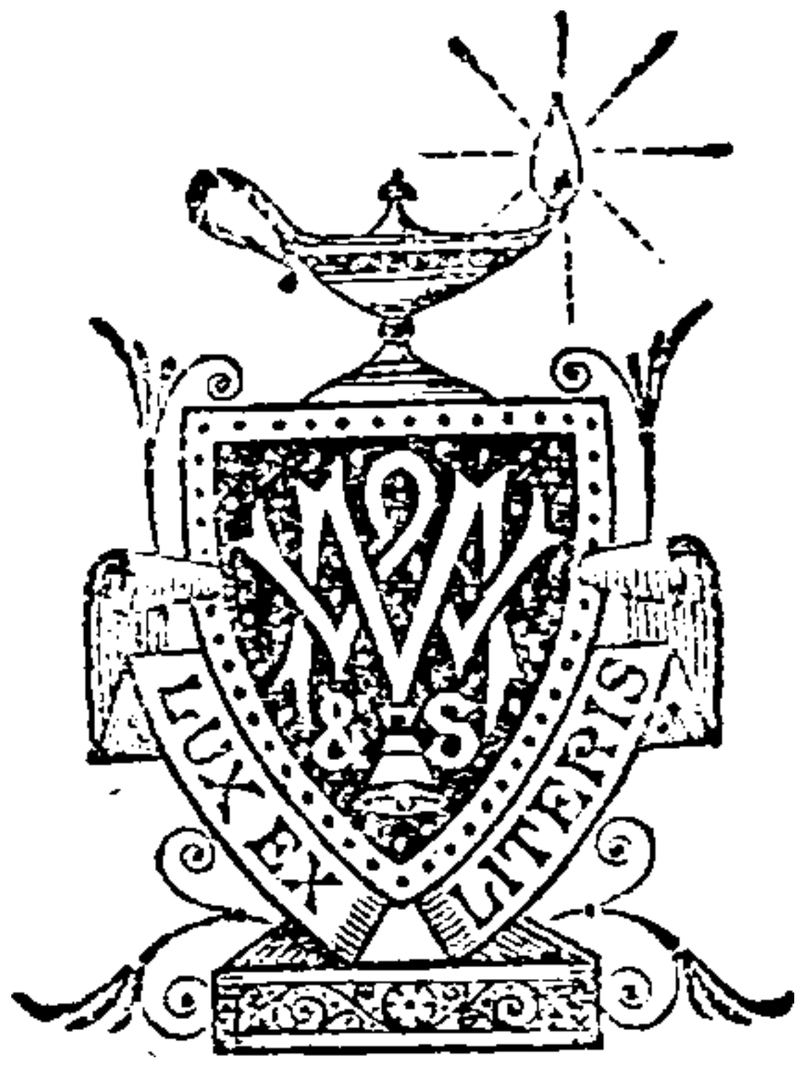
New Edition, greatly enlarged and improved.

WILLIAM MULLAN & SON,

4, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON;

4, DONEGALL PLACE, BELFAST.

1878.



Wholesale Agents for this Work :—

Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., ... *London.*

Hamilton, Adams, & Co., ... *London.*

Sampson Low, Son, & Marston, . . *London.*

Kent & Co., ... *London.*

John Menzies & Co., ... *Edinburgh.*

John Menzies & Co., ... *Glasgow.*

Porteous Brothers, ... *Glasgow.*

W. H. Smith & Son, ... *Dublin.*

Gill & Son, ... *Dublin*

Philip, Son, & Nephew, ... *Liverpool.*

John Heywood, ... *Manchester.*

Lewis Smith, ... *Aberdeen.*

Campbell & Son, ... *Toronto.*

Dawson Brothers, ... *Montreal.*

Robert Miller, ... *Montreal.*

George Robertson, ... *Melbourne.*

J. J. Moore, ... *Sydney.*

PREFACE.

The following Work embraces, besides a large variety of Original Selections and Adaptations from Modern Authors, a copious collection of Extracts from older compilations, the merits or peculiar fitness of which for Elocutionary Exercise have established them as favourites for Reading or Recitation.

To Authors and Publishers the Compilers return thanks for the readiness with which permission to introduce new passages has been granted.

The attention of Teachers is specially directed to the Table of Vowel Sounds, at page 15, and to the principle of a Numerical Nomenclature of Vowels (par. 31) as a simple means of imparting a definite and accurate pronunciation of syllables. The first Table of Inflexions, at page 20, may be introduced to the youngest classes; it will be found effectual in developing the voice, and imparting flexibility and natural expressiveness in reading.

The prosaic mode of printing many of the poetical Extracts, besides tending to prevent or correct the habit of reading Verse with sing-song tones, may be also rendered subservient to the study of Measure, by exercising the pupils in discriminating and marking the poetic lines. The present Edition has undergone a thorough revisal. New Extracts have been introduced in the various sections of Recitations; and selections of Dialogues from Shakspeare, and Extracts from Milton, have besides been added.

The Dramatic, Humourous, and other Recitations, have been carefully adapted for use in Schools, by the avoidance of objectionable words or phrases. All the Extracts have been chosen with special reference to their practical value as Elocutionary Exercises, and they have been condensed, or sometimes extended, wherever increased effectiveness in Delivery could be secured.

252

TABLE OF SYMBOLS FOR THE NOTATION OF GESTURE.

I. THE FEET, AND TRUNK. (Notation written below the line.)

["Close" position, feet 5 or 6 inches apart; "open," 10 or 12; "extended," 20 or more.]

Right foot in front,	weight on left,	(close)	R.1,	(open)	R.3,	(extended)	R.5.
	weight on right,	"	R.2,	"	R.4,	"	R.6.
Left foot in front,	weight on right,	"	L.1,	"	L.3,	"	L.5.
	weight on left,	"	L.2,	"	L.4,	"	L.6.

ad (advancing), *re* (retiring), *r* (stepping to right), *l* (left), *st* (starting), *stp* (stamping), *sh* (shaking), *wk* (walking), *kn* (kneeling), *bw* (bowing), *crt* (curtseying), *cr* (one foot across the other), *up* (body drawn up, as in pride), *dn* (down, as in languor.)

[When an action is to be performed more than once, prefix a number. Thus: ^{2}ad (advancing two steps), ^{2}bw (bowing twice.)

II. THE ARMS. (Notation written above the line.)

[The left arm or hand is denoted by a line prefixed to the symbol. Thus, —dq (left, downwards, oblique.) A colon is placed between letters that refer to different arms. Thus, —w : e q (left, arm on waist: right, elevated, oblique. The symbol || denotes that both arms perform the same motion; the letter a denotes alternation.]

Vertical: z e h d n R; *Transverse:* c f q x b. (See diagram, par. 102.)

as (ascending), *de* (descending), *r* (moving to right), *l* (left), *w* (on waist), *sl* (slow), *qk* (quick), *pp* (preparatory), [see par. 105,] *con* (contracting), *exp* (expanding), *pj* (projected), *bk* (drawn back), *rt* (rebound from any position to the same again), *dr* (drooping), *fd* (folded), *kim* (a-kimbo), *wv* (waving), ⌒ (over-curve), ⌣ (under-curve), ⌒⌣ or ⌣⌒ (serpentine.)

III. THE HANDS. (Notation written above the line.)

s (supine, *palm* upwards), *p* (prone, downwards), *o* (outwards), *i* (inwards), *v* (*hand* raised vertically), *dn* (turned downwards), *in* (moved inwards, as in invitation), *ou* (outwards), *ix* (indexing, or pointing), *rv* (revolving), *sh* (shaking), *ch* (clinched), *str* (striking), *gr* (grasping), *ap* (hands applied palm to palm), *tip* (fingers tip to tip), *en* (enumerating, right forefinger successively on left finger-tips), *pal* (striking palm with forefinger), *cr* (hands crossed), *cl* (clasped), *wr* (wrung), *clp* (*clapping*), *im* (imitative action.)

IV. PARTS OF THE BODY ON WHICH THE HANDS MAY BE PLACED.

(Notation written above the line or in the margin.)

he (head), *fo* (forehead), *te* (temple), *ey* (eyes), *mo* (mouth), *li* (lip), *ck* (cheek), *cn* (chin), *br* (breast), *bbr* (beating breast), *bk* (behind back.)

V. THE HEAD AND FACE. (Notation above, or in margin.)

B (head thrown back), C (crouched), I (*inclined*), IL (to left), IR (to right), H (hanging down), T (tossing), S (shaking), N (nodding), A (averted from direction of gesture), Sm (smiling countenance), Fr (frowning), Lu (lugubrious), La (laughing), Lf (*eyebrows* lifted), Dp (depressed), Kn (brow knitted), R (*eyes* looking to right), L (to left), U (upwards), D (downwards), F (in front), V (vacantly), Ar (around), As (askance), Cl (closed), St (staring), W (weeping), Wi (winking), M (measuring, as in contempt), Pt (*lips* pouted), Bt (bitten), Cp (compressed), No (nostrils drawn up), O (mouth open), Gn (teeth gnashing.)

Order of Symbolic Arrangement.—Place first the notation of the Vertical situation of the arm; then of its Transverse direction; next, of the manner of presentation or motion of the hand; and the other symbols in the most convenient order.

CONTENTS.

Table of Symbols for the Notation of Gesture: reverse of Frontispiece.
Frontispiece: relative Positions of the Hand and Arm in Motion.

SECTIONS.

I. Outline of the Principles of Elocution, *page* 13
II. Exercises on the Principles, . . . 29
III. Miscellaneous Readings in Prose, . . 41
IV. Readings in Pulpit Eloquence, . . . 69
V. Readings in Ancient and Modern Eloquence, 99
VI. Miscellaneous Readings in Poetry, . . 139
VII. Recitations for Junior Pupils, . . . 187
VIII. Recitations for Senior Pupils, . . . 205
IX. Recitations for Advanced Students, . . 239
X. Humourous Recitations, ... 299
XI. Dramatic Speeches and Soliloquies, . . 343
XII. Dialogues and Dramatic Scenes, . . . 379

CONTENTS OF SECTIONS.

I. OUTLINE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF ELOCUTION.

THE BREATH.—Inhalation, par. 2-6. Expiration, 7, 8.
THE ORGANS OF ARTICULATION.—Active and passive organs, par. 10. Oral positions and actions, 11-13. Opening the mouth, 14, 15.
PRONUNCIATION.—Vowel quality, 20. The aspirate H, 21. Articulative quality, 22. Final consonants, 23. Table of Vowel Sounds, page 15. Table of Articulations, page 16. SYLLABLES. Constituents of Syllables, par. 26-28. Distinct enunciation, 30. Syllabication of words, 31, 32. ACCENT AND EMPHASIS. Accented Syllables in words, 36. Accented words in Sentences, 37, 38. Grammatical Clausing of Sentences, 39-42. Enunciation of Clauses, 43.
THE VOICE.—The mechanism of the voice, par. 45-48. Modifications of Voice, 49-51. INFLEXION. Simple and Compound Inflexions, 53. EXPRESSIVENESS OF THE SIMPLE INFLEXIONS. The Rising Termination, 54. The Falling Termination, 55. Extent of the Inflexions, 59. Accentual Pitch of the Inflexions, 60-63. Inflexion of Syllables before the Accent, 64. Diagram of the Essential Varieties of Inflexion, 66. Diagram of a complete Gamut of Inflexion, 67. Notation of the Inflexions, 68. Rising Double wave, 69. APPLICATION OF THE INFLEXIONS TO SENTENCES. The Rising Termination, 70. The Falling Termination, 71. The Melody of Speech, 72. Classification of Sentences, 73. Inflexion of Interrogative Sentences, 74. Inflexion of Assertive Sentences, 75. Inflexion of Imperative Sentences, 76. Inflexion of Questions that cannot be answered by "yes" or "no," 77. Inflexion not dependent on the forms of Sentences, 78. MODULATION. Emphatic Modulation, 79. Expressive Modulation, 80. When change of Modulation is necessary, 82. Table of degrees of Modulation, 83. FORCE. Table of degrees of Force, 86. TIME. Table of degrees of Time, 89. Variety of Modulation, Force, and Time essential to intellectual reading, 90. EXPRESSIVE SAMENESS OF TONE AND FORCE, 92. STACCATO PRONUNCIATION, 93. BREAK OR SUDDEN PAUSE, 94.

GESTURE.—ATTITUDE. The head, par. 96. The chest, 97. The arms 98. The feet, 99. Poise of the body, 100. MOTION. GRACE. The Motions of the Arms, 102, 103. Separate Movement of the Arm and Hand, 104. Preparation for Accentual Motion, 105. Mode of presentation of the hand, 106. Angle of Separation of the Feet, 107. Relative position of the Feet, 108. Turning the Body, 109, 110. Diagram of Positions and Shifs of the Feet, 111. EXPRESSIVENESS. Indefinite motions to be avoided, 112. Isolated movements unnatural, 113. On Suiting the Action to the Word, 114. Summary of Expressive Motions, 115.

MISCELLANEOUS DIRECTIONS FOR READING. Holding the Book, par. 116, 117. Opening the Mouth and Breathing, 118. Separate pronunciation of Thoughts and Clauses, 119. Clausular Grouping of words, 120. The eye, 121. The last word or clause of a page, 122. On Words and Thoughts, 123.

ON THE READING OF VERSE, par. 124.

MISCELLANEOUS DIRECTIONS FOR RECITATION. Leisurely commencement, par. 125. The Subject should absorb the thoughts, 126. Arrangement of gesticulative pictures, 127.

II. EXERCISES ON THE PRINCIPLES.

Action of the Teeth, the Lips, and the Tongue,—Oral Gymnastics, . . 29
Exercises on Vowels, . 30
Exercises on Articulations, . 31
Exercises on Accent, . 33
Difficult Words and Sentences, 34
Exercises on Inflexion, . 35
Exercises on the Notation of do. 36
Exercises on the Notations of Inflexion, Modulation, Force, and Time, . 37
Exercises on Imitative Utterance, Expressive Sameness, and Staccato Pronunciation. . . 39
Recapitulation of the Secret of Good Reading, . 40

III. MISCELLANEOUS READINGS IN PROSE.*

Twenty Extracts.

On the Tones of the Human Voice, . . . 41
The Art of Reading Well, . 43
On Study, . . . 44
Means of Acquiring Distinction, 45
Uncertainties of Fortune, . 46
On Labour, . . . 47
The Lamp of Truth, . ib.
The Fate of Burns, . . 49
The Blank Bible, . . 51
The Elder's Deathbed, . 54
On British History, . . 57
A Wild Night at Sea, . 58
Humourous Incongruities, . 60
The Island, . . . 61
On Human Grandeur, . 62
The Approach of Evening, . 63
Sorrow for the Dead, . 64
Liberty and Slavery, . 66
The Power of Little Things, 67
Ossian's Address to the Sun, . 68

IV. READINGS IN PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

Twenty-one Extracts.

God is Love, . . . 69
Consolations of Religion, . ib.
Majesty of the Redeemer, . 70
The Poetry of the Bible, . 72
Inefficiency of Human Works, 73
Latent Principles of Religion, 75
Insignificance of this World, 76
Wealth not Productive of Enjoyment, . . . 78
Uncertainty of Life, . . 80
Sweet and Bitter Memories, 82
The Pursuit of Happiness, . 83
The Doctrines of the Gospel, 84
The Crucifixion, . . 86
On Infidelity, . . . 87
On War, . . . 88
The Slavery of Sin, . . 90
The Grace and Glory of Salvation, . . . 91
On Autumn, . . . 92
On Death, . . . 94
The Death of the Wicked, . 95
Sympathy Taught by Suffering, . . . 97

* The names of the Authors are given at the head of the Extracts.

V. READINGS IN ANCIENT AND MODERN ELOQUENCE.

Twenty-eight Extracts.

On the Character of Caius Verres, . . . 99
On Philip of Macedon, . 101
On the Catiline Conspiracy, 103
Scipio to the Roman Army, 105
The Scythian Ambassadors to Alexander, . . 106
Hannibal to his Soldiers, . 108
On Negro Slavery, . . 109
On Law Reform, . . 110
On Conciliating the Colonies, 112
On the Slave Trade, . . 113
On the Present Age, . 115
On the Theatre, . . 116
On the American War, . 117
On Universal Emancipation, 119
On Precedents, . . 120
On National Character, . 121
On Literature and Liberty, . 122
On the Defence of Britain from Invasion, . . . 123
On British Government in America, . . . 125
On the Poetry of City and Country Life, . . 127
On the British Press, . 128
On Napoleon Bonaparte, . 129
Pitt, on being Taunted by Mr Walpole, . . . 131
On Irish Valour and Loyalty, 132
On the Condition of India, . 133
On the Fugitive Slave Bill, . 135
On the Influence of Great Actions, . . . 137
On True Eloquence, . . 138

VI. MISCELLANEOUS READINGS IN POETRY.

Forty-four Extracts.

On the Being of a God, . 139
The Messiah, . . 140
Thanatopsis—A View of Death, 142
Human Life, . . 144
On Proscrastination, . . 145
To-morrow, . . . 146
Address to Independence, . ib.
On Slavery, . . . 147
The Bridge of Sighs, . . 149
David and Absalom, . . 150
Spring Rain, . . . 151
On Man, . . . 152
The Dying Christian to his Soul, . . . 153
The Skylark, . . . 154
The Three Sons, . . ib.
The Mother and her Dead Child, . . . 156
Death's Final Conquest, . 157
Retreat of the French Army from Moscow, . . ib.
Ode to Adversity, . . 159
Instability of Friendship, . 160
Ode in Imitation of Alcœus, . 161
The Cloud, . . . ib.
Address to the Ocean, . 163
To the Nightingale, . . 164
The Skylark, . . . 165
The Holly Tree, . . 167
Thunder-storm on the Lake of Geneva, . . . ib.
On Revisiting the Banks of the Wye . . . 168
Beauty and Expression, . 170
The Deserted Village, . ib.
Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni, . 171
The Fountain, . . 173
Pompeii, . . . 174
The Shores of Greece, . 175
To Mary in Heaven, . ib.
The Country Clergyman, . 176
The Last Minstrel, . . 177
Satan's Address to the Sun, . 179
The Pulpit, . . . 180
Waiting for the May, . 182
Flight of Imagination, . 183
The Forging of the Anchor, ib.
The Cataract of Lodore, . 185
Our Country and our Home, 186

VII. RECITATIONS FOR JUNIOR PUPILS.

Forty-three Extracts.

The Temple of Nature, . 187
Saul's Address, . . ib.
Jephtha's Daughter, . . ib.
The Star of Heaven, . . 188
The Dying Chief, . . ib.
Destruction of Sennacherib, ib.
The Star of Bethlehem, . 189
Casabianca, . . . ib.
The Orphan Boy, . . 190
The Soldier's Funeral, . 190
Christian Warfare . . 191
The Fall of D'Assas, . ib.
The Mother of the Macabees, ib.
Miriam's Song, . . 192
A Psalm of Life, . . ib.
Gertrude Von der Wart, . ib.
Excelsior, . . . 193
The Spring Journey, . ib.

The Jackdaw, . . 194
Jerusalem, . . . ib.
The Homes of England, . ib.
The Soldier's Dream, . 195
The Mariners of England . ib.
The Pilgrim Fathers, . 196
The Battle of Blenheim, . ib.
Look Aloft, . . . 197
Bruce and the Spider, . ib.
No Work the Hardest Work, ib.
The Wind and the Weathercock, 198
The Mariner's Hymn, . ib.
Freedom, . . . 199
British Freedom, . . 19
Confidence in God, . . i
The Common Lot, . . 20
Courage in Poverty, . i
The Treasures of the Deep, i
All Hollow, . . 20
The Cow and the Ass, . i
The Gluttonous Duck, . 20
Home for the Holidays, . 20
The Infant Orator, . . 20
Occasional Prologue, . i
Occasional Epilogue, . i

VIII. RECITATIONS FOR SENIOR PUPILS.

Fifty-eight Extracts.

The Voice and the Pen, . 205
The Burial of Sir John Moore, ib.
The Arab Maid's Song, . 206
The Battle of Hohenlinden, ib.
Apology for the Pig, . 207
The Street of By-and-Bye, ib.
Lord Ullin's Daughter, . 208
The Last of the Red Men, ib.
Crescentius, . . . 209
Bruce to his Army, . . 210
The Gheber's Attack, . ib.
Lochinvar, . . . 211
The Flight of Xerxes, . 212
Glenara, . . . ib.
War-Song of the Greeks, . 213
Harmosan, . . . ib.
Death of De Boune, . ib.
The Exile of Erin, . . 214
A Ship Sinking, . . 215
The African Chief, . . ib.
The Pauper's Deathbed, . 216
The Slave's Petition, . ib.
The Massacre of Glencoe, . 217
The Felon, . . . ib.
The Palm-Tree, . . 218
Beth Gelert, . . . ib.
The Polish Exiles, . . 219
The Drum, . . . 220
The Vision of Belshazzar, . ib.
The Mariner's Dream, . 221
Road to the Trenches, . . 2
Boadicea, . . . 2
The Fugitive Slave, . i
The High-Born Ladye, . 2
The Captive Knight, . i
The Death of Duke D'Enghein, 2
The Grave of Korner, . i
The Death of Murat, . 2
The Battle of the Baltic, . 2
The Uplifting of the Banner, i
The Old Arm-Chair, . 2
The Death of the Flowers, i
The Destroying Angel, . 2
The Glove and the Lions, . i
The Indian Hunter, . 2
We are Seven, . . i
The Village Blacksmith, . 2
Cœur-de-Lion at the Bier of his Father, . . i
The Wreck of the Hesperus, 2
Ivan the Czar, . . i
Childe Harold's Song, . 2
The Ploughshare of Old England, . . . 2
The Inchcape Bell, . .
Arnold Winkelried, . . 2
The Slave's Dream,
The Good Time Coming, . 2
John Littlejohn, . .
The Adopted Child, .

IX. RECITATIONS FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS.

Sixty-two Extracts.

Bernardo del Carpio, . 239
Bernardo and Alphonso, . 240
Bernardo's Revenge, . 241
The Legend of Horatius, . 242
Charles Edward at Versailles, 243
Scene before the Siege of Corinth, . . 244
Scene after the Siege of Corinth, ib.
Virginia—a Lay of Ancient Rome, . . 245
The Lady of Provence, . 247
The Old Clock on the Stairs, 248
Mary Queen of Scots, . 2
On Modern Greece, . . 2
Marco Bozzaris, . . 2
Lord William, . . 2
Combat between Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu, . 2
The Dying Gladiator, . 2
The Progress of Madness, .
Nature's Gentleman, . 2
The Convict Ship, . . 2
Orange and Green, . .
The Ruined Cottage, .

Arab's Farewell to his Steed, 259
The Prisoner of Chillon, . 260
Lament of Irish Emigrant, 261
Battle of Flodden Field and Death of Marmion, . 262
The War of the League, . 263
Mary, the Maid of the Inn, 264
The Sack of Baltimore, . 266
Ginevra, . . . 267
The Gambler's Wife, . ib.
Love, (a Tale), . . 268
The Battle of Albuera, . 269
The Field of Waterloo, . ib.
The Song of the Shirt, . 270
The Lyre, . . . 271
Within and Without, . 272
Childhood and Manhood, . ib.
Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard, . . 273
The Three Warnings, . 275
Collier s Dying Child, . 276
Jugurtha in Prison, . ib.
Cavalry Charge at Balaklava, 277
Fifth of Nov. at Inkermann, ib.
The Battle, . . . 279
Execution of Montrose, . ib.
The Downfall of Poland, . 281
Ode to Eloquence, . . ib.
The Last Days of Herculaneum, 282
The Bard, . . . 284
Alexander's Feast, . . 286
The Baron's Last Banquet, 287
The World for Sale, . 288
The Last Man, . . ib.
The Raven, . . . 289
The Bells, . . . 291
The Leaguer of Lucknow, 292
Ode for St Cecilia's Day, . 293
The Death of Minnehaha, 294
The Leper, . . . 296
Tubal Cain, . . . 297
Time and the Sea Tide, . ib.
The Passions . . 298

X. HUMOUROUS RECITATIONS.

Forty-five Extracts.

An Orator's First Speech, . 299
The Astronomical Alderman, ib.
The Chameleon, . . 300
The Country Squire, . 301
The Razor Seller, . . 302
The Doctor and his Apprentice, ib.
The Newcastle Apothecary, 303
A Waterloo Ballad, . 304
Toby Tosspot, . . 305
Rustic Logic, . . 306
Modern Logic, . . 307
Faithless Nelly Gray, . 308
The Widow's Choice, . ib.
Ask Mamma, . . 310
The Confession, . . 311
The Husband's Petition, . ib.
The Maiden's Request, . 312
The Lover's Sacrifice, . ib.
Cornelius Agrippa, . . ib.
The Alarm, . . . 313
The Quarrel, . . ib.
The Well of St Keyne, . 314
A Cheap Dinner, . . 315
A Dear Dinner, . . 316
The Farmer's Blunder, . 317
The Farmer and the Barrister, 318
The Collegian and the Porter, 319
The Frenchman and the Rats, 320
Lodgings for Single Gentlemen, 321
Yorkshire Angling, . 322
A Rara Avis, . . ib.
The Spirit of Contradiction, 324
Goody Grim *v.* Lapstone, . 325
Blind-man's Buff, . . 328
Dining by Steam, . . 329
The Two Cats, . . 330
Number One, . . 331
The Spider and the Fly, . 332
Contest between Nose & Eyes, 333
The Duel, . . . ib.
Black Beer for "Brown Stout," 334
The Bachelor's Complaint, 335
Bullum versus Boatum, . ib.
Speech of Sergeant Buzfuz, 337
The Bashful Man, . . 339

XI. DRAMATIC SPEECHES AND SOLILOQUIES.

Sixty-five Extracts.

The Seven Ages, . . 343
Cato on Immortality, . ib.
A Plea for Mercy, . . 344
Douglas's Account of Himself, ib.
Soliloquy of King Claudius, ib.
Queen Mab, . . 345
The Slave's Remonstrance, 346
Marullus to the Roman Mob, ib.
Cassius Instigating Brutus, ib.
Brutus on the Death of Cæsar, 347
Antony on the Death of Cæsar, 347
Tell to his Native Mountains, 349
Clarence's Dream, . . 350
Richmond to his Soldiers . 351
Henry IV. on Sleep, . ib.
Henry V. at Harfleur, . ib.
Macbeth to the Dagger Vision, 352
Rolla to the Peruvians, . ib.
Othello's Defence, . . 353
Defence of King Richard II. 354

Hamlet on his Mother's Marriage, 354
Hamlet on the Players, . ib.
Hamlet on a Future State, . 355
Hamlet to the Players, . 356
Romeo on seeing Juliet . ib.
Macbeth before the Murder of King Duncan, . . 357
Macbeth Planning the Murder of Banquo, . . ib.
Henry V. on Royal Ceremony, ib.
Henry VI. on Royalty, . 358
Gloster on his Ambitious Projects, . . 359
Master Walter to Julia, . 360
Rienzi to the Romans, . ib.
Bobadil's Mode of Warfare, 361
Lucius Junius Brutus over the Body of Lucretia, . 362
Claude Melnotte to Pauline, ib.

SPEECHES ADAPTED FROM DIALOGUE.

Menenius to the Tribunes, . 364
Mark Antony over Cæsar, . ib.
Laertes to his Sister Ophelia, 365
Polonius to his Son Laertes, ib.
Cassio on his Dismissal, . 366
King Lear to Goneril . ib.
King Lear to his Daughters, ib.
King Lear on being Shut out, 367
Macbeth on Attaining the first of his foretold Honours, ib.
Lady Macbeth Meditating the Murder of Duncan, . 368
Macbeth instigating to the Murder of Banquo, . ib.
Macbeth on seeing the Ghost, 369
Constance on Ignoble Peace, ib.
King John Instigating Hubert, 370
Prince Arthur to Hubert, . ib.
Lord Chief Justice to Henry V. 371
Henry V. before Agincourt, 371
The Duke of Gloster meditating Clarence's Death, 372
King Richard III. awaking from ill-boding Dreams, 373
Earl of Richmond awaking from fair-boding Dreams, ib.
The Duke of Buckingham before his Execution, . 374
Queen Catherine to Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey, ib.
Cardinal Wolsey on his Fall, 375
Wolsey to his Secretary, . ib.
Portia on her Suitors, . 376
Lorenzo on Music, . . ib.
Speech of the Exiled Duke, 377
Jaques on the Fool, . . ib.
Prospero's Abjuration of Magic, 378
Touchstone on Quarreling, . ib.

XII. DIALOGUES AND DRAMATIC SCENES.

Seventeen Extracts.

King and Miller, . . 379
Lochiel's Warning, . . 380
From the Iliad of Homer, . 382
From the Tragedy of "Catiline," ib.
From the Tragedy of "Cato," 384
From the Tragedy of "Douglas," 385
From "Venice Preserved," 387
From "The Iron Chest," . 388
From "William Tell," . 390
From "The Englishman Returned from Paris," . 392
From "The Poor Gentleman," 393
From "The Rivals," . 396
From "The Critic," . . 398
From "The Heir at Law," . 400
From "The School for Scandal," 401
From "The Honeymoon," . 404
From the play of "Money," . 406

XIII. DRAMATIC SCENES FROM SHAKSPEARE.

1. From "Merchant of Venice," 408
2. Do. do. . 410
3. From "Hamlet," . 414
4. From "As you like it," . 416
5. From "Julius Cæsar," . 418
6. From "Coriolanus," . 420
7. From "Macbeth," . 421
8. From "Henry the Fourth," 422
9. Do. do. . 423

XIV. SELECTIONS FROM MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST."

1. The Introduction, . 426
2. Speech of Satan in Hell, ib.
3. Speech of Satan to his Legions, ib.
4. Description of Satan, . 427
5. Satan in Pandemonium, ib.
6. Moloch's Oration, . ib.
7. Speech of Belial dissuading from War, . 428
8. Mammon's Oration, . 429
9. Interview of Satan with Death and Sin, . ib.
10. Apostrophe to Light, . 430
11. Evening in Paradise, . 431
12. Creation of the World, ib.
13. Morning Hymn of Adam and Eve, . . 432

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS FOR RECITATION.

Fifty-six Extracts.

	Page		Page
Good News from Ghent, .	433	Battle of Fontenoy, .	460
Sheridan's Ride, . .	434	Building of the House, .	461
Paul Revere's Ride, .	ib.	England's Message to America,	ib.
Burial of Moses, . .	436	O Brazil, the Isle of the Blest, . . .	463
Gougane Barra, . .	ib.	Old Times, . . .	ib.
Battle of Morgarten, .	437	Bridal of Malahide, . .	464
Killed at the Ford, . .	438	O'Connor's Child, . .	465
Curse of Kehama, . .	ib.	The Uncle, . . .	466
Dirge of Wallace, . .	ib.	Marguerite of France, .	467
Man was made to Mourn, .	439	The Shipwreck, . .	469
Farewell to Caledonia, .	440	Thermopylæ, . .	ib.
Rob Roy's Grave, . .	ib.	Song of Old Time, . . .	ib.
Song of the Sword, . .	441	Jessie Brown at Lucknow,	470
The Bended Bow, . .	ib.	Maud Müller, . .	471
The Ship on Fire, . .	442	An Old Man's Idyl, . .	472
The Pauper's Drive, .	ib.	The Black Regiment, .	473
Eliza, . . .	443	Our Folks, . . .	474
The Lessons of the Birds, .	444	The Vagabonds, . .	475
Death of King Connor Mac Nessa, . . .	445	Annabel Lee, . .	476
The Diver, . . .	446	Burial of William the Conqueror, . . .	ib.
Pillar Towers of Ireland, .	449	The Heritage, . .	477
Barbara Fritchie, . .	450	What is Time? . .	ib.
Beautiful Snow, . .	ib.	The Sleep, . . .	478
Parrhasius, . . .	451	My Child, . . .	479
Fate of Mac Gregor, .	452	The Rising of the Vendée, .	ib.
Cowper's Grave, . .	454	Marston Moor, . .	480
Darkness, . . .	455	Ring out, Wild Bells! .	481
Ode to the Almighty, .	ib.		
King Robert of Sicily, .	457		

ADDITIONAL HUMOROUS SELECTIONS FOR RECITATION.

Sixteen Extracts.

Address to an Egyptian Mummy, . .	482	Laugh and Get Fat, .	491
The Belle of the Ball, .	483	"I Wouldn't—Would you?"	492
Seven Ages of Woman, .	484	Rhyme of the Rail, . .	ib.
The Ladies' Petition, .	485	The Bashful Bachelor—"Ask Papa!" . .	493
Misadventures at Margate.	486	The Three Black Crows, .	495
Coronation of Queen Victoria,	488	Evening—By a Tailor, .	ib.
A Parental Ode to my Son,	490	The Big Shoe, . .	496
The Courtin', . .	ib.	Nothing to Wear, . .	497

OUTLINE

OF THE

PRINCIPLES OF ELOCUTION,

WITH

RELATIVE EXERCISES.

---

1. THE Student of ELOCUTION must acquire power over all the processes concerned in the management of

I. THE BREATH;
II. THE ORGANS OF ARTICULATION;
III. PRONUNCIATION;
IV. THE VOICE;
V. GESTURE.

I.—THE BREATH.

2. Speech consists of variously modified *emissions* of breath. All utterance must, therefore, be preceded by inhalation.

3. The inspirations should be noiseless. If the chest is raised, with the passages to the lungs open, the air will enter of itself, silently and instantaneously.

4. The breath may be inspired through the mouth or through the nostrils. The freest respiration is obtained by using both passages simultaneously. Inhalation through the nostrils is frequently necessary in long-sustained passages in speech and song.

5. Every cessation of the outward stream of air, however short, should be taken advantage of to replenish the lungs, in order that the periods of ordinary vital respiration may be interrupted as little as possible. The marks of punctuation do not furnish opportunities enough for a healthful management of the breath.

6. The quantity of air inspired for vocal uses must be greater than that inhaled for vital wants.

7. The outward impulse which the air receives in speech should be given, not so much by descent of the thorax or walls of the chest, as by ascent of the diaphragm or base of the chest.

8. The expirations of speech should never be prolonged to

exhaustion of the air in the lungs. The chest should be kept well raised throughout the longest utterance, and the lungs well supplied with air, even at the close of a sentence.

II.—The Organs of Articulation.

9. The Organs of Articulation include the pharynx, situated behind the soft palate; and all the anterior parts of the mouth, —the palate, the tongue, the teeth, and the lips.

10. The *active* articulating organs are the soft palate, the tongue, the lower jaw, and the lower lip; and the *passive* organs, —or those to and from which the others act,—are the hard palate, the upper gum, the upper teeth, and the upper lip.

11. Breath, the material of speech, is *moulded* into "vowels" by the shape of the oral channel through which it issues; or *articulated* into "consonants" by close approximation, or by contact, of parts of the mouth.

12. When the organs are in any articulative "*position*," the pharynx becomes distended with air, in proportion as the breath is impeded in the mouth; the *separation of the organs* constitutes the articulative "*action*," and gives percussiveness to the breath as the pharynx collapses.

13. Errors in articulation arise from faulty positions of the organs,—from a want of sharpness and precision in the points of approximation or contact,—or from an effort of pushing outwards, or of *conjunctive pressure*, instead of a light *disjunctive action*.

14. A light and pointed action of the articulating organs is assisted by the lower jaw; a free, downward motion of which should *precede* consonant formation, and *accompany* vowel utterance. During the pauses in speech, the teeth should remain slightly apart.

15. As a hammer is raised before its downward stroke, and afterwards rebounds from the object struck; so the active organs of speech should, before an articulative stroke, be freely separated from the parts of the mouth against which they are to act, and afterwards gently fall asunder. The opening of the mouth puts all the organs in a state of readiness for any action that may follow; and, at the same time, allows of an easy influx of air. This graceful preparation is the natural commencement of all utterance.

16. During the rests of speech, the lips should lie evenly in line with the teeth, so that the edges of the dental ranges may be visible; and, in the mechanism of speech, the lips should not be protruded. The lower lip only should move—upwards and downwards, not outwards; and the upper lip remain almost quiescent. The labial organs are thus left free for their higher functions of expressiveness.

17. The tongue should never be depressed within the lower jaw, or protruded between the teeth. It should be held back

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

ARTICULATIONS.

	Whispered.	Vocalized.	Nasal.	Examples.
1, 2, 3	K	G	NG	call, gall, gong.
4		Y		yet.
5, 6	Sh	Zh		mission, vision.
7		R		far, rough.
8		L		light.
9, 10, 11	T	D	N	tame, dame, name.
12, 13	S	Z		seal, zeal.
14, 15	Th	Th		thigh, thy.
16, 17	F	V		fine, vine.
18, 19	Wh	W		whey, way.
20, 21, 22	P	B	M	pay, bay, may.

SYLLABLES.

26. A Syllable may consist of a vowel only, or of a vowel preceded or followed, or both preceded and followed, by any articulation: Thus,

I, tie, I'd, tied.

27. The articulations L and N, frequently constitute syllables without vowels sounded; as in

rippl(e), ris(e)n, ev(e)n, &c.

28. The letter M has the same syllabic effect in such words as

rhythm, chasm, &c.

29. These letters, L, M, and N, though perfect articulations, have almost a vowel purity of voice, from the openness of the oral or nasal aperture in their formation.

30. Every syllable in a word, and every element in a syllable, should receive its definite and exact sound, however rapid the pronunciation.

31. In the pronunciation of words of more than one syllable, all the consonants that can be uttered monosyllabically are united to the succeeding vowel. Double letters are used merely as orthographic expedients, and pronounced as *one*. Thus,

10 2 2 10 8 10 8 2 10 10 y-13 2 2 10 9
o-ri-gin, or-der, o-(r)re-ry, o-(p)por-tu-ni-ty, ob-struct, &c.

32. Such words as *evening*, *hasteneth*, *listener*, &c., generally pronounced in two syllables, are dissyllables or trissyllables, according as their elements are phonically grouped. Thus,

Dissyllables: ēv(e)-ning, hās(te)-neth, lis(te)-ner, &c.
Trissyllables: ē-v(e)n-ing, hā-s(te)n-eth, lī-s(te)n-er, &c.

ACCENT AND EMPHASIS.

33. Every word of more than one syllable has an *accented* syllable, which should be distinctly indicated in pronunciation.

34. Every phrase or cluster of grammatically associated words has a principal *word*, which should be rendered prominent by superior accent or stress.

35. Every sentence, or association of words or clauses making up a proposition, has a principal *idea*, the word expressive of which should be distinguished from the subordinate and accessory words.

36. The accented syllables of words are generally the *radical* syllables; and, in cases of contrasted words having their accented syllables the same, the accent is shifted to the syllable of difference,—the new syllable,—as in

assent and dis'sent, mortality and im'mortality.

37. In phrases or sentences, all words that express ideas new to the context are distinguished by accent; and all words that have been previously stated or implied are unaccented.

38. Any word used in *contrast* to a preceding term is rendered prominent by superior accent; and any word used in contrast to an antithesis that is not formally expressed, is pronounced with a stronger degree of emphasis to *suggest* the contrasted idea.

39. A sentence consists of a subject and a predicate, with or without explanatory or relative clauses; as

John | speaks
John | speaks | before he thinks.

My brother John, | who cannot conceal his ignorance by silence, | often speaks before he thinks.

40. The words of each grammatical clause in a sentence should be accentually *united*, and the clauses of a sentence *detached*.

41. When the subject and the predicate are both new, each should be pronounced with a separate accent. Thus,

The fleet | has sailed.

42. When either the subject or the predicate has been previously stated or implied, the two members should be united, and only the new member accented. Thus,

The fleet has *sailed*,
The *fleet* has sailed,
The fleet *has* sailed.

43 Every accented member of a sentence,—subject, predicate, or circumstance,—should be preceded by an opening of the mouth, accompanied generally by inhalation of the breath, to separate accent from accent.

44. An opening of the mouth should similarly detach words between which an ellipsis occurs.

IV.—The Voice.

45. Voice is produced in the glottis by mechanical vibration, caused by the passage of air.

46. Voice is variously modified by the condition of the glottis, by resonance within the pharynx and cavities of the head, and by all the organs of speech.

47. The greater or less opening of the aperture of the glottis, the greater or less tension of its vibrating edges, and the greater or less elevation of the vocalizing apparatus—the larynx,—produce variations of acuteness or gravity in the voice.

48. Grave sounds have a greater opening, and a less tension of the glottis, with depression of the larynx. Acute sounds have a smaller aperture and a greater tension, with elevation of the larynx.

49. Upon the sonorous condition of the glottis, the expansion of the guttural arch, and the external aperture of the mouth, depends the purity of the tone. A husky tone results from relaxation of the glottis; a guttural tone from contraction of the fauces, as by enlarged tonsils; a dental tone from a too close position of the teeth; a labial tone from pouting or overhanging lips; and a nasal tone from partial emission of the voice through the nostrils.

50. The voice passes solely through the mouth for all English vowels; and solely through the nostrils for the articulations M, N, and Ng.

51. [The French sounds represented by en, in, on, &c., are *semi-nasal vowels*, the voice passing partly through the mouth, and partly through the nostrils.]

INFLEXION.

52. The tones of the voice in singing are level, or of the same pitch throughout the duration of each note. In speaking, all the tones of the voice are inflected; *i.e.*, each vocal impulse, however short, carries the voice higher or lower than the commencing pitch.

53. Inflexions are *simple* when the progress of the voice is directly upwards or downwards from the accented syllable to the end of an utterance; and they are *compound* when the direction of the voice is changed from a rise to a fall, or a fall to a rise, in the pronunciation of an accented syllable, or the enclitic syllables following an accent.

EXPRESSIVENESS OF THE SIMPLE INFLEXIONS.

54. The rising *termination* carries on the attention of the hearer to what is to follow; it thus denotes incompleteness of statement, or appeal to the hearer's will or knowledge; and is the inflexion of continuity, doubt, enquiry, or deference.

55. The falling termination directs the attention of the hearer to what has been said; it thus denotes completeness of statement, or predicates the speaker's will or knowledge; and is the inflexion of conclusion, assurance, assertion, or command.

EXPRESSIVENESS OF THE COMPOUND INFLEXIONS.

56. The union of the two simple movements of the voice with one accent, produces a pair of compound inflexions, which *combine* the opposite expressions of the simple tones.

57. The compound rising inflexion consists of an accented falling or assertive tone, followed by an unaccented rising or interrogative tone; it blends assertion with enquiry, as in insinuation; or imperativeness with appeal, as in warning; or gives the suggestion of antithesis to interrogation, or to an incompletive clause.

58. The compound falling inflexion consists of an accented rising tone, followed by an unaccented falling tone, and blends enquiry or surprise with assertiveness, as in sneering and sarcasm; or gives a suggestion of antithesis to affirmation.

59. An inflexion may rise or fall through any of the musical intervals. Inflexions limited to the interval of a semi-tone, or of a minor third, (a tone and a half,) are plaintive; and those which range through the greater intervals of the major third, (two tones,) fourth, fifth, &c., express proportionate degrees of intensity in the appellatory or assertive effect.

60. Inflexions, whether simple or compound, are of Two Modes, according as their accentual pitch is above or below the middle tone of the voice, or higher or lower than the pitch that precedes the accent.

61. Rising accents pitched above the middle of the voice, or higher than the pre-accentual syllable or word, are of the First Mode, the less emphatic; and those pitched below the middle tone, or lower than the pre-accentual pitch, are of the Second Mode,—the more emphatic.

62. Falling accents pitched below the middle tone, or lower than the syllable or word before the accent, are of the First Mode,—the less emphatic; and those pitched above the middle of the voice, or higher than the pre-accentual pitch, are of the Second Mode,—the more emphatic.

63. The accent of an inflexion is its commencement, which always coincides with the syllabic accent or emphasis.

64. Of each mode of inflexion there are two degrees, according as the pre-accentual syllables are inflected *towards* or *from* the accentual pitch;—the former arrangement being the less emphatic, the latter the more emphatic.

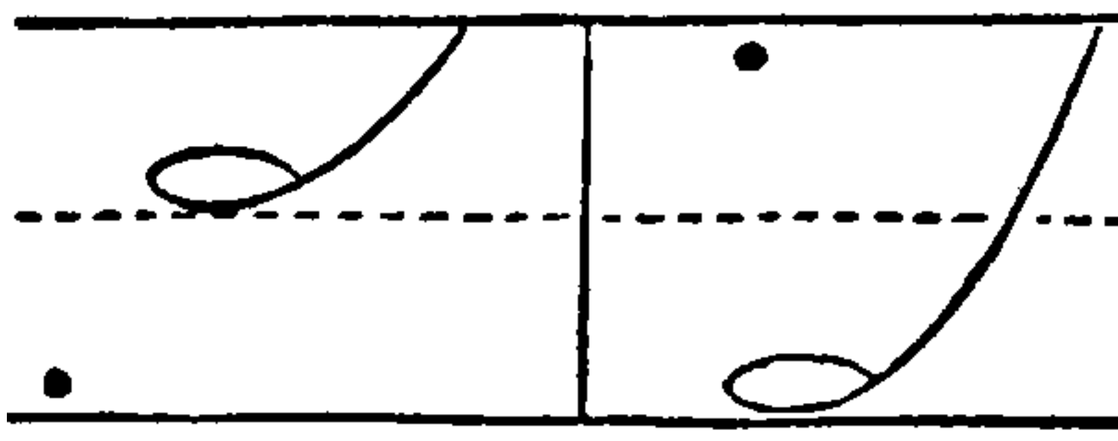
65. There are thus two simple and two compound inflexions, and four degrees of each,—independently of the varieties of extent, or interval through which the voice rises or falls.

66. The following diagram illustrates the two Modes of the four inflexions, as modified by the pitch of the accent above or

below the middle of the voice, or above or below the pre-accentual syllable. These varieties are *essential*, and may be perfectly mastered even by those who have not a musical "ear."

SIMPLE RISE.
Appeal.

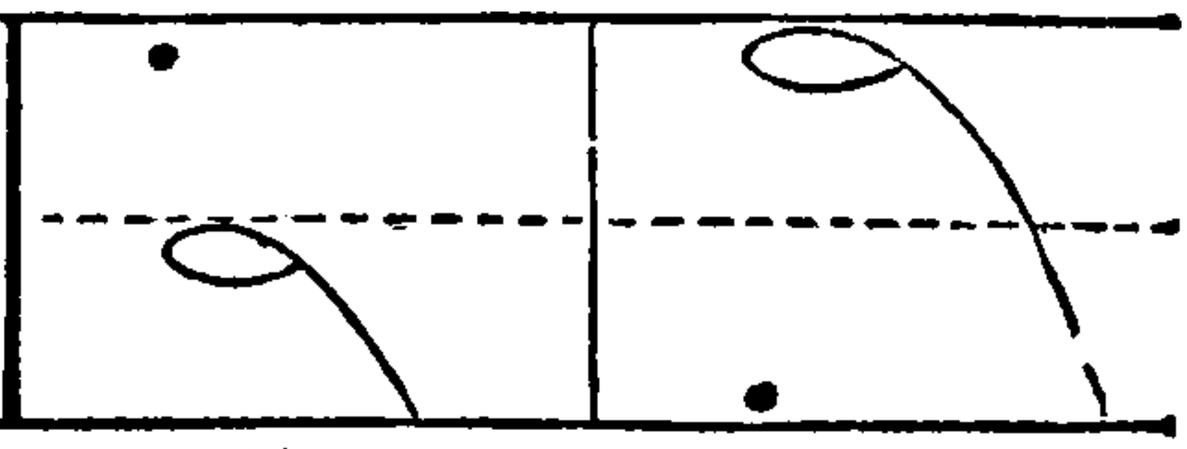
First Mode. Second Mode.



Well? Ah!
All right? Away?

SIMPLE FALL.
Assertion.

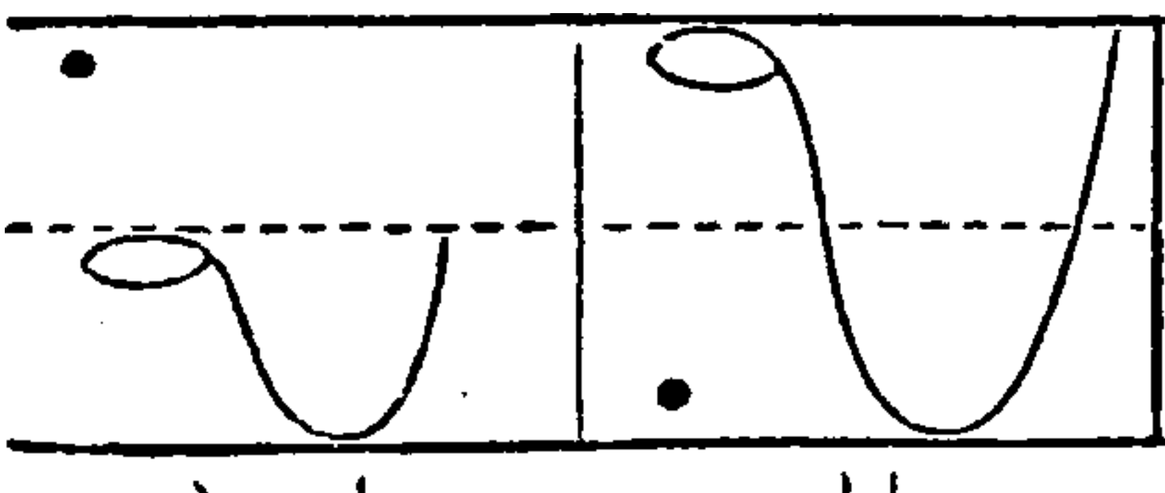
First Mode. Second Mode.



Yes. Go!
Just so. Go on!

COMPOUND RISE.
Assertive Appeal.

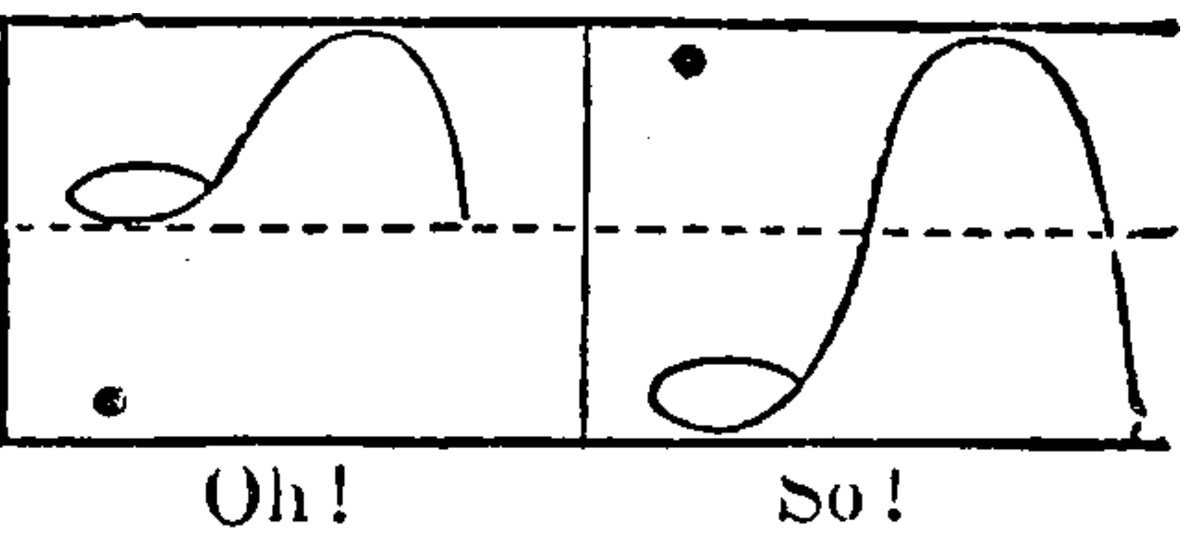
First Mode. Second Mode.



You! I!
Not I! Beware!

COMPOUND FALL.
Appellatory Assertion.

First Mode. Second Mode.



Oh! So!
You will! Indeed.

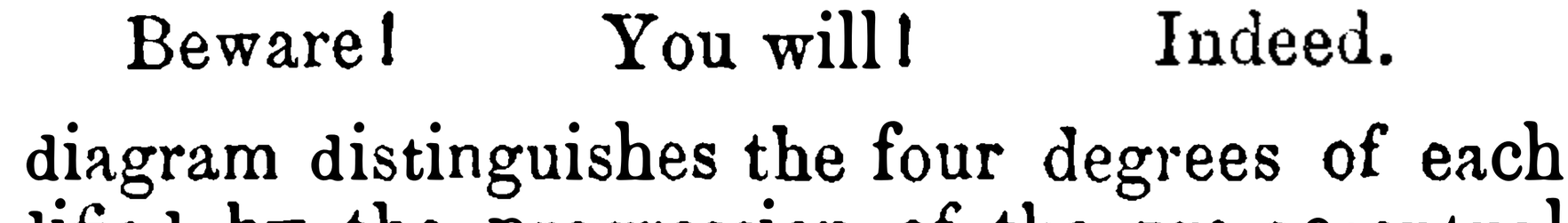
67. The next diagram distinguishes the four degrees of each inflexion, as modified by the progression of the pre-accentual syllable towards or from the pitch of the accent. These varieties require a good "ear" for their discrimination.

GAMUT OF INFLEXIONS.

FIRST MODE. SECOND MODE.

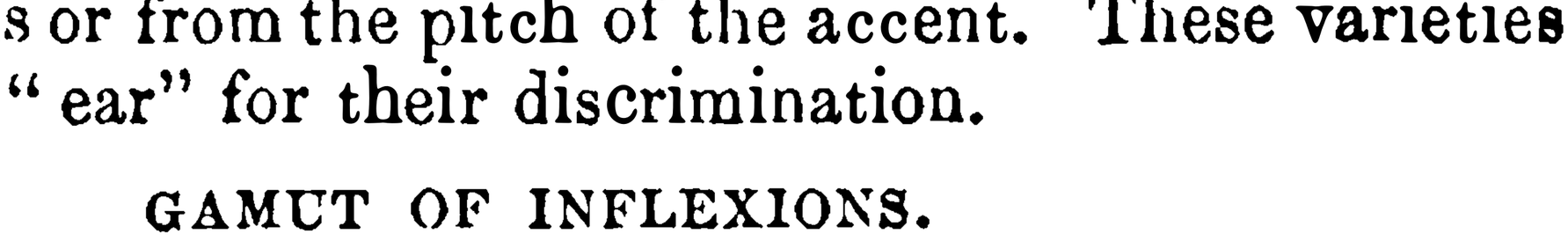
1st degree. 2nd degree. 3rd degree. 4th degree.

SIMPLE RISE.
Interrogation.
Surprise.



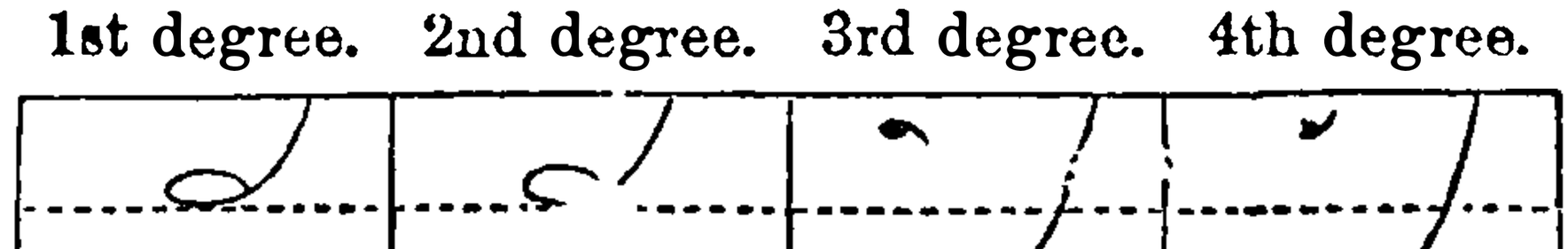
Indeed? Indeed? Indeed? Indeed?

SIMPLE FALL.
Assertion.
Command.



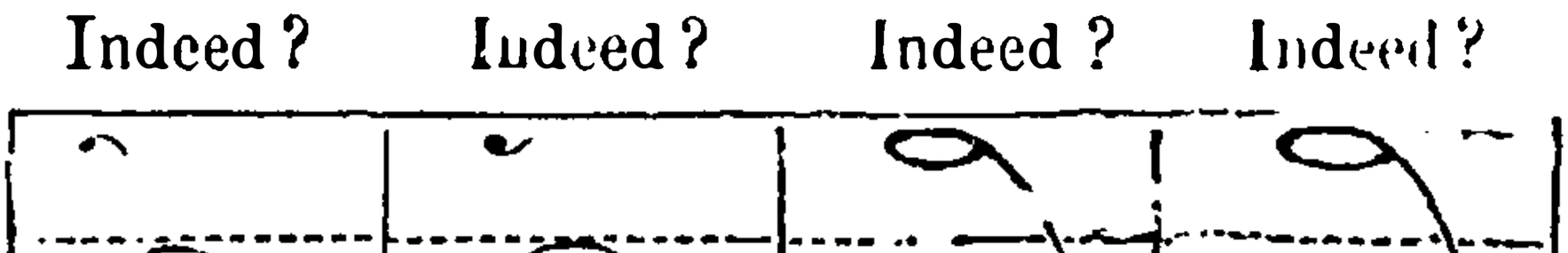
Behold! Behold! Behold! Behold!

COMPOUND RISE.
Antithetic Appeal.
Insinuation.



Remember! Remember! Remember! Remember!

COMPOUND FALL
Antithetic Assertion.
Sarcasm.



Impossible! Impossible! Impossible! Impossible!

NOTATION OF THE INFLEXIONS.

68. The inflexions are represented by the marks (◡ ◠ ◡̂ ◠̂) written above or below the inflected word, in accordance with the pitch of the tone above or below the middle of the voice. Thus:—

Simple Rise,	(◡)	First mode,—	mark	above	the word.
		Second mode,	"	below	"
Simple Fall,	(◠)	First mode,	"	below	"
		Second mode,	"	above	"
Compound Rise.	(◡̂)	First mode,	"	below	"
		Second mode,	"	above	".
Compound Fall,	(◠̂)	First mode,	"	above	"
		Second mode,	"	below	"

69. Besides the above regular varieties of Inflexion, a Rising Double Wave, consisting of a Compound Falling accent with a rising termination, is occasionally employed. The effect of this tone is highly expressive. Sarcastic interrogation is the sentiment it conveys, or antithetic assertion with incompleteness. Thus:—

"One murder makes a villain:

Millions a hero!

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE INFLEXIONS TO SENTENCES.

70. The Rising turn *connects* what has been said with what is to be uttered, and is thus the tone of incompleteness of statement; or it intimates *expectancy* of something to be inferred or supplied by the hearer, and is thus associated with appeal to the *hearer's* will or knowledge; with dubiety, interrogation, or supplication.

71. The Falling turn *disconnects* what has been said from whatever may follow, and is thus the tone of completeness of statement; or it intimates *absoluteness*, and communication of the *speaker's* will or knowledge; and is thus associated with confidence, affirmation, or command.

72. The melody of speech consists of contrasted tones. A rise precedes a fall, a fall precedes a rise.

73. All sentences belong to one of the three classes, (1.) Interrogative, (2.) Assertive, (3.) Imperative; as

(1.) Are you coming? (2.) I am coming. (3.) Come.

74. Interrogative sentences *appeal* for the hearer's assent or dissent to the proposition they contain, and therefore take a rising termination; but when they do not imply doubt or desire

of assurance, they take a falling termination, as in assertion of what the hearer's consciousness must affirm.

75. Assertive sentences affirm the speaker's will or knowledge, and therefore take a falling termination; but when they do not imply absoluteness, or do not communicate information, they take a rising termination, as in appeal to the hearer's consciousness.

76. Imperative sentences convey the speaker's will or desire, with or without reference to the will of the hearer. They take a falling termination when they are absolute and exclude appeal, as in command; and a rising termination when they imply appeal, and solicit rather than enjoin, as in supplication.

77. Interrogative sentences that cannot be answered by "yes" or "no," are of the nature of Imperative sentences, and follow the same law.

78. The Reader must not be guided by the rhetorical forms of sentences; for interrogative construction may be strongly assertive in meaning, and declarative construction may be emphatically interrogative.

MODULATION.

79. Modulation is to sentences what emphasis is to the members of a sentence, or accent to the syllables of a word. It distinguishes the more important from the subordinate passages by a change of key.

80. Modulation has also an imitative or analogical expressiveness, making the sound "an echo to the sense." As a general rule, high modulation renders prominent the speaker or the subject spoken, and is expressive of egotism, boldness, or importance; and low modulation is retiring, solemn, or expletive in effect.

81. All varieties of emphasis, inflexion, force, time, &c., may be given in any modulative pitch.

82. A change of modulation should take place at all changes of style: at the commencement of a paragraph; on parenthetic sentences and similes; and to distinguish question and answer, or different speakers in dialogue.

83. The reader or speaker should be able to discriminate and adopt at will the following five degrees of modulation: the middle or conversational pitch,—a considerably higher and a considerably lower key,—and a pitch intermediate to the conversational and the highest and lowest keys. Thus,

5——————high,—passionate.
4——————important.
3——————conversational.
2——————subordinate.
1——————low,—solemn.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

and sympathetic sensibility must accompany every utterance that is *naturally* delivered. But there is an expressive *sameness* of Tone and Force that is sometimes appropriate.

EXPRESSIVE SAMENESS OF TONE AND FORCE.—(MONOTONE.)

91. The style must be suited to the thought: if the latter is gay, the voice will leap from pitch to pitch, with a buoyancy that analogizes the bounding pulse and high spirits of cheerfulness; if the sentiment is sublime and solemnizing, gloomy or saddening, the tones will be subdued in range and level in pitch.

92. When the words of a clause are equally accented, and the voice sustained from accent to accent, with level pitch and subdued inflexions, the effect is a near approach to, though never a perfect, monotone. This is highly effective when judiciously introduced. The expressive sameness may be used at any pitch of the voice: low, soft, equal tones express awe; strong, low, level sounds express horror or disgust; a high level pitch denotes anguish or despair.

STACCATO PRONUNCIATION.

93. When the words of a clause are equally accented, but the voice not sustained from accent to accent, the effect is Staccato,—an abrupt, pointed, and general emphasis on every word,—or even, it may be, on every syllable. This mode of pronunciation is most effective to express reproachful and acrimonious sentiments; but it may be used in connection with any feeling, to indicate a very weighty and momentous utterance.

BREAK, OR SUDDEN PAUSE.

94. An important means of expressing emphasis consists in interrupting the sequence of grammatically related words—adjective and noun, pronoun and verb, preposition and noun, &c.,—by a *break*, or sudden pause, which powerfully arrests the hearer's attention to the expected word. The "break" is reflective, arch, or monitory in expressiveness.

V.—GESTURE.

95. The proper carriage of the body is important to the Reader or Speaker, as contributing both to ease and effectiveness. The management of gesture involves grace and expressiveness of Attitude and Motion.

ATTITUDE.

96. The head should be planted firmly, but without stiffness on the neck,—the neck upright, and the chin horizontal.

97. The chest should be held up, but without any raising of the shoulders. The shoulders should be kept level, and presented square to the eye of the spectator.

98. The arms should hang in perfect relaxation from the shoulders,—the elbows not touching the sides.

99. The feet should stand moderately apart,—the toes turned slightly outwards, and one foot a little in advance of the other.

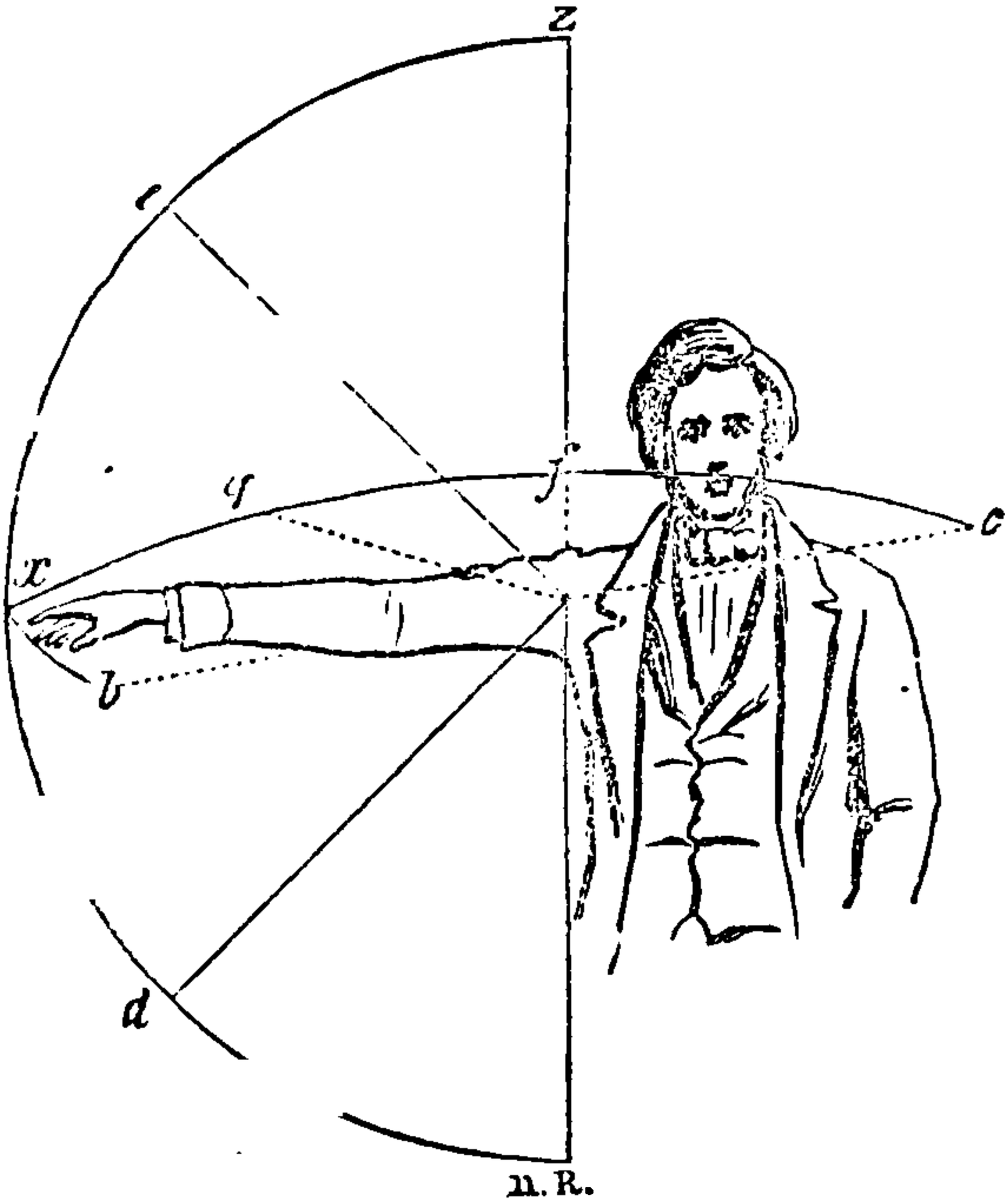
100. The weight of the body should be poised on one toot at a time. The supporting limb should be perfectly straight, while the knee of the other limb may be slightly bent.

MOTION.

101. All action should be graceful in mechanism, and definite in expressiveness.

GRACE.

102. Either arm may move with grace to the extent of half a circle, vertically or horizontally. The extremities of the semi-circle, the middle, and a point intermediate to the middle and each extreme, give five elevations and five transverse directions,—in all 25 points,—for gesture with either arm. Thus



VERTICAL SEMI-CIRCLE —*z*, zenith; *e*, elevated; *h*, horizontal; *d*, downwards; *n. R*, nadir or Rest.

TRANSVERSE SEMI-CIRCLE.—*c*, across the body; *f*, forwards; *q*, oblique; *x*, extended; *b*, backwards.

103. The arms should move directly from the shoulders, not from the elbows.

104. The arm and the hand should move separately; the motion of the arm preceding and being preparatory to that of

the hand. Thus, in raising the arm, the hand hangs down from the wrist while the arm is ascending. The subsequent action of the hand gives an *accentual* beat to the gesture, which should be coincident with the vocal accent or emphasis.

105. Every accentual action should be preceded by a preparatory movement in the opposite direction to that of the gesture.

106. As a general principle, either the upper side (the thumb) or the back of the hand, should be turned in the direction of the gesture in upward motions; and the lower side, or the palm of the hand, in downward motions.

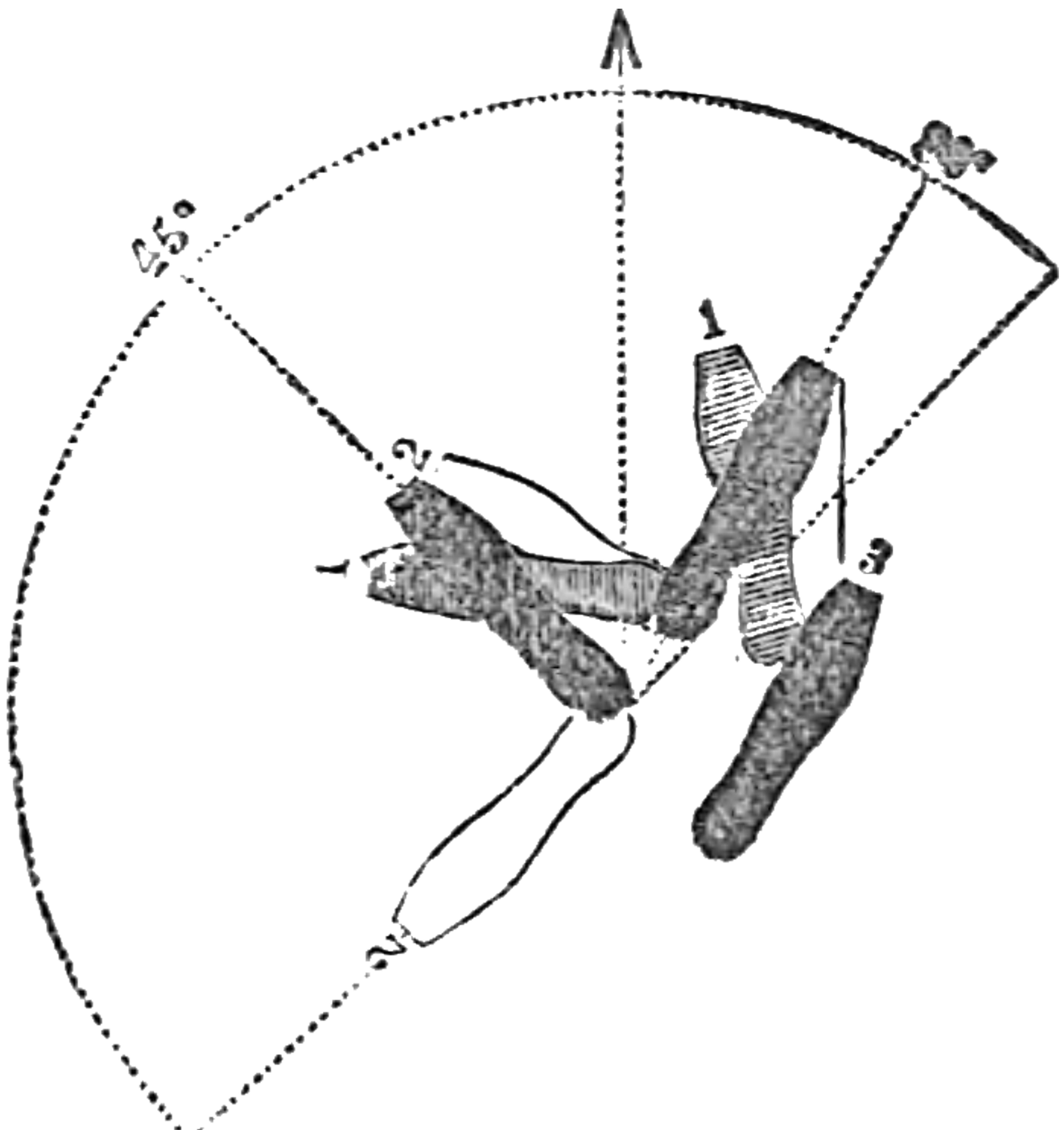
107. The feet should preserve a uniform angle of separation in every motion.—the toes being turned outwards to an angle of not more than 75 degrees.

108. The left foot should be in advance when the right arm is in action, and the right foot when the left arm is used.

109. In turning the body, the feet must make a corresponding turn. The ball or forepart of the foot should be the axis for a turn not exceeding 45 degrees, and the heel for a greater turn. No turn should exceed 90 degrees.

110. The body can only be turned to the side corresponding to the retired foot. Thus, in order to turn to the right when the right foot is in front, the right foot must first be drawn back or the left foot advanced, and *vice versa*.

111. The following diagram illustrates the positions and lateral shifts of the feet:—



EXPLANATION. — The black feet show the position of graceful standing. The advanced foot is 30° and the retired foot 45° from the centre.

1. The shaded feet show a semi-lateral turn on the ball of the feet.

2. The outline feet show a lateral turn on the heel.

3. The third black foot shows a preparatory shift for turning to the opposite side.

EXPRESSIVENESS.

112. No motion should be made without a reason for it; and whatever attitude or position any action leads to, should be maintained until a new motive either dictates a new movement, or allows the gesture appropriately to subside. Impulsive jerks and meaningless or indefinite shifts of the head, hands, arms, or

feet, should be carefully avoided. The speaker must learn to "stand at ease,"—to stand still. Repose is a chief element of effect.

113. The face and the whole body must sympathetically accord with the sentiment illustrated by the motions of the limbs. Isolated actions of the arms, &c. are ungraceful and unnatural. The impulse that moves the hand will not be unfelt by every muscle in the frame.

"To this sure standard make your just appeal;
Here lies the golden secret,—*learn to feel!*"

114. In the application of Gesture, the speaker's aim should be to realize the scene or incident described. His action should never—with tautology of expression—depict the literal meaning of words, or illustrate what the words themselves sufficiently describe; but rather suggest such naturally attendant particulars as are not formally expressed. Thus, in speaking of the heart, he should not point to the locality of that organ, but illustrate the feeling in connection with which the word "heart" is used, or which its use suggests. The principle of *imitatively* suiting the action to the "*word*" is only legitimate for comic effect; the principle of appropriately "*suiting*" the action to the word,—*i.e.* the *utterance*,—demands such an adaptation as is consistent with time, place, speaker, hearer, object, and all attendant circumstances of the utterance.

115. Motions towards the body indicate self-esteem, egotism, or invitation; from the body, command or repulsion; expanding gestures express liberality, distribution, acquiescence or candour; contracting gestures, frugality, reserve, or collection; rising motions express suspension, climax, or appeal; falling motions, completion, declaration, or response; a sudden stop expresses doubt, meditation, or listening; a sudden movement, decision or discovery; a broad and sweeping range of gesture illustrates a general statement, or expresses boldness, freedom, and self-possession; a limited range denotes diffidence or constraint, or illustrates a subordinate point; rigidity of the muscles indicates firmness, strength, or effort; laxity denotes languor or weakness; slow motions are expressive of gentleness, caution, deliberation, &c.; and quick motions, of harshness, temerity, &c.

MISCELLANEOUS DIRECTIONS FOR READING.

116. Hold the book in the left hand, and use the right hand to turn the pages.

117. Keep the book flatly open, so as not to cover the face; and hold the book sufficiently high to secure perfect vision without any bending of the neck or body.

118. Open the mouth gently, raise the chest before beginning, and take breath silently at every pause.

119. Pronounce one thought at a time; and do not run together clauses that have not a mutual reference.

120. The words expressive of each member of a sentence,—Subject, Predicate, or Circumstance,—should be accentually united, and the members themselves kept distinct.

121. Do not keep the eye constantly fixed on the page, but carry the words of a clause in your mind, and address the eye to your hearers.

122. Do not pronounce the last word or clause of a page, until you have turned over the leaf, lest you sever words connected in sense.

123. To a Speaker, the thought precedes and dictates the words; and words or clauses are instinctively grouped and accented so as to express the thought. But to a Reader, the words precede and dictate the thought; and constant care and discernment are necessary to discover precisely the thought intended to be expressed, and so to collocate the words as neither to separate those which should be accentually associated, nor to unite those which are unconnected in sense. The most important grammatical words are not necessarily the principal or emphatic words in a sentence.

ON THE READING OF VERSE.

124. Verse, or metrical composition, consists of sense in connection with the music of rhythm, or the consonance of syllables. The reader's business is to express the sense—by uniting or separating words exactly as in reading prose. In strictly following the sense, there should be no discord between the reader's voice and the poet's rhythm. If any want of harmony exist, the poet is in fault. One rule is common to both poet and reader, "Make the sound an echo to the sense." The reader must often accommodate his pronunciation to suit the rhythmical necessities,—but he should never sacrifice the sense for the sake of ill-adapted melody.

MISCELLANEOUS DIRECTIONS FOR RECITATION.

125. Do not stand up hurriedly, or consequentially, or be in haste to begin, but take your position with leisurely grace; pause, and bow before commencing. A few deep inspirations, slowly taken, especially through the nostrils, will assist in subduing nervous agitation.

126. Surround yourself by the imagery of your subject, and take no further thought of your auditors until the close. Then bow and leisurely retire.

127. Never turn your back to your hearers. Arrange your gesticulative pictures, as far as possible, neither behind you, nor directly in front, nor in the line of the shoulders, but to right and left of the centre before you.

MISCELLANEOUS EXERCISES.

ACTION OF THE TEETH.

128. Pronounce the names of the days of the week, the months of the year, or a series of numbers, &c., with an opening of the teeth before, and a pause after, each word.

ACTION OF THE LIPS.

129. Pronounce the following labial syllables rapidly and distinctly, without any action of the nostrils or superfluous motion of the lips. Vary the voice, and shift the accent.

pe be me fe ve whe we, &c.
ip ih im if iv, &c.

ACTION OF THE TONGUE.

130. Pronounce the following lingual syllables rapidly and distinctly, with the teeth open, and without any action of the lips or protrusion of the tongue. Give vocal and accentual variety.

te de ne le re the, &c.
it id in il ith. &c.

ORAL GYMNASTICS.

131. Pronounce each of the following difficult combinations of syllables five or six times without any superfluous motion of the articulating organs. Vary the accents and tones.

ip it, ip ik, it ik, it ip, ik it, ik ip.
ip it ip, ip ik ip, it ik it, it ip it, ik it ik, ik ip ik.
ip it ik, ip ik it, it ip ik, it ik ip, ik it ip, ik ip it.
ip it it ip, ip ik ik ip, it ik ik it, it ip ip it, ik it it ik, ik ip ip ik.

ip if, if ip, it ith, ith it, if ith, ith if.
ip if ip, if ip if, it ith it, ith it ith, if ith if, ith if ith.
ip if if ip, if ip ip if, it ith ith it, ith it it ith, if ith ith if, ith if if ith

ith iss, iss ith, ith ish, ish ith, iss ish, ish iss.
ith iss ith, iss ith iss, ith ish ith, ish ith ish, iss ish iss, ish iss ish.
ith iss ish, ith ish iss, iss ith ish, iss ish ith, ish iss ith, ish ith iss.
ith iss iss ith, iss ith ith iss, ith ish ish ith, ish ith ith ish,
iss ish ish iss, ish iss iss ish.

im in, in im, in ing, ing in, im ing, ing im.
im in im, in im in, in ing in, ing in ing, iin ing im, ing im ing.
im in ing, im ing in, in im ing, in ing im, ing in im, ing im in.
im in in im, in im im in, in ing ing in, ing in in ing, im ing ing im,
ing im im ing.

in il, il in, ih iv, iv ib, im iv, iv im.
in il in, il in il, ib iv ih, iv ib iv, im iv im, iv im iv.
in il il in, il in in il, ib iv iv ib, iv ib ib iv, im iv iv im, iv im im iv.

ve we, we ve, re le, le re, re ne, ne re.
ve we ve, we ve we, re le re, le re le, re ne re, ne re ne.
re le ne, re ne le, le re ne, le ne re, ne le re, ne re le.
ve we we ve, we ve ve we, re le le re, le re re le, re ne ne re, ne re re ne.

pip tit, pip kik, tit pip, tit kik, kik tit, kik pip.
pit kit, pik tik, tip kip, tik pik, kit pit, kip tip.
pit pik, pik pit, tip tik, tik tip, kit kip, kip kit.

thith sis, thith shish, sis thith, sis shish, shish sis, shish thith.
this shis, thish sish, sith shith, sish thish, shis this, shith sith.
this thish, thish this, sith sish, sish sith, shith shis, shis shith.

lil nin, nin lil, mim nin, nin mim, min lin, lin min.
rin lin, lin rin, nil ril, ril nil, rin ril, ril rin.
nirrin linnil, nirril rinnil, rillin lirrin, nillin lirril.

EXERCISES ON VOWELS.

FIRST VOWEL, as in *eel*:—eve, fatigue, minutiæ, aerie, quay, field, antœci, turquoise, aureola, sphere, shire, belief, unique, priest, seizure, ægis, amphisbœna, œdema, meagre, league, freeze, trustee, ennui, pique, Cæsar, demesne, impregn.

SECOND VOWEL, as in *ill*:—cabbage, pretty, women, busy, mountain, Monday, guineas, breeches, parliament, England, miniature, business, vineyard, cygnet, abyss, miracle, vigil, visor, dynasty, tyranny, clef, sieve.

THIRD VOWEL, as in *ale*: (a‿ee)—gaol, guage, steak, vein, connoisseur, halfpenny, complacent, azure, ache, baize, chaise, vagrant, dismay, inveigh, grange, hasten, arraign, aorist, aviary, bravado, dictator, ukase, vase, emigrate, portrait.

FOURTH VOWEL, as in *ĕll, ēre*:—many, any, bury, said, says, ne'er, heir, heifer, leopard, eyre, jeopardy, feoff, etiquette, burial, beryl, legend, brethren, chary, there, bestial, epoch, fœtid, wainscot, again, against, Aaron, Michaelmas.

FIFTH VOWEL, as in *an*:—Canaan, raillery, banian, patent, tapestry, waft, altitude, balcony, galaxy, album, gaseous, plaid, harangue, wrap, bade, sacrament, pacify, acrid, aloe, baron, atlantean, translate, arid, scandal, value, actual.

SIXTH VOWEL, as in *ask*:—bath, cast, castle, brass, fasten, master, pass, repast, sample, staff, task, vast, surpass, oasis, pagoda, paralysis, saliva, saloon, syllable, sofa, drama, charade, dragoon, abode, adopt.

SEVENTH VOWEL, as in *ah*:—ardour, clerk, haunt, hearty, guardian, parhelion, artifice, hearth, hearken, aunt, can't, draught, laugh, sergeant, alms, balm, malmsey, qualm, salve, almond, jaundice, artificer, barbaric.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

SECOND.—G, (vocalized,) as in *gall*:—gate, game, bag, gag, bigot, plague. vague, ghost, guerdon, guinea, guarantee, guilt, prologue, epilogue, gewgaw, ragged, craggy, groat, gibbous, gimblet, gibcat.

THIRD.—NG, (nasal,) as in *gong*:—king, fang, ring, flinging, ringing, singing, hanger, length, strength, lengthen, strengthen, reading, writing, drawing, dancing, singing. Ng-k; ancle, banquet, ink, donkey, monk, uncle, succinct, relinquish. Ng-g; anger, anguish, strangle, finger, distinguish, extinguish, congregate, congress.

FOURTH.—Y, (vocalized,) as in *yet*:—year, young, your, you, use, utility, yield, humour, youth, spaniel, million, poniard, fuchsia, celestial, graduate, question, feudal, neuter, yew-tree.

FIFTH.—SH, (whispered,) as in *mission*:—censure, nauseate, associate, Asia, Persia, mansion, pension, anxious, obnoxious, ocean, Dccii, chaise, chagrin, chivalry, schedule, fluxion, adventitious. *Tsh.* March, chamber, charity, attach, witch, which, scutcheon, inch, bunch, filch.

SIXTH.—ZH, (vocalized,) as in *vision*:—pleasure, leisure, rasure, fusion, explosion, osier, treasure, persuasion, adhesion. *Dzh.* Judge, jury, perjure, refuge, soldier, jejune, pledge, oblige, age, doge, divulged, exchanged.

SEVENTH.—R, (vocalized,) smooth as in *far*:—power, mayor, pure, lure, virtue, commerce, colonel, pardon, warden, mercy, farm, term, storm, mortgage, appear. Trilled, as in *rough*:—roar, whirring, spring, wrangle, wrack, wreck, wrestle, priory, rheum, rhubarb, tremendous, rugged, Russian.

EIGHTH.—L, (vocalized,) as in *light*:—lively, lovely, nestle, epistle, thistle, jostle, rustle, victual, needle, drivel, devil, evil, gravel, hazel, housel, ousel, ravel, shovel, shrivel, swivel, weasel, earl, marl, leave, loins, isle, longing, lingering, look.

NINTH.—T, (whispered,) as in *tame*:—debt, satiety, Thames, Thomas, Ptolemy, receipt, yacht, subtle, indict, victuals, phthisis, phthisic, titillate, taciturn, tutelar, indebted, indictment, tempter thyme, chopped, wrecked.

TENTH.—D, (vocalized,) as in *dame*:—bade, would, should twanged, harangued, buzzed. caged, lodged, suggest, exaggerate, courage, damage, rigged, writhed, bdellium, condemned, intrigued, fatigued, impugned, abridged.

ELEVENTH.—N, (nasal,) as in *name*:—penance, nonentity, gnomon, condign, stolen, fallen, swollen, gnarl, gnaw, kneel, nestorian, aspen, happen, sudden, kitchen, chicken, hyphen, sloven, heaven, pattens, mittens.

TWELFTH.—S, (whispered,) as in *seal*:—sin, sign, design, suit, soot, dose, sceptre, transgress, transcend, psalm, precedent, schism, tacit, Styx. mists, flaccid, Chersonese, scintillate, exist'st, striv'st, psalmist, Psyche, rescind, vaccinate, scimitar.

THIRTEENTH.—Z, (vocalized.) as in *zeal*:—zephyr, dissolve, hussars, damson, residue, president, mechanism, dismay, refusal, anxiety, houses, prizes, dances, scissors, dismal, complaisance, monarchize, as, his, rose.

FOURTEENTH.—TH, (whispered,) as in *thigh*:—thank, thaw, theatre, thought, bath, path, mouth, tooth, faith, breath, panther, orthoepy, apathy, ether, rhythm, ethics, atheist, length, strength, width, breadth, thesis, Lethe, amethyst, orthodox, labyrinth.

FIFTEENTH.—TH, (vocalized,) as in *thy*:—there, thine, thither, though, beneath, booth, either, tithe, wreathe, brethren, farthing, heathen, weather, breathe, clothe, unsheathe; *also in these plurals*, baths, paths, laths, oaths, mouths.

SIXTEENTH.—F, (whispered,) as in *fine*:—fame, feud, fanciful, proffer, crafty, chafe, enough, chough, rough, cough, trough, laughter, draught, phial, phlegm, nymph, dwarf, sphinx, epitaph, phaeton, febrifuge, whereof, thereof.

SEVENTEENTH.—V. (vocalized,) as in *vine*:—vane, veer, vivid, pave, weave, halve, livid, votive, nephew, twelve, revolve, nerve, Stephen, void, of, (but in the compounds *whereof*, &c., the *f* is not changed into *v*.)

EIGHTEENTH.—WH, (whispered,) as in *whey*:—whale, what, when, while, where, whirl, whist, which, whether, whither, whirlwind.

NINETEENTH.—W, (vocalized,) as in *way*:—war, waft, wall, wonder, one, once, swan, swagger, sweet, twig, twine, dwarf, dwell, buoy, buoyance, quotation, quality, choir, suite, cuirass, cuirassier, quorum, quagmire.

TWENTIETH.—P, (whispered,) as in *pay*:—peer, pound, happy, rapid, tropic, monophthong, diphthong, triphthong, naphtha, shepherd, ophthalmic, populous, papacy, puritan, turpitude, pippin, slipper, steeple, proper, span, spoil, scarp.

TWENTY-FIRST.—B, (vocalized,) as in *bay*:—bought, beast, beg, inhabit, bound, stab, ebb, subtile, babbler, glebe, cupboard, bulb, superb, verb, proverb, tube, barb, baboon, barbarous, barbican, abrogate, ebony, fabulous, obstacle.

TWENTY-SECOND.—M, (nasal,) as in *may*:—man, morn, move, mound, charm, mammon, moment, blame, hymn, solemn, phlegm, drachm, chasm, realm, film, farm, worm, rhythm, comb, womb, mimic, matrimony.

H, (whispered,)—Hate, haunt, hall, high, whole, hair, huge, hothouse, hartshorn, heritage, hospital, humanize, Hudibras.

In the following words and their derivatives, H is silent:—heir, honest, honour, hostler, hour, humour, *and, by many speakers*, humble.

EXERCISES ON ACCENT.

WORDS LIABLE TO MAL-ACCENTUATION.

Abdo′men, accep′table, ac′cessary, ad′mirable, coadju′tor, ad′vertise, ad′vertiser, adver′tisement, ancho′vy, antip′odes, a′lienable, apothe′osis, aro′ma, aspi′rant, asyn′deton, bal′cony, banian′, bitu′men, blas′phemous, brevet′, (*s*) brev′et, (*adj.*) cam′elopard, calor′ic,

cel'ibacy, centrif'ugal, centrip'etal, commen'dable, commit'tee, com'parable, chas'tisement, clandes'tine, complaisant', complaisance', compen'sate, con'fessor, consum'mate, con'trary, contem'plate, con'versant, cor'ollary, deco'rous, des'uetude, elegi'ac, ener'vate, epicure'an, ex'emplary, extir'pate, fanat'ic, fari'na, gon'dola, heg'ira, hori'zon, hymene'al, imbecile', im'pious, indis'soluble, interfe'rence, inter'stice, invalid', (*s.*) inval'id, (*adj.*) irreme'diable, lab'oratory, lam'entable, machi'nist, Mahom'et, martinet', met'onymy, mis'cellany, mis'chievous, o'asis, ob'durate, or'ison, pacha', panace'a, panegyr'ic, pan'egyrize, per'emptory, prolix', quanda'ry, recep'tacle, recitative', recon'dite, rep'ertory, ref'ragable, rev'enue, sali'va, seques'trate, sono'rous, stalac'tite, stalag'mite, sub'altern, subjec'ted, synec'doche, the'atre, uten'sil, verti'go.

TRANSPOSITION OF ACCENT IN CONTRASTED WORDS.

Giving, for'giving; plausibility, prob'ability; done, un'done; justice, in'justice; mortal, im'mortal; simulation, dis'simulation; visible, in'visible; accuse, ex'cuse; decrease, in'crease; proportion, dis'proportion; religion, ir'religion; untaught, ill'-taught; comprehend, ap'prehend; expel, im'pel; deduce, ad'duce; avenge, re'venge.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND SENTENCES.

Repeat each several times, quickly, and with firm accentuation.

Acts, chaise, copts, fifths, judged, knitting, laurel, literal, literally, literary, literarily, peacock, quick, railroad, raillery, rural, ruler, sash, sashes, sects, sixths, statistics, vivification.

Five wives weave withes. Such pranks Frank's prawns play in the tank. Put the cut pumpkin in a pipkin. Pick pepper peacock. Coop up the cook. A knapsack strap. Pick up the pips. A school coal-scuttle. Six thick thistle sticks. She says she shall sew a sheet. A sure sign of sunshine. The sun shines on the shop signs. A shot-silk sash-shop. I snuff shop snuff: do you snuff shop snuff? She sells sea-shells. Some shun sunshine. A rural ruler. Truly rural. A laurel-crowned clown. A lump of raw red liver. Literally literary. Don't run along the wrong lane. Let little Nelly run.

Laid in the cold ground, (not coal ground.) Half I see the panting spirit sigh, (not spirit's eye.) Be the same in thine own act and valour as thou art in desire, (not thy known.) Oh, the torment of an ever-meddling memory, (not a never meddling.) All night it lay an ice-drop there, (not a nice drop.) Would that all difference of sects were at an end, (not sex.) Oh studied deceit, (not study.) A sad dangler, (not angler.) Goodness centres in the heart, (not enters. His crime moved me, (not cry.) Chaste stars, (not chase tars.) She could pain nobody, (not pay.) Make clean our hearts, (not lean.) His beard descending swept his aged breast. (not beer.)

EXERCISES ON INFLEXION.

132. Pronounce the names of the days of the week, the months of the year, the cardinal or ordinal numbers, or any unconnected words, with the expressiveness of the Simple and Compound Rising and Falling Inflexions, and with as much as possible of variety in the pitch, extent, and force of each tone.

133. To give smoothness and natural effect to the inflexions, the following logical formulas may be prefixed to the words in practice:

For the Simple Rise, "Is it ——"
For the Simple Fall, "It is ——."
For the Compound Rise, "It is not ——"
For the Compound Fall, "But it is ——"

134. The formulas are to be pronounced softly, and in the opposite pitch to that of the accented word,—high before a low accent, low before a high accent. Thus:

First Modes:	Sunday?	It is	It is not	Wednesday
	Is it	Monday.	Tuesday.	But it is
Second Modes:	Is it	February.	March.	But it is
	January?	It is	It is not	April, &c.

135. The following antithetic sentences should be practised, with alternate rising and falling tones,—simple and compound. Thus:—

First Modes:	Not able but Abel.	Not axe but acts.
Second Modes:	Not add but had.	Not airy but hairy.

Not able but Abel.
Not axe but acts.
Not add but had.
Not airy but hairy.
Not artless but heartless.
Not assistance but assistants.
Not ballot but ballad.
Not bridle but bridal.
Not captor but capture.
Not coffin but coughing.
Not conventicle but conventical.
Not coral but choral.
Not coward but cowherd.
Not devīsable but divĭsible.
Not eddy but heady.
Not elegy but elogy.
Not eminent but emanent.
Not fetor but feature.
Not gamble but gambol.
Not gluttonous but glūtinous.
Not holy but wholly.
Not idle but idol.
Not impassible but impassable.
Not impostor but imposture.
Not innocence but innocents.
Not islands but highlands.
Not jester but gesture.
Not juggler but jugular.
Not juvenile but Juvenal.
Not lair but layer.
Not legislator but legislature.
Not liniment but lineament.

Not lore but lower.
Not magnet but magnate.
Not mantle but mantel.
Not mare but mayor.
Not matin but matting.
Not meddle but medal.
Not mines but minds.
Not moles but moulds.
Not ooze but whose.
Not oracle but auricle.
Not pastor but pasture.
Not patience but patients.
Not plaintive but plaintiff.
Not poplar but popular.
Not prĕcedent but prĕsident (z.)
Not principle but principal.
Not regimen but regiment.
Not relic but relict.
Not sentry but century.
Not track but tract.
Not weigh but whey.
Not weather but whether.
Not witch but which.
Not world but whirled.

EXERCISES ON THE NOTATION OF THE INFLEXIONS.

136. The following Exercises are minutely marked for additional vocal discipline and practice in the use of the inflective Notation. When the mark is above a word, the inflexion is pitched above the middle of the voice; and when the mark is below the word, the inflexion is pitched below the middle of the voice. Syllables before the accent are always to be pronounced in the opposite pitch to that of the accent,—low before a high accent, high before a low accent. Syllables after the accent are pronounced with the accentual inflexion continued to the end of the word or clause.

Will you go. Will you go. Will you go. Will you go. Will you go. Will you go. Will you go. Will you go.

Were you there. Were you there. Were you there. Were you there. Were you there. Were you there. Were you there. Were you there.

Is it right. Is it right. Is it right. Is it right. Is it right. Is it right. Is it right. Is it right. Is it right.

Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible. Is it possible.

How do you do. How do you do. How do you do. How do you do. How do you do. How do you do. How do you do. How do you do.

Gone away. Gone away. Gone away. Gone away. Gone away. Gone away. Gone away. Gone away.

No more. No more. No more. No more. No more. No more. No more. No more. No more. No more.

Have patience. Have patience. Have patience. Have patience. Have patience. Have patience. Have patience. Have patience.

He reads correctly. He reads correctly. He reads correctly. He reads correctly. He reads correctly. He reads correctly when he likes. He reads correctly when he likes. He reads correctly when he likes. He reads correctly when he likes. He reads correctly when he likes to pay attention. He reads correctly when he likes to pay attention. He reads correctly when he likes to pay attention. He reads correctly when he likes to pay attention.

The Christian's hope. The Christian's hope. The Christian's hope. The Christian' hope. The Christian's hope. The Christian's hope. The Christian's hope. The Christian's hope is fixed. The Christian's hope is fixed. The Christian's hope is fixed on heaven. The Christian's hope is fixed on heaven.

EXERCISES ON THE NOTATIONS OF INFLEXION, MODULATION, FORCE, AND TIME.

[The following additional marks are introduced: Plaintive, (pl.) Break, (...) Pause, (𝄐)]

To practise virtue is the sure way to love it.

A true friend unbosoms freely, advises justly, assists readily, adventures bodily.

His energies as a man, his affection as a fether, his solicitude as a King, his zeal as a Christian, were never equalled.

All partial evil is universal good.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Rend your heart and not your garments.

If to do were as easy as to know what 'twere good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces.

We can do nothing against the truth.

Strength and majesty belong to man.

He requires a voluntary service.

4
I could not treat a dog ill.

2 pl
Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord!

God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Those governments that curb not evils, cause;
And a rich knave's a libel on our laws.

As no man is alike unfit for every employment, so there is not any man unfit for all.

When people are determined to quarrel, a straw will furnish the occasion.

The labour of years is often insufficient for a complete reformation.

Consult your whole nature. Consider yourselves not only as sensitive, but as rational beings; not only as rational, but social; not only as social, but immortal.

You are not left alone to climb the arduous ascent; God is with you.

A friend cannot be known in prosperity, and an enemy cannot be hidden in adversity.

Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

8 2 3
Extended empire, like expanded gold, exchanges solid strength for feeble splendour.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

[3] Methought I heard a voice cry, [4 5] "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep—[3]the innocent sleep—
Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleave of care—
The death of each day's life—sore labour's bath—
Balm of hurt minds—great Nature's second course—
Chief nourisher in life's feast."—

[2] Still it cried, [4] "Sleep no more!" [2]to all the house:

[4] "Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more!—[3]Macbeth shall sleep no more!"

[4] If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall...[5v]tear her; [4]if they wrong her honour
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.

[5] Gone to be married! [4]Gone to swear a peace?
[e] False blood to false blood joined!
What men could do
Is done already: heaven and earth will witness,
[4] If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

RECAPITULATION OF THE SECRET OF GOOD READING.—ORATORICAL WORDS.

137. Attention is again directed—in conclusion—to the most important element of good reading—THE COMBINATION OF WORDS INTO GRAMMATICAL GROUPS, and THE SEPARATE PRONUNCIATION OF SUCH "ORATORICAL WORDS." (See par. 5, 40, 43, 118, 119, 120, 123.) The Distinct Articulation of SYLLABLES, and the Logical Enunciation of CLAUSES, are the primary requisites for effectiveness, as well as for ease in reading. The PRINCIPLES of grouping may be thus briefly comprehended:—NO WORDS SHOULD BE UNITED BETWEEN WHICH A GRAMMATICAL GOVERNMENT, OR MUTUAL RELATION, DOES NOT SUBSIST; and NO SUCH GRAMMATICALLY RELATED WORDS SHOULD BE SEPARATED. (But see par. 94.) These principles render the reader independent of the Marks of Punctuation.

[Teachers and Students of the Theory of Elocution, are referred to the "ELOCUTIONARY MANUAL," (by A. M. BELL,) in accordance with which the preceding Outline of Principles and Exercises has been prepared.]

MISCELLANEOUS READINGS

IN

PROSE.

[In many cases throughout the Book, the Extracts have been condensed, to render them more effective as Exercises in Reading and Recitation.]

I.—ON THE TONES OF THE HUMAN VOICE.—Alison.

There is a sublimity or beauty felt in particular notes or tones of the human voice. That this arises from the nature of the qualities which the tones express, and not from the nature of the sounds themselves, may perhaps appear from the following observations.

Such sounds are beautiful or sublime, only as they express passions or affections which excite our sympathy. If we inquire what are the particular tones which are beautiful, it will universally be found that they are such only as are expressive of pleasing or interesting affections. The tones peculiar to anger, peevishness, malice, envy, misanthropy, deceit, &c., are neither agreeable nor beautiful. The tone of good-nature, though very agreeable, is not beautiful but at particular seasons, because the quality itself is in general rather the source of complacence than pleasure; we regret the want of it, but we do not much enjoy its presence.—On the contrary, the tones peculiar to hope, joy, humility, gentleness, modesty, melancholy, &c., though extremely different, are all beautiful; because the qualities they express are the objects of universal interest and approbation. In the same manner, the tones peculiar to magnanimity, fortitude, self-denial, patience, resignation, &c., are all sublime; and for a similar reason. This coincidence of the beauty and sublimity of the tones of the human voice, with those qualities of mind that are interesting or affecting to us, if it is not a formal proof, is yet a strong presumption that from the expression of such qualities these sounds derive their sublimity or beauty.

The effect of such sounds in producing these emotions, instead of being permanent, is limited by the particular temper of mind we happen to be in, or by the coincidence

between that temper and the peculiar qualities of which the sounds are expressive. To most men, for instance, the tone of hope is beautiful. To a man in despair, it would be far from being so. To a man in grief, the tone of cheerfulness is simply painful. The tone of indignation, though in particular situations strongly sublime, to a man of a quiet and placid temper is unpleasant. To men of an ardent and sanguine character, the tone of patience is contemptible. To peevish and irritable spirits, the voice of humility, so peculiarly beautiful, is provoking. If the beauty or sublimity of tones were independent of the qualities of mind we thus associate with them, such diversities could not happen; the same sounds would produce uniformly the same emotions, as the same colours or smells produce uniformly the same sensations.

There is yet a further consideration. We know either from nature, or from experience, that particular sounds or tones are the expression of particular passions and affections; and the perception of such sounds is immediately accompanied with the belief of corresponding affections in the person from whom they proceed. Our sympathy, our interest, it is plain, depend on our opinion of the propriety or impropriety of such affections in such circumstances. All this, however, does not in any degree affect the nature of the sound, which is still the same, whether the affection is proper or improper. No tone of passion or affection is beautiful, with which we do not sympathize. The tone of joy, for instance, is beautiful, in most cases where it is heard. Suppose we find that such a sound proceeds from some very trifling or ridiculous cause, our sense of its beauty is instantly destroyed with our opinion of its propriety. The tone of melancholy, or moderated grief, is affecting and beautiful beyond most others:—assign some frivolous reason for it, and instantly it becomes contemptible. The tone of patience is sublime in a great degree:—tell us that it is pusillanimity, and its effect is instantly gone. The high imperious note of rage is often sublime:—a trifling cause renders it simply ludicrous. The same observation may be extended to the tones of all our passions. It is therefore extremely difficult, if not impossible, to account for this change of emotion, on the principle of the original and independent beauty of sounds.

With regard to the human voice, however, it is to be

observed that, besides all this, there is also a beauty in particular degrees of the same tones. As we are naturally led to judge of the character of a person from his peculiar tones, and to believe that those passions have the principal dominion of his mind which have the most prevalent expression in his voice; so we are led in the same way to judge of the degree or force of these passions, by the degree or strength of his tones. Thus, we feel a beauty in chastened degrees of sound, as they are expressive of moderation and self-command,—of habit more than immediate impulse; but they are beautiful only in those cases where temperance of emotion, of which they are the sign, is considered manly and proper.

II.—THE ART OF READING WELL.—Mrs Ellis.

If, in our ideas of the *fine arts*, we include all those embellishments of civilized life which combine, in a high degree, the gratification of a refined taste, with the exercise of an enlightened intellect; then must reading aloud hold a prominent place amongst those arts which impart a charm to social intercourse, and purify the associations of ordinary life. But it must be *good* reading, or the enjoyment is exchanged for unspeakable annoyance; not pompous or theatrical reading, but easy, familiar, and judicious reading; such reading as best conveys to the hearers the true meaning of the writer.

It certainly does appear strange that those who speak every day with the tone of right reason and the emphasis of truth, should so pervert that beautiful instrument of music, the human voice, as to read aloud with any tone and emphasis but those which are right and true. Yet so it is; and many a youth now sent home from school or college, after a costly, and what is called a *finished*, education, is wholly incapable of reading so as not at the same time to disgrace himself, and offend his hearers.

It is sometimes said that nothing can be easier than to read well, if persons understand what they are reading. But where, then, are the good readers who find it so easy? or where, in other words, are the people of understanding? for certainly many of our readers would be utterly unable to understand *themselves*, were not the sense of what they utter conveyed to their minds through the medium of sight.

The art of reading, as it is too generally treated, would seem to consist in the mere recognition and utterance of verbal signs of ideas, as they appear to us in their printed form. But it should never be forgotten, that, unless a right utterance is given to these signs, they fail to represent ideas; they are mere words, and nothing more.

When all the necessary requisites for a good reader are taken into account, we wonder not so much that this accomplishment is neglected, as that it does not constitute, with all who look upon education in its true light, an important means of refining and elevating the mind, of cultivating the sympathies, and of improving those habits of perception and adaptation which are so valuable to all.

Reading aloud, and reading well, ought not to be considered as mere amusement. A good book well read is like the conversation of an intelligent friend, and ought to be treated with the same respect. It forms, in fact, a rallying point, around which different tempers, feelings, and constitutions, can meet without discord; it tends to draw each mind out of its petty cares and perplexities, to meet with other minds on common ground; where a wider extent of interest, and often a nobler range of thought, have the effect of showing, by contrast, how trivial and unimportant are the things of Self, when compared with the great aggregate of human happiness and misery.

III.—ON STUDY.—Lord Bacon.

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgement and disposition of business. For, expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars one by one; but the general councils, and the plots, and marshaling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgement wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded-in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise

men use them; for they teach not their own use,—but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read,—not to contradict and refute, not to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse,—but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read—but not curiously; and some few, to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts of them made by others; but that should be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else, distilled books are like common distilled waters,—flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference, a ready man; and writing, an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a present wit; if he confer little, he had need have a good memory; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know what he doth not.

IV.—MEANS OF ACQUIRING DISTINCTION.—Sydney Smith.

It is natural in every man to wish for distinction; and the praise of those who can confer honour by their praise, is, in spite of all false philosophy, sweet to every human heart; but, as eminence can be only the lot of a few, patience of obscurity is a duty, which we owe not more to our own happiness, than to the quiet of the world at large. Give a loose, if you are young and ambitious, to that spirit which throbs within you; measure yourself with your equals; and learn, from frequent competition, the place which Nature has allotted to you; make of it no mean battle, but strive hard; strengthen your soul to the search of Truth, and follow that spectre of Excellence which beckons you on, beyond the walls of the world, to something better than man has yet done. It may be you shall burst out into light and glory at the last: but, if frequent failure convince you of that mediocrity of nature, which is incompatible with great actions, submit wisely and cheerfully to your lot; let no mean spirit of revenge tempt you to throw off your loyalty to your country, and to prefer a vicious celebrity to obscurity crowned with piety and virtue. If you can throw new light upon moral truth, or, by any exertions, multiply the comforts or confirm the happiness of mankind, this fame guides you to the true

ends of your nature; but, in the name of Heaven, as you tremble at retributive justice; and in the name of mankind, if mankind be dear to you, seek not that easy and accursed fame which is gathered in the work of revolutions: and deem it better to be for ever unknown, than to found a momentary name upon the basis of anarchy and irreligion.

V.—UNCERTAINTIES OF FORTUNE.—Lord Bolingbroke.

The sudden invasion of an enemy overthrows such as are not on their guard; but they who foresee the war, and prepare themselves for it before it breaks out, stand, without difficulty, the first and the fiercest onset. I learned this important lesson long ago; and never trusted to Fortune, even while she seemed to be at peace with me. The riches, the honours, the reputation, and all the advantages, which her treacherous indulgence poured upon me, I placed so, that she might snatch them away without giving me any disturbance. I kept a great interval between me and them. She took them, but she could not tear them from me.

No man suffers by bad fortune, but he who has been deceived by good. If we grow fond of her gifts; if we fancy that they belong to us, and are perpetually to remain with us; if we lean upon them, and expect to be considered for them; we shall sink into all the bitterness of grief, as soon as these false and transitory benefits pass away,—as soon as our vain and childish minds, unfraught with solid pleasures, become destitute even of those which are imaginary. But, if we do not suffer ourselves to be transported with prosperity, neither shall we be reduced by adversity. Our souls will be proof against the dangers of both these states: and, having explored our strength, we shall be sure of it; for, in the midst of felicity, we shall have tried how we can bear misfortune.

Ignominy can take no hold on Virtue; for Virtue is in every condition the same, and challenges the same respect. We applaud the world when she prospers; and when she falls into adversity we applaud her. Like the temples of the gods, she is venerable even in her ruins. After this, must it not appear a degree of madness to defer, one moment, acquiring the only arms capable of defending us against attacks, to which at every moment we are exposed? Our being miserable or not miserable, when we fall into misfortunes, depends on the manner in which we have enjoyed prosperity.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

pillar; that golden and narrow line which the very powers and virtues that lean upon it bend, which Policy and Prudence conceal, which Kindness and Courtesy modify, which Courage overshadows with his shield, Imagination covers with her wings, and Charity dims with her tears. How difficult must the maintenance of that authority be, which, while it has to restrain the hostility of all the worst principles of man, has also to control the disorders of his best;—which is continually assaulted by the one and betrayed by the other, and which regards with the same severity the lightest and the boldest violations of its law! There are some faults slight in the sight of Love, some errors trivial in the estimate of Wisdom; but Truth forgives no insult and endures no stain.

We do not enough consider this; nor enough dread the slight and continual occasions of offence against her. We are too much in the habit of looking at falsehood in its darkest associations, and through the colour of its worst purposes. That indignation which we profess to feel at deceit absolute, is indeed only felt at deceit malicious. We resent calumny, hypocrisy, and treachery, because they harm us, not because they are untrue. Take the detraction and the mischief from the untruth, and we are little offended by it; turn it into praise, and we may be pleased with it. And yet it is not calumny nor treachery that does the largest sum of mischief in the world; but it is the glistening and softly-spoken lie; the amiable fallacy; the patriotic lie of the historian, the provident lie of the politician, the zealous lie of the partizan, the merciful lie of the friend, and the careless lie of each man to himself, that cast that black mystery over humanity, through which any man who pierces, we thank as we would thank one who dug a well in a desert; happy that the truth still remains with us, even when we have wilfully left its fountains.

It would be well if moralists less frequently confused the greatness of a sin with its unpardonableness. The two characters are altogether distinct. The greatness of a fault depends partly on the nature of the person against whom it is committed, partly on the extent of its consequences. Its pardonableness depends, humanly speaking on the degree of temptation to it. One class of circumstances determines the weight of the impending punish-

ment; the other, the claim to remission of punishment. Since it is not easy for men to estimate the relative weight, or possible for them to know the relative consequences, of crime, it is usually wise in them to quit the care of such nice measurements, and to look to the other clearer condition of culpability,—esteeming those faults worst which are committed under least temptation. I do not mean to diminish the blame of the injurious and malicious sin, of the selfish and deliberate falsity; yet it seems to me that the shortest way to check the darker forms of deceit is to set watch more scrupulous against those which have mingled, unregarded and unchastised, with the currents of our life.

Do not let us lie at all. Do not think of one falsity as harmless, and another as slight, and another as unintended. Cast them all aside: it is better that our hearts should be swept clean of them, without over-care as to which is largest or blackest. To speak and to act truth with constancy and precision are nearly as difficult, and perhaps as meritorious, as to speak it under intimidation or penalty; and it is a strange thought, how many men there are, as I trust, who would hold to it at the cost of fortune or life, for one who would hold to it at the cost of a little daily trouble! And, seeing, that, of all sin, there is, perhaps, no one more flatly opposite to the Almighty, no one more "wanting the good of virtue and of being," than this of lying, it is surely a strange insolence to fall into the foulness of it on light or on no temptation; and surely becoming an honourable man to resolve that, whatever semblances or fallacies the necessary course of his life may compel him to bear or to believe, none shall disturb the serenity of his voluntary actions, or diminish the reality of his chosen delights.

VIII.—THE FATE OF BURNS.—Thomas Carlyle.

Contemplating the sad end of Burns—how he sank unaided by any real help, uncheered by any wise sympathy,—generous minds have sometimes figured to themselves, with a reproachful sorrow, that much might have been done for him; that, by counsel, true affection, and friendly ministrations, he might have been saved to himself and the world. But it seems dubious whether the richest, wisest, most benevolent individual could have lent Burns any effectual help.

Counsel,—which seldom profits any one,—he did not need. In his understanding, he knew the right from the

wrong, as well, perhaps, as any man ever did; but the persuasion which would have availed him, lies not so much in the head as in the heart, where no argument or expostulation could have assisted much to implant it.

As to money, we do not believe that this was his essential want; or well see that any private man could have bestowed on him an independent fortune, with much prospect of decisive advantage. It is a mortifying truth, that two men, in any rank of society, can hardly be found virtuous enough to give money, and to take it as a necessary gift, without an injury to the moral entireness of one or both. But so stands the fact: Friendship, in the old heroic sense of the term, no longer exists; it is in reality no longer expected, or recognised as a virtue among men. A close observer of manners has pronounced "patronage,"—that is, pecuniary or economic furtherance,—to be "twice cursed;" cursing him that gives, and him that takes! And thus, in regard to outward matters, it has become the rule, as, in regard to inward, it always was and must be the rule, that no one shall look for effectual help to another; but that each shall rest contented with what help he can afford himself. Such is the principle of modern Honour; naturally enough growing out of the sentiment of Pride, which we inculcate and encourage as the basis of our whole social morality.

We have already stated our doubts whether direct pecuniary help, had it been offered, would have been accepted, or could have proved very effectual. We shall readily admit, however, that much was to be done for Burns; that many a poisoned arrow might have been warded from his bosom; many an entanglement in his path cut asunder by the hand of the powerful; light and heat, shed on him from high places, would have made his humble atmosphere more genial; and the softest heart then breathing might have lived and died with fewer pangs. Still we do not think that the blame of Burns's failure lies chiefly with the world. The world, it seems to us, treated him with more, rather than with less kindness than it usually shows to such men. It has ever, we fear, shown but small favour to its teachers: hunger and nakedness, perils and reviling, the prison, the poison-chalice, the Cross, have, in most times and countries, been the market-price it has offered for wisdom—the welcome with which it has treated

those who have come to enlighten and purify it. Homer and Socrates, and the Christian Apostles, belong to old days; but the world's martyrology was not completed with these. So neglected, so "persecuted they the prophets," not in Judea only, but in all places where men have been. We reckon that every poet of Burns's order is, or should be, a prophet and teacher to his age; that he has no right to expect kindness, but rather is bound to do it; that Burns, in particular, experienced fully the usual proportion of goodness; and that the blame of his failure, as we have said, lies not chiefly with the world.

Where then does it lie? We are forced to answer, WITH HIMSELF: it is his inward, not his outward misfortunes, that bring him to the dust. Seldom, indeed, is it otherwise; seldom is a life morally wrecked, but the grand cause lies in some internal mal-arrangement,—some want, less of good fortune than of good guidance. Nature fashions no creature without implanting in it the strength needful for its action and duration; least of all does she neglect her master-piece and darling—the poetic soul! Neither can we believe that it is in the power of any external circumstances utterly to ruin the mind of a man; nay,—if proper wisdom be given him,—even so much as to affect its essential health and beauty. The sternest sum-total of all worldly misfortunes is Death; nothing more can lie in the cup of human woe: yet many men, in all ages, have triumphed over death, and led it captive; converting its physical victory into a moral victory for themselves—into a seal and immortal consecration for all that their past life had achieved. What has been done may be done again; nay, it is but the degree, and not the kind, of such heroism, that differs in different seasons: for, without some portion of this spirit, not of boisterous daring, but of silent fearlessness—of SELF-DENIAL in all its forms, no great man, in any scene or time, has ever attained to be good.

IX.—THE BLANK BIBLE.—ROGERS.

I thought I was at home, and that, on taking up my Bible one morning, I found, to my surprise, what seemed to be the old familiar book was a total blank: not a character was inscribed in it or upon it. On going into the street, I found every one complaining in similar perplexity of the same loss; and before night it became evident that a great

and wonderful miracle had been wrought in the world: the hand which had written its awful menace on the walls of Belshazzar's palace had reversed the miracle, and expunged from our Bibles every syllable they contained;—thus reclaiming the most precious gift that Heaven had bestowed, and ungrateful man had abused.

I was curious to watch the effects of this calamity on the varied characters of mankind. There was, however, universally, an interest in the Bible, now it was lost, such as had never attached to it while it was possessed. Some, to whom the Sacred Book had been a blank for twenty years, and who never would have known of their loss but for the lamentations of their neighbours, were not the least vehement in their expressions of sorrow. The calamity not only stirred the feelings of men, but it immediately stimulated their ingenuity to repair the loss. It was very early suggested that the whole Bible had again and again been quoted piecemeal in one book or other; that it had impressed its image on human literature, and had been reflected on its surface, as the stars on a stream. But alas! on inspection, it was found that every text, every phrase which had been quoted, whether in books of theology, poetry, or fiction, had been remorselessly obliterated.

It was with trembling hand that some made the attempt to transcribe the erased texts from memory. They feared that the writing would surely fade away; but to their unspeakable joy, they found the impression durable; and people at length came to the conclusion, that God left them at liberty, if they could, to reconstruct the Bible for themselves out of their collective remembrances of its contents. Some obscure individuals who had studied nothing else but the Bible, but who had well studied that, came to be objects of reverence among Christians and booksellers; and he who could fill up a chasm by the restoration of words which were only partially remembered, was regarded as a public benefactor.

At length, a great movement was projected amongst the divines of all denominations, to collate the results of these partial recoveries of the Sacred Text. But here it was curious to see the variety of different readings of the same passages insisted on by conflicting theologians. No doubt the worthy men were generally unconscious of the influence of prejudice; yet somehow the memory was seldom so clear

in relation to texts which told against, as in relation to those which told for, their several theories.

It was curious, too, to see by what odd associations, sometimes of contrast, sometimes of resemblance, obscure texts were recovered. A miser contributed a maxim of prudence, which he recollected principally from having systematically abused. All the ethical maxims were soon collected; for though, as usual, no one recollected his own peculiar duties or infirmities, every one kindly remembered those of his neighbours. As for Solomon's "times for every thing," few could recal the whole, but everybody remembered some. Undertakers said there was "a time to mourn;" and comedians said there was "a time to laugh;" young ladies innumerable remembered there was "a time to love;" and people of all kinds, that there was "a time to hate;" everybody knew there was "a time to speak;" and a worthy quaker added, that there was also "a time to keep silence."

But the most amusing thing of all was, to see the variety of speculations which were entertained respecting the object and design of this strange event. Many gravely questioned whether it could be right to attempt the reconstruction of a Book of which God himself had so manifestly deprived the world; and some, who were secretly glad to be relieved of so troublesome a monitor, were particularly pious on this head, and exclaimed bitterly against this rash attempt to counteract the decrees of Heaven. Some even maintained that the visitation was not in judgement but in mercy; that God, in compassion, and not in indignation, had taken away a book which men had regarded with an extravagant admiration and idolatry; and that, if a rebuke at all was intended, it was a rebuke to a rampant Bibliolatry. This last reason, which assigned, as the cause of God's resumption of his own gift, an extravagant admiration and reverence of it on the part of mankind—it being so notorious that even the best of those who professed belief in its Divine origin and authority had so grievously neglected it—struck me as so exquisitely ludicrous, that I broke into a fit of laughter, which awoke me.

The morning sun was streaming in at the window, and shining upon the open Bible which lay on the table; and it was with joy that my eyes rested on those words, which I read through grateful tears,—"The gifts of God are without repentance."

X.—THE ELDER'S DEATH-BED.—Professor Wilson.

For six years' Sabbaths, I had seen the Elder in his accustomed place beneath the pulpit; and, with a sort of solemn fear, had looked on his steadfast countenance, during sermon, psalm, and prayer. I met the Pastor, going to pray by his death-bed:—and, with the privilege which nature gives us to behold, even in their last extremity, the loving and beloved, I turned to accompany him to the house of sorrow, of resignation, and of death.

And now, for the first time, I observed, walking close to the feet of his horse, a little boy about ten years of age, who kept frequently looking up in the Pastor's face, with his blue eyes bathed in tears. A changeful expression of grief, hope, and despair, made almost pale, cheeks which otherwise were blooming in health and beauty; and I recognised, in the small features and smooth forehead of childhood, a resemblance to the aged man, who, we understood, was now lying on his death-bed. "They had to send his grandson for me through the snow, mere child as he is," said the minister, looking tenderly on the boy; "but love makes the young heart bold;—and there is One who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

As we slowly approached the cottage through a deep snow-drift, we saw, peeping out from the door, brothers and sisters of our little guide, who quickly disappeared; and then their mother showed herself in their stead; expressing, by her raised eyes and arms folded across her breast, how thankful she was to see, at last, the pastor,—beloved in joy and trusted in trouble.

A few words sufficed to say who was the stranger:—and the dying man, blessing me by name, held out to me his cold shrivelled hand, in token of recognition. I took my seat at a small distance from the bed-side, and left a closer station for those who were more dear. The pastor sat down near his Elder's head;—and by the bed, leaning on it with gentle hands, stood that matron, his daughter-in-law; a figure that would have sainted a higher dwelling, and whose native beauty was now more touching in its grief.

"If the storm do not abate," said the sick man after a pause, "it will be hard for my friends to carry me over the drifts to the church-yard." This sudden approach to the grave, struck, as with a bar of ice, the heart of the loving boy:—and, with a long deep sigh, he fell down, his face like ashes, on the bed; while the old man's palsied right

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

and if I have ever made you unhappy, I ask your forgiveness; for, though I may not think as you do on matters of religion, I have a human heart. Father, I may have been unkind, but I am not cruel. I ask your forgiveness."

"Come near to me, William; kneel down by the bedside, and let my hand feel the head of my beloved son; for blindness is coming fast upon me. Thou wast my first-born, and thou art my only living child. All thy brothers and sisters are lying in the church-yard, beside her, whose sweet face, thine own, William, did once so much resemble. Long wast thou the joy, the pride of my soul,—ay, too much the pride; for there was not, in all the parish, such a man, such a son, as my own William. If thy heart has since changed, God may inspire it again with right thoughts. I have sorely wept for thee—ay, William, when there was none near me;—even as David wept for Absalom —for thee, my son! my son!"

A long deep groan was the only reply; but the whole body of the kneeling man was convulsed; and it was easy to see his sufferings, his contrition, his remorse, and his despair. The pastor said, with a sterner voice and austerer countenance than were natural to him, "Know you whose hand is now lying on your rebellious head? But what signifies the word 'father,' to him who has denied God, the Father of us all?"—"Oh! press him not too hardly," said his weeping wife, coming forward from a dark corner of the room, where she tried to conceal herself in grief, fear, and shame. "Spare, oh! spare my husband!—he has ever been kind to ME;" and, with that, she knelt down beside him, with her long, soft, white arms, mournfully and affectionately laid across his neck. "Go thou likewise, my sweet little Jamie," said the Elder, "go even out of my bosom, and kneel down beside thy father and thy mother; so that I may bless you all at once, and with one yearning prayer." The child did as the solemn voice commanded, and knelt down somewhat timidly by his father's side; nor did the unhappy man decline encircling with his arm his son, too much neglected, but still dear to him as his own blood—in spite of the deadening and debasing influence of infidelity!

"Put the Word of God into the hands of my son, and let him read aloud, to his dying father, the eleventh chapter of the Gospel according to St John." The pastor went up to the kneelers, and said, "There was a time when none,

William, could read the Scriptures better than couldst thou;—can it be that the son of my friend hath forgotten the lessons of his youth?" He had not forgotten them; there was no need of the repentant sinner to lift up his eyes from the bed-side. The sacred stream of the Gospel had worn a channel in his heart, and the waters were again flowing. With a choked voice, he read, "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this? She said unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

"That is not an unbeliever's voice," said the dying man triumphantly; "nor, William, hast thou an unbeliever's heart. Say that thou believest in what thou hast read, and thy father will die happy!" "I do believe, and as THOU forgivest me, so may I be forgiven by my FATHER, who is in heaven." The Elder seemed like a man suddenly inspired with a new life. His faded eyes kindled,—his pale cheeks glowed,—his palsied hands seemed to wax strong,—and his voice was clear, as that of manhood in its prime.—"Into thy hands, O God! I commit my spirit—" and so saying, he gently sank back on his pillow;—and I thought I heard a sigh. There was then a long, deep silence; and the father, the mother, and the child, rose from their knees. The eyes of us all were turned towards the white, placid face of the figure, now stretched in everlasting rest; and without lamentations, save the silent lamentations of the resigned soul, we stood around THE DEATH-BED OF THE ELDER.

XI.—ON BRITISH HISTORY.—REV. C. WOLFE.

Great was the benefit of historical retrospect in ancient days, but its value is now incalculably augmented; for, of the sciences, history is that which is always advancing. Poetry and the arts are often stationary, often retrograde; but every year, every month, every day, is contributing its knowledge to the grand magazines of historical experience. With what an accession of beauty does History invite the Briton to the study of her charms, while she recounts the acts and heroism and glories of his country!

Let the energies of England be extinct,—let her armies be overwhelmed,—let her navy become the spoil of the enemy and the ocean,—let the national credit become a

by-word,—let the last dregs of an exhausted treasury be wrung from her coffers,—let the constitution crumble,—let the enemy ride in her capital, and her frame fall asunder in political dissolution ;—then stand, with History on one hand, and Oratory on the other, over the grave in which her energies lie entombed,—and cry aloud! Tell her that there was a time when the soul of a Briton would not bend before the congregated world:—tell her that she once called her sons around her, and wrung the charter of her liberties from a reluctant despot's hand:—tell her that she was the parent of a band of brothers that fought on Crispin's day:—tell her that Spain sent forth a nation upon the seas against her, and that England and the elements overwhelmed it:—tell her that six centuries were toiling to erect the edifice of her constitution, and that at length the temple arose:—tell her that there are plains in every quarter of the globe where Victory has buried the bones of her heroes:—tell her that when the enemy of human liberty arose, the freedom of the whole world took refuge with her; that, alone and unaided, she flung back the usurper, till recreant Europe blushed with shame:—tell her all this; and I say that the power of lethargy must be omnipotent, if she does not shake the dust from her neck, and rise in flames of annihilating vengeance on her destroyer.

For him who peruses history, every hero has fought,—every philosopher has instructed, every legislator has organized;—every blessing was bestowed, every calamity was inflicted, for his information. In public, he is in the audit of his counsellors, and enters the senate with Pericles, Solon, and Lycurgus; in private, he walks among the tombs of the mighty dead, and every tomb is an oracle.

XII—A WILD NIGHT AT SEA.—Dickens.

A dark and dreary night: people nestling in their beds or circling late about the fire; Want, colder than Charity, shivering at the street corners; church-towers humming with the faint vibration of their own tongues, but newly resting from the ghostly preachment—"One!" The earth covered with a sable pall, as for the burial of Yesterday; the clumps of dark trees,—its giant plumes of funeral feathers—waving sadly to and fro: all hushed, all noiseless, and in deep repose, save the swift clouds that skim across the moon; and the cautious wind, as, creeping after

them upon the ground, it stops to listen, and goes rustling on, and stops again, and follows, like a savage on the trail.

Whither go the clouds and wind so eagerly? If, like guilty spirits, they repair to some dread conference with powers like themselves, in what wild region do the elements hold council, or where unbend in terrible disport?

Here! Free from that cramped prison called the earth, and out upon the waste of waters. Here, roaring, raging, shrieking, howling, all night long. Hither come the sounding voices from the caverns on the coast of that small island, sleeping a thousand miles away so quietly in the midst of angry waves; and hither, to meet them, rush the blasts from unknown desert places of the world. Here, in the fury of their unchecked liberty, they storm and buffet with each other; until the sea, lashed into passion like their own, leaps up in ravings mightier than theirs, and the whole scene is whirling madness.

On, on, on, over the countless miles of angry space, roll the long heaving billows. Mountains and caves are here, and yet are not; for what is now the one, is now the other; then all is but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit, and flight, and mad return of wave on wave, and savage struggling, ending in a spouting up of foam that whitens the black night; incessant change of place, and form, and hue; constancy in nothing but eternal strife; on, on, on they roll, and darker grows the night, and louder howl the winds, and more clamorous and fierce become the million voices in the sea—when the wild cry goes forth upon the storm, "A ship!"

Onward she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her tall masts trembling, and her timbers starting on the strain; onward she comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low down in the hollows of the sea, as hiding for the moment from its fury; and every storm-voice in the air and water cries more loudly yet, "A ship!"

Still she comes striving on: and at her boldness and the spreading cry, the angry waves rise up above each other's hoary heads to look; and round about the vessel, far as the mariners on her decks can pierce into the gloom, they press upon her, forcing each other down, and starting up, and rushing forward from afar, in dreadful curiosity. High over her they break, and round her surge and roar; and, giving place to others, moaningly depart, and dash themselves to fragments in their baffled anger: still she comes

onward bravely. And though the eager multitude crowd thick and fast upon her all the night, and dawn of day discovers the untiring train yet bearing down upon the ship in an eternity of troubled water, onward she comes, with dim lights burning in her hull, and people there, asleep: as if no deadly element were peering-in at every seam and chink, and no drowned seamen's grave, with but a plank to cover it, were yawning in the unfathomable depths below.

XIII.—HUMOUROUS INCONGRUITIES.—Sydney Smith.

To see a young officer of eighteen years of age come into company in full uniform, and with such a wig as is worn by grave and respectable clergymen advanced in years, would make everybody laugh; because it certainly is a very unusual combination of objects, and such as would not atone for its novelty by any particular purpose of utility to which it was subservient. It is a complete instance of incongruity. Add ten years to the age of this incongruous officer, the incongruity would be very faintly diminished;—make him eighty years of age and a celebrated military character of the last reign, and the incongruity almost entirely vanishes: I am not sure that we should not be rather more disposed to *respect* the peculiarity than to laugh at it. As you increase the incongruity, you increase the humour; as you diminish it, you diminish the humour. If a tradesman of a corpulent and respectable appearance, with habiliments somewhat ostentatious, were to slide down gently into the mud, and dedecorate a pea-green coat, I am afraid we should all have the barbarity to laugh. If his hat and wig, like treacherous servants, were to desert their falling master, it certainly would not diminish our propensity to laugh; but if he were to fall into a violent passion, and abuse everybody about him, nobody could possibly resist the incongruity of a pea-green tradesman, very respectable, sitting in the mud, and threatening all the passers-by with the effects of his wrath. Here, every incident heightens the humour of the scene—the gaiety of his dress, the general respectability of his appearance, the rills of muddy water which trickle down his cheeks, and the harmless violence of his rage! But if, instead of this, we were to observe a dustman falling into the mud, it would hardly attract any attention, because the opposition of ideas is so trifling, and the incongruity so slight.

XIV.—THE ISLAND.—Hood.

If the author of the Irish Melodies had ever had a little isle so much his own as I have possessed, he might not have found it so sweet as the song anticipates. It has been my fortune, like Robinson Crusoe, to be thrown on such a desolate spot; and I felt so lonely, though I had a follower, that I wish *Moore* had been there. I had the honour of being in that tremendous action off Finisterre, which proved the end of the earth to many a brave fellow. I was ordered with a boarding party forcibly to enter the Santissima Trinidada; but in the act of climbing into the quarter-gallery, which, however, gave no quarter, was rebutted by the but-end of a gun—a marine's; who remained the quarter-master of the place. I fell senseless into the sea, and should no doubt have perished in the waters of oblivion, but for the kindness of John Monday, who picked me up to go adrift with him in one of the ship's boats. All our oars were carried away,—that is to say, we did not carry away any oars; and while shot was raining, our feeble hailing was unheeded. As may be supposed, our boat was anything but the jolly-boat; for we had no provisions to spare in the middle of an immense waste. We were, in fact, adrift in the cutter, with nothing to cut. We had not even junk for junketing, and nothing but salt-water, even if the wind should blow fresh. Famine indeed seemed to stare each of us in the face,—that is, we stared at one another. We were truly in a very disagreeable pickle, with oceans of brine and no beef; and, I fancy, we would have exchanged a pound of gold for a pound of flesh. No bread rose in the east, and in the opposite point we were equally disappointed. We could not compass a meal any how, but got mealy-mouthed, notwithstanding.

Time hung heavy on our hands, for our fast days seemed to pass very slowly; and our strength was rapidly sinking, from being so much afloat. Still we nourished Hope, though we had nothing to give her. But at last we lost all prospect of land, if one may say so when no land was in sight. The weather got thicker as we were getting thinner; and though we kept a sharp watch, it was a very bad look-out. We could see nothing before us but nothing to eat and drink. At last the fog cleared off, and we saw something like land right a-head; but, alas! the wind was in our teeth as well as in our stomachs. We could do nothing but "keep her near," and as we could not keep our-

selves full, we luckily suited the course of the boat; so that, after a tedious beating about—for the wind not only gives blows, but takes a great deal of beating—we came to an island. Here we landed, and our first impulse on coming to dry land was to drink. There was a little brook at hand to which we applied ourselves till it seemed actually to murmur at our inordinate thirst. Our next care was to look for some food; for though our hearts were full at our escape, the neighbouring region was dreadfully empty. We succeeded in getting some natives out of their bed, but with difficulty got them open; a common oyster-knife would have been worth the price of a sceptre. Our next concern was to look out for a lodging; and at last we discovered an empty cave, reminding me of an old inscription at Portsmouth, "The hole of this place to let." We took the precaution of rolling some great stones to the entrance, for fear of last lodgers,—lest some bear might come home from business, or a tiger to tea. Here, under the rock, we slept without rocking; and when, through the night's failing, the day broke, we saw, with the first instalment of light, that we were upon a small desert isle, now for the first time an Isle of Man.

XV.—ON HUMAN GRANDEUR.—Goldsmith.

An alehouse-keeper, near Islington, who had long lived at the sign of the French King, upon the commencement of the last war pulled down his old sign, and put up that of the Queen of Hungary. Under the influence of her red face and golden sceptre he continued to sell ale, till she was no longer the favourite of his customers; he changed her, therefore, some time ago, for the king of Prussia, who may probably be changed, in turn, for the next great man that shall be set up for vulgar admiration.

In this manner the great are dealt out, one after the other, to the gazing crowd. When we have sufficiently wondered at one of them, he is taken in, and another exhibited in his room, who seldom holds his station long;—for the mob are ever pleased with variety.

I must own, I have such an indifferent opinion of the vulgar, that I am ever led to suspect that merit which raises their shout; at least I am certain to find those great, and sometimes good men, who feel satisfaction in such acclamations, made worse by it; and history has too frequently taught me, that the head which has grown this

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

However my social hours are enlivened with innocent pleasantry, let the evening, in her sober habit, toll the bell to serious consideration. Every meddling and intrusive avocation is excluded. Silence holds the door against the strife of tongues, and all the impertinences of idle conversation. The busy swarm of vain images and cajoling temptations, which beset us, with a buzzing importunity, amid the gayeties of life, are chased by these thickening shades. Here I may, without disturbance, commune with my own heart, and learn that best of sciences—to know myself.

XVII.—SORROW FOR THE DEAD.—Washington Irving.

The sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be divorced. Every other wound we seek to heal —every other affliction to forget; but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open—this affliction we cherish and brood over in solitude. Where is the mother who would willingly forget the infant that perished like a blossom from her arms, though every recollection is a pang? Where is the child that would willingly forget the most tender of parents, though to remember be but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend over whom he mourns? Who, even when the tomb is closing upon the remains of her he most loved; when he feels his heart, as it were, crushed in the closing of its portal;—who would accept of consolation that must be bought by forgetfulness? No, the love which survives the tomb is one of the noblest attributes of the soul. If it has its woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection; when the sudden anguish and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved, is softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was in the days of its loveliness—who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may sometimes throw a passing cloud over the bright hour of gayety, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom; yet who would exchange it, even for a song of pleasure, or the burst of revelry? No, there is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song. There is a remembrance of the dead, to which we turn even from the charms of the living. Oh, the gravel—the grave! It buries every error—covers every defect—extinguishes every resentment. From

its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave, even of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb that he should ever have warred with the poor handful of earth, that lies mouldering before him?

But the grave of those we loved—what a place for meditation. There it is that we call up, in long review, the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us—almost unheeded—in the daily intercourse of intimacy; there it is that we dwell upon the tenderness—the solemn, awful tenderness—of the parting scene. The bed of death, with all its stifled griefs—its noiseless attendance—its mute, watchful assiduities. The last testimonies of expiring love! The feeble, fluttering, thrilling—oh, how thrilling!—pressure of the hand. The last, fond look of the glazing eye, turning upon us, even from the threshold of existence! The faint, faltering accents, struggling in death to give one more assurance of affection!

Ay! go to the grave of buried love and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience, for every past benefit unrequited—every past endearment unregarded—of that departed being, who can never—never—never return, to be soothed by thy contrition!

If thou art a child, and hast ever added a sorrow to the soul, or a furrow to the silvered brow, of an affectionate parent,—if thou art a husband, and hast ever caused the fond bosom that ventured its whole happiness in thy arms, to doubt one moment of thy kindness or thy truth,—if thou art a friend, and hast ever wronged in thought, or word, or deed, the spirit that generously confided in thee,—if thou art a lover, and hast ever given one unmerited pang to that true heart which now lies cold and still beneath thy feet;—then be sure that every unkind look, every ungracious word, every ungentle action, will come thronging back upon thy memory, and knocking dolefully at thy soul; then be sure that thou wilt lie down, sorrowing and repentant, on the grave, and utter the unheard groan, and pour the unavailing tear—more deep, more bitter, because unheard and unavailing!

Then weave thy chaplet of flowers, and strew the beauties of nature about the grave; console thy broken spirit, if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile tributes of regret: but, take warning by the bitterness of this thy contrite

affliction over the dead, and henceforth be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living.

XVIII.—LIBERTY AND SLAVERY.—STERNE.

Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still, Slavery! still thou art a bitter draught: and though thousands, in all ages, have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account. It is thou, Liberty!—thrice sweet and gracious goddess, 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 sceptre 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! grant me but health, thou Great Bestower of it, and give me but this fair goddess as my companion; and shower down thy mitres,—if it seem good unto thy divine providence,—upon those heads which are aching for them.

Pursuing these ideas, I sat down close by 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, 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 is, 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 farthest corner of his dungeon, which was alternately

his chair and bed: a little calendar of small sticks was laid 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 towards 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.

XIX.—THE POWER OF LITTLE THINGS.—Smiles.

The close observation of little things is the secret of success in business, in art, in science, and in every pursuit in life. Human knowledge is but an accumulation of small facts, made by successive generations of men, the little bits of knowledge and experience, carefully treasured up, growing at length into a mighty pyramid. Though many of these facts and observations may have seemed in the first instance to have but slight significance, they are all found to have their eventual uses, and to fit into their proper places. Even many speculations seemingly remote, turn out to be the basis of results the most obviously practical. Had not mathematicians toiled so long, and, to uninstructed observers, apparently so fruitlessly, over the abstract relations of lines and surfaces, few of our mechanical inventions would ever, probably, have seen the light.

When Franklin made his discovery of the identity of lightning and electricity, it was sneered at, and people asked, "Of what use is it?" To which his apt reply was, "What is the use of a child? It may become a man!" When Galvani discovered that a frog's leg twitched when placed in contact with different metals, it could scarcely have been imagined that so apparently insignificant a fact could have led to important results. Yet therein lay the germ of the Electric Telegraph, which binds the intelligence of continents together, and probably, before many years elapse, will "put a girdle round the globe." So too, little bits of stone and fossil, dug out of the earth, intelligently interpreted, have issued in the science of geology and the practical operations of mining, in which large capitals are invested, and vast numbers of persons profitably employed

The gigantic machinery employed in pumping our mines, working our mills and manufactories, and driving our steamships and locomotives, in like manner depends for its supply of power upon so slight an agency as particles of water expanded by heat. The steam which we see issuing from the common tea-kettle, when pent up within an ingeniously contrived mechanism, displays a force equal to that of millions of horses, and contains a power to rebuke the waves, and to set even the hurricane at defiance. Nay, it is the same power at work within the bowels of the earth which has been the cause of many of those semi-miraculous catastrophes,—volcanoes and earthquakes,—that have played so mighty a part in the history of the globe.

XX.—OSSIAN'S ADDRESS TO THE SUN.—Macpherson.

O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O Sun! thy everlasting light? Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty—the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon, cold and pale, sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone: who can be a companion of thy course?

The oaks of the mountains fall; the mountains themselves decay with years; the ocean shrinks and grows again; the moon herself is lost in heaven: but thou art for ever the same—rejoicing in the brightness of thy course.

When the world is dark with tempests, when thunder rolls, and lightning flies; thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian thou lookest in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more, whether thy yellow hairs flow on the Eastern clouds, or thou tremblest at the gates of the West.

But thou art perhaps like me—for a season: thy years will have an end; thou shalt sleep in the clouds, careless of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O Sun, in the strength of thy youth! Age is dark, and unlovely: it is like the glimmering light of the moon when it shines through broken clouds: the mist is on the hills; the blast of the north is on the plain; the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey.

READINGS IN PULPIT ELOQUENCE

I.—GOD IS LOVE.—Richard Watson.

Where shall we go for manifestations of the tenderness, the sympathy, the benignity of God? The Philosopher of this world leads us to Nature, its benevolent final causes, and kind contrivances to increase the sum of animal happiness; and there he stops—with half his demonstration! But the Apostle leads us to the Gift bestowed by the Father for the recovery of man's intellectual and moral nature, and to the Cross endured by the Son on this high behalf. Go to the heavens, which canopy man with grandeur, cheer his steps with successive light, and mark his festivals by their chronology; go to the atmosphere, which invigorates his spirits, and is to him the breath of life; go to the smiling fields, decked with verdure for his eye, and covered with fruits for his sustenance; go to every scene which spreads beauty before his gaze, which is made harmoniously vocal to his ear, which fills and delights the imagination by its glow or by its greatness: we travel with you, we admire with you, we feel and enjoy with you, we adore with you,—but we stay not with you. We hasten onwards, in search of a demonstration more convincing that "God is love;" and we rest not till we press into the strange, the mournful, the joyful scenes of Calvary; and, amidst the throng of invisible and astonished angels, weeping disciples, and the mocking multitude, under the arch of the darkened heaven, and with earth trembling beneath our feet, we gaze upon the meek, the resigned, but fainting Sufferer; and exclaim, "Herein is love!"—herein, and no-where else, is it so affectingly, so unequivocally demonstrated.—"not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

II.—CONSOLATIONS OF RELIGION.—Finlayson.

What is it, O child of sorrow,—what is it that now wrings thy heart, and bends thee in sadness to the ground? Whatever it be, if thou knowest the truth, the truth shall give thee relief. Have the terrors of guilt taken hold of thee? Dost thou go all the day long, mourning for thy iniquities, refusing

to be comforted? And, in thy bed at night, do visions of remorse disturb thy rest, and haunt thee with the fears of a judgement to come? Behold, the Redeemer hath borne thy sins in his own body on the tree; and if thou art willing to forsake them, thou knowest, with certainty, that they shall not be remembered in the judgement against thee.

Hast thou, with weeping eyes, committed to the grave the child of thy affections, the virtuous friend of thy youth, or the tender partner whose pious attachment lightened thy load of life? Behold, they are not dead! Thou knowest that they live in a better region, with their Saviour and their God; that still thou holdest thy place in their remembrance; and that thou shalt soon meet them again, to part no more.

Dost thou look forward with trembling to the days of darkness—when thou shalt lie on the bed of sickness—when thy pulse shall have become low—when the cold damps have gathered on thy brow—when the mournful looks of thy attendants have told thee that the hour of thy departure has come? To the mere natural man, this scene is awful and alarming. But, if thou art a Christian, if thou knowest and obeyest the truth, thou shalt fear no evil. The shadows which hang over the Valley of Death, shall retire at thy approach; and thou shalt see beyond it the spirits of the just, and an innumerable company of angels,—the future companions of thy bliss,—bending from their thrones to cheer thy departing soul, and to welcome thee into everlasting habitations.

III.—MAJESTY OF THE REDEEMER.—W. Archer Butler.

On such a subject as this, what can one say which is not unworthy? It is far vaster than our largest conception, infinitely grander than our loftiest; yet, overpoweringly awful as it is, how familiarity reconciles us to hearing it without awe! We must endeavour to devise some mode of meeting this miserable influence of habit, by forcing the mind to make an effort—faint though it may be—to realize the infinite magnificence of the subject.

You are wandering (I will suppose) in some of the wretched retreats of poverty, upon some mission of business or charity. Perplexed and wearied amid its varieties of misery, you chance to come upon an Individual whose conversation and mien attract and surprise you. Your attention, enkindled by the gracious benevolence of the

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

beyond all the systems of all the stars; around this whole universe, and through the infinity of infinite space itself; from all eternity and to all eternity;—there lives a Being, compared to whom that mighty Spirit just described, with his empire of a million suns, is infinitely less, than to you is the minutest mote that floats in the sunbeam. Hear his own voice attesting his eternal sovereignty: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." —But *who* is He that thus builds the throne of his glory upon the ruins of earth and heaven? who is He that thus triumphs over a perishing universe, himself alone eternal and impassible? The child of a Jewish woman;—even He who was laid in a manger at Bethlehem!

IV.—THE POETRY OF THE BIBLE.—GILFILLAN.

That so much of Scripture should be written in the language of poetry has excited some surprise, and created some inquiry; and yet in nothing do we perceive more clearly than in this, the genuineness, power, and divinity of the oracles of our faith. As the language of poetry is that into which all earnest natures are insensibly betrayed, so it is the only speech which has in it the power of permanent impression. The language of the imagination is the native language of man. It is the language of his excited intellect,—of his aroused passions,—of his devotion,—of all the higher moods and temperaments of his mind. It was meet, therefore, that it should be the language of his revelation from God.

The language of poetry is thus the language of the inspired volume. The Bible is a mass of beautiful figures;—its words and its thoughts are alike poetical;—it has gathered around its central truths all natural beauty and interest;—it is a Temple with one altar and one God, but illuminated by a thousand varied lights, and studded with a thousand ornaments. It has substantially but one declaration to make, but it utters that in the voices of the creation. It has pressed into its service the animals of the forest, the flowers of the field, the stars of heaven, all the elements of nature. The lion spurning the sands of the desert, the wild roe leaping over the mountains, the lamb led in silence to the slaughter, the goat speeding to the wilderness; the rose blossoming in Sharon, the lily drooping in the valley, the apple-tree bowing under its fruit; the great rock shadowing a weary land, the river gladdening the

dry place; the moon and the morning star; Carmel by the sea, and Tabor among the mountains; the dew from the womb of the morning, the rain upon the mown grass, the rainbow encompassing the landscape; the light, God's shadow; the thunder, His voice; the wind and the earthquake His footsteps:—all such varied objects are made—as if naturally so designed from their creation—to represent Him to whom the Book and all its emblems point. Thus the quick spirit of the Book has ransacked creation to lay its treasures on Jehovah's altar;—united the innumerable rays of a far-streaming glory on the little hill, Calvary;—and woven a garland for the bleeding brow of Immanuel, the flowers of which have been culled from the gardens of a universe.

V.—INEFFICIENCY OF HUMAN WORKS.—MELVILLE.

Some persons think, that, if they repent of their sins, they shall be pardoned. In other words, they suppose that there is a virtue in repentance, which causes it to procure forgiveness. Thus, repentance is exhibited as meritorious; and how shall we simply prove that it is not meritorious? Why, allowing that man can repent of himself,—which he can not,—what is the repentance on which he presumes? What is there in it of his own? The tears? they are but the dew of an eye, which is God's. The resolutions? they are but the workings of faculties, which are God's. The amendment? it is but the better employment of a life, which is God's. Where, then, is the merit? Oh, find something which is, at the same time, human and excellent in the offering, and you may speak of desert; but, until then, away with the notion of there being merit in repentance!—seeing that the penitent man must say, "All things come of Thee, and of thine own, O God, do I give thee."

Again, some men will speak of being justified by faith, till they come to ascribe merit to faith. By faith, is interpreted as though it meant on account of faith; and thus the great truth is lost sight of, that we are justified freely "through the redemption that is in Christ." But how can faith be a meritorious act? What is faith, but such an assent of the understanding to God's word, as binds the heart to God's service? And whose is the understanding, if it be not God's? Whose is the heart, if it be not God's? And if faith be nothing but the rendering to God that intellect, and that energy, which we have received from

God, how can faith deserve of God? Oh, as with repentance, so with faith: away with the notion of merit! He who believes, so that he can dare the grave, and grasp eternity, must pour forth the confession, "All things come of Thee, and of thine own, O God, do I give thee."

And once more: what merit can there be in works? If you give much alms, whose is the money? "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts." If you mortify the body, whose are the macerated limbs? If you put sackcloth on the soul, whose is the chastened spirit? If you be moral, and honest, and friendly, and generous, and patriotic, whose are the dispositions which you exercise—whose the powers, to which you give culture and scope? And if you use only God's gifts, can that be meritorious? You may say, "Yes—it is meritorious to use them aright, whilst others abuse them." But, is it wickedness to abuse? Then, it can only be duty to use aright; and duty will be merit, when debt is donation! You may bestow a fortune in charity, but the wealth is already the Lord's. You may cultivate the virtues which adorn and sweeten human life, but the employed powers are the Lord's. You may give time and strength to the enterprises of philanthropy; each moment is the Lord's, each sinew is the Lord's. You may be upright in every dealing of trade, scrupulously honourable in all the intercourses of life; but, "a just weight and balance are the Lord's; all the weights of the bag are His work." And where, then, is the merit of works? Oh, throw into one heap each power of the mind, each energy of the body; use, in God's service, each grain of your substance, each second of your time; give, to the Almighty, every throb of the pulse, every drawing of the breath; labour, and strive, and be instant in season, and out of season; and let the steepness of the mountain daunt you not, and the swellings of the ocean deter you not, and the ruggedness of the desert appal you not;—but, on! still on, in toiling for your Maker! and dream, and talk, and boast of merit, when you can find that particle in the heap, or that shred in the exploit, which you may exclude from the confession, —"All things come of Thee, and of thine own, O God, have I given thee."

VI.—LATENT PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION.—Caird.

In order to lead a religious life in the world, every action must be governed by religious motives. It is not by any means implied, that, in all the familiar actions of our daily life, religion must form a direct and conscious object of thought: the mind can no more think of heaven and earth at the same moment, than the body can be in heaven and earth at the same time. Moreover, there are few kinds of work in the world that to be done well must not be done heartily;—many that require, in order to excellence, the whole condensed force and energy of the highest mind. But although we cannot, in our worldly work, be always thinking of religion, yet, unconsciously, insensibly, we may be acting under its ever-present control.

Many of the thoughts and motives, that most powerfully impel and govern us in the common actions of life, are *latent* thoughts and motives. Have you not often experienced that curious law, by which a secret thought or feeling may lie brooding in your mind, quite apart from the particular work in which you are nevertheless diligently employed? Think of the work in which I am at this moment occupied. Amidst all the mental exertions of the public speaker,—underneath the outward workings of his mind, so to speak,—there is the latent thought of the presence of his auditory. Perhaps no species of exertion requires greater concentration of thought, or undividedness of attention than this; and yet, amidst all the subtle processes of intellect, the excogitation or recollection of ideas, —the selection, right ordering, and enunciation of words;—there never quits his mind for one moment, the idea of the presence of the listening throng. And have not you, too, my friends, an auditor,—it may be "a great cloud of witnesses," but at least one all-glorious Witness and Listener, ever present, ever watchful, as the discourse of life proceeds? Why, then, in this case, too, while the outward business is diligently prosecuted, may there not be on your spirit a latent and constant impression of that awful inspection? What worldly work so absorbing as to leave no room in a believer's spirit for the hallowing thought of that glorious Presence, ever near? Do not say that you do not see God,—that the presence of the Divine Auditor is not forced upon your senses, as that of the human auditory on the speaker. For, the same process goes on in the secret meditations, as in the public addresses of the

preacher;—the same latent reference to those who shall listen to his words dwells in his mind, when in his solitary retirement he thinks and writes, as when he speaks in their immediate presence. And, surely, if the thought of an earthly auditory,—of human minds and hearts that shall respond to his thoughts and words,—can intertwine itself with all the activities of a man's mind, and flash back inspiration on his soul; at least as potent and as penetrating may the thought be of Him, the great Lord of Heaven and Earth, who not only sees and knows us now, but before whose awful presence, in the last great congregation, we shall stand forth to recount, and answer-for, our every thought and deed.

VII.—INSIGNIFICANCE OF THIS WORLD.—Dr. Chalmers.

Though the earth were to be burned up, though the trumpet of its dissolution were sounded, though yon sky were to pass away as a scroll, and every visible glory which the finger of the Divinity has inscribed on it, were extinguished for ever—an event, so awful to us, and to every world in our vicinity, by which so many suns would be extinguished, and so many varied scenes of life and population would rush into forgetfulness,—what is it in the high scale of the Almighty's workmanship? A mere shred, which, though scattered into nothing, would leave the universe one entire scene of greatness and of majesty. Though the earth and the heavens were to disappear, there are other worlds which roll afar; the light of other suns shines upon them, and the sky which mantles them is garnished with other stars. Is it presumption to say, that the moral world extends to these distant and unknown regions? that they are occupied with people? that the charities of home and of neighbourhood flourish there? that the praises of God are there lifted up, and his goodness rejoiced in? that there piety has its temples and its offerings; and the richness of the Divine attributes is there felt and admired by intelligent worshippers?

And what is this world, in the immensity which teems with them? and what are they who occupy it? The universe at large would suffer as little in its splendour and variety, by the destruction of our planet, as the verdure and sublime magnitude of a forest would suffer by the fall of a single leaf. The leaf quivers on the branch which supports it; it lies at the mercy of the slightest accident: a breath

of wind tears it from its stem, and it lights on the stream of water which passes underneath. In a moment of time, the life, which we know by the microscope it teems with, is extinguished; and an occurrence, so insignificant in the eye of man and on the scale of his observation, carries in it, to the myriads which people this little leaf, an event as terrible and as decisive as the destruction of a world. Now, on the grand scale of the universe, we—the occupiers of this ball, which performs its little round among the suns and the systems that astronomy has unfolded—we may feel the same littleness and the same insecurity. We differ from the leaf only in this circumstance, that it would require the operation of greater elements to destroy us. But these elements exist. The fire which rages within, may lift its devouring energy to the surface of our planet, and transform it into one wide and wasting volcano. The sudden formation of elastic matter in the bowels of the earth—and it lies within the agency of known substances to accomplish this—may explode it into fragments. The exhalation of noxious air from below, may impart a virulence to the air that is around us; it may affect the delicate proportion of its ingredients; and the whole of animated nature may wither and die under the malignity of a tainted atmosphere.

These are changes which may happen in a single instant of time, and against which nothing known in the present system of things provides us with any security. They might not annihilate the earth, but they would unpeople it; and we, who tread its surface with such firm and assured footsteps, are at the mercy of devouring elements, which, if let loose upon us by the hand of the Almighty, would spread solitude, and silence, and death, over the dominions of the world.

Now, it is this littleness, and this insecurity, which make the protection of the Almighty so dear to us, and bring, with such emphasis, to every pious bosom, the holy lessons of humility and gratitude. The God who sitteth above, and presides in high authority over all worlds, is mindful of man; and though at this moment, His energy is felt in the remotest provinces of creation, we may feel the same security in his providence as if we were the objects of His undivided care.

It is not for us to bring our minds up to this mysterious agency. But such is the incomprehensible fact, that the same Being, whose eye is abroad over the whole universe,

gives vegetation to every blade of grass, and motion to every particle of blood which circulates through the veins of the minutest animal; that, though His mind takes into its comprehensive grasp immensity and all its wonders, I am as much known to Him as if I were the single object of His attention; that He marks all my thoughts; that He gives birth to every feeling and every movement within me; and that—with an exercise of power which I can neither describe nor comprehend—the same God, who sits in the highest heaven, and reigns over the glories of the firmament, is at my right hand, to give me every breath which I draw, and every comfort which I enjoy.

VIII.—WEALTH NOT PRODUCTIVE OF ENJOYMENT.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

Suppose a man gets all the world; what is it that he gets? It is a bubble and a phantasm, and hath no reality beyond a present transient use;—a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed, because its fruits and usages are transmitted to us by parts and by succession. He that hath all the world (if we can suppose such a man) cannot have a dish of fresh summer fruits in the midst of winter, not so much as a green fig: and very much of its possessions is so hid, so fugacious, and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the sea to the lord of the shore; all the fish and wealth within all its hollownesses are his, but he is never the better for what he cannot get; all the shell-fishes that produce pearls, produce them not for him; and the bowels of the Earth hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements; so that it will signify as much to this great proprietor, to be entitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the air: he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not so much as know of them, nor understand the philosophy of its minerals.

I consider that he who is the greatest possessor in the world, enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferior persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest prince enclose the sun, or set one little star in his cabinet for his own use, or secure to himself the gentle and benign influence of any one constellation? Are not his subjects' fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

Nay, those things which he esteems his ornament and

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

excellent than all the jewels of his crown. Understanding and knowledge are the greatest instruments of pleasure; and he that is most knowing, hath a capacity to become happy, which a less knowing prince, or a rich person, hath not; and in this only a man's capacity is capable of enlargement. But then, although they only have power to relish any pleasure rightly who rightly understand the nature, and degrees, and essences, and ends of things; yet they that do so, understand also the vanity and unsatisfyingness of the things of this world: so that the relish, which could not be great but in a great understanding, appears contemptible, because its vanity appears at the same time: the understanding sees all, and sees through it.

IX.—UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE.—KIRWAN.

Every thing human admits of change and vicissitude; states and empires, arts and sciences, customs and manners, laws and governments, feel, without ceasing, this inevitable principle acting upon them. God, from the throne of his immutability, sports with all the works and enterprises of man; and, willing to show us the little value we should set on things perishable, has decreed that there should be nothing permanent on the face of the earth, but the very vicissitude that marks and agitates it.

My brethren, the true source of all our delusion is a false and deceitful security of life. Thousands pass their accounts around us, and we are not instructed: some are struck in our very arms—our parents, our children, our friends; and yet we stand as if we had shot into the earth an eternal root. Even the most sudden transitions from life to dust, produce but a momentary impression on the dust that breathes. No examples, however awful, sink into the heart. Every instant we see health, youth, beauty, titles, reputation, and fortune, disappear like a flash. Still do we pass gaily on in the broad and flowery way—the same busy, thoughtless, irreclaimable beings; panting for every pleasure as before; thirsting for riches and pre-eminence; rushing on the melancholy ruins of one another; intriguing for the employments of those whose ashes are scarce cold; nay, often, I fear, keeping an eye on the very expiring, with the infamous view of seizing the earliest moment to solicit their spoils.

Great God! as if the all-devouring tomb, instead of solemnly pronouncing on the vanity of all human pursuits,

on the contrary emitted sparks to rekindle all our attachment to a perishable world! Let me suppose, my brethren, that the number of man's days were inscribed on his brow! Is it not clear that an awful certainty of that nature must necessarily beget the most profound and operative reflection? Would it be possible to banish, even for a moment, the fatal term from his thought? The nearer he approached it, what an increase of alarm! what an increase of light—on the folly of every thing but immortal good!

This much we all know, that, whatever length of days we promise ourselves, go we must; and, what is perhaps equally certain, at the moment we least expect it. Even examples of instant death in all the vigour of health, in the very bosom of security, are far from being uncommon. The scythe is suspended over our heads by a slender and imperceptible thread, which many causes, internal and external, often dissever without allowing us a breath for recollection. But, admitting that a misfortune so terrible is the lot of the fewer number, are we, therefore, more secure from surprise? There is not one individual in ten thousand, when obliged to lie down under illness however alarming, who can bring himself to believe it will prove fatal.

No! wedded to this miserable scene of existence, our hopes are afloat to the last; our eyes are opened, only when they are ready to close for ever. Perhaps an instant of reflection to be made the most of; perhaps to be divided between the disposition of worldly affairs, and the business of eternity! An instant of reflection!—just God!—to bewail an entire life of disorder! to inspire faith the most lively, hope the most firm, love the most pure! An instant of reflection—when reason is half eclipsed, and all the faculties palsied by the strong grasp of death! Oh, my brethren, terrible is the fate of those, who are only roused from a long and criminal security, by the sword of Divine Justice already gleaming in their eyes!

It is to the incomprehensible oblivion of our mortality, that the world owes all its fascination. Observe for what man toils. Observe what it often costs him to become rich and great;—dismal vicissitudes of hope and disappointment—often all that can degrade the dignity of his nature, and offend his God! Study the matter of the pedestal, and the instability of the statue. Scarce is it erected,—scarce presented to the stare of the multitude—when death, starting like a massy fragment from the summit of a moun-

tain, dashes the proud colossus into dust! Where, then, is the promised fruit of all his toil? Where the wretched and deluded being, who fondly promised himself that he had "laid up much goods for many years?"—Gone, my brethren, to his account!—a naked victim, trembling in the hands of the living God! Yes, my brethren, the final catastrophe of all human passions is rapid as it is awful. Fancy yourselves on that bed from which you never shall rise; and the reflection will exhibit, like a true and faithful mirror, what shadows we are and what shadows we pursue. Happy they who meet that great, inevitable transition, full of days! Unhappy they who meet it but to tremble and despair! Then it is that man learns wisdom, when too late; then it is that every thing will forsake him, but his virtues or his crimes. To him the world is past; dignities, honours, pleasure, glory!—past like the cloud of the morning!—nor could all that the great globe inherits, afford him, at that tremendous hour, as much consolation, as the recollection of having given but one cup of cold water to a child of wretchedness, in the name of Christ Jesus!

X.—SWEET AND BITTER MEMORIES.—Bishop Bloomfield.

When Jacob arose from his sleep, acknowledging the Presence in which he was, he marked the spot, and vowed a vow, that he would, indeed, give himself to God, to whom he felt he had been brought so very near; and he not only vowed the vow, but, through the changing and falling-off of his after-life, he still kept it. Years passed, and he returned to the spot, and built an altar there, and called upon the name of God, the God of Bethel!—for he could find no dearer name than that of this place, in which his soul was turned from death to life.

It is ever so; the place, the times that have been blessed for our spiritual refreshment, will be ever dear to our memories! How true, also, is the opposite! how often does a man, as he advances in life, feel unwilling to revisit a place known in his youth, because it reminds him of many sins—sins of which he may have long since repented, but the effects of which upon others may continue through eternity! It is not only the undetected murderer who will be afraid to go back to the place of his secret deed of darkness; every man who has a heart will loathe the places and the times, which are fraught with the memory of past sins; sins which might have sunk his own soul into utter ruin,

and which may have been destructive to the souls of others. And as the thoughts of such times and places are full of bitter memories, so, very pleasant is the thought of the time, the place, the friend, that spoke to us of God's mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ.

XI.—THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.—STERNE.

The great pursuit of man is Happiness: it is the first and strongest desire of his nature;—in every stage of life, he searches for it as for hidden treasure; courts it under a thousand different shapes, and, though perpetually disappointed, still persists; runs after and inquires for it afresh; asks every passenger that comes in his way, "Who will show me any good? who will assist me in the attainment of it? or direct me to the discovery of this great end of all my wishes?"

He is told by one, to search for it among the more gay and youthful pleasures of life, in scenes of mirth and sprightliness, where Happiness ever presides, and is ever to be known by the joy and laughter painted in her looks.

A second, with a graver aspect, points to the costly dwellings which Pride and Extravagance have erected;—tells the inquirer, that the object he is in search of inhabits there; that Happiness lives only in company with the great, in the midst of much pomp and outward state; that he will easily find her out by the coat of many colours she has on, and the great luxury and expense of equipage and furniture with which she always sits surrounded.

The Miser blesses God!—wonders how any one would mislead, and wilfully put him upon so wrong a scent—convinces him that Happiness and Extravagance never inhabited under the same roof; that, if he would not be disappointed in his search, he must look into the plain and thrifty dwellings of the prudent man, who knows and understands the worth of money, and cautiously lays it up against an evil hour: that it is not the prostitution of wealth upon the passions, or the parting with it at all, that constitutes happiness;—but that it is the keeping it together, and the having and holding it fast to him and his heirs for ever, which are the chief attributes that form this great idol of human worship, to which so much incense is offered up every day.

The Epicure, though he easily rectifies so gross a mistake, yet, at the same time, plunges him, if possible, into a greater: for, hearing the object of his pursuit to be Hap-

pincss, and knowing of no other happiness than what is seated immediately in the senses—he sends the inquirer there; tells him 'tis vain to search elsewhere for it, than where Nature herself has placed it—in the indulgence and gratification of the appetites which are given us for that end; and, in a word—if he will not take his opinion on the matter—he may trust the word of a much wiser man, who has assured us, that there is nothing better in this world than that a man should eat, and drink, and rejoice in his works, and make his soul enjoy good in his labour; for that is his portion.

To rescue him from this brutal experiment, Ambition takes him by the hand, and carries him into the world—shows him all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them—points out the many ways of advancing his fortune, and raising himself to honour—lays before his eyes all the charms and bewitching temptations of power—and asks, if there can be any happiness in this world like that of being caressed, courted, flattered, and followed?

To close all, the Philosopher meets him, bustling in the full career of his pursuit—stops him,—tells him, if he is in search of Happiness, he is gone far out of his way; that this deity has long been banished from noise and tumults, where there was no rest found for her, and was fled into solitude, far from all commerce of the world; and, in a word, if he would find her, he must leave this busy and intriguing scene, and go back to the peaceful scene of retirement and of books.

In this circle, too often does a man run,—tries all experiments, and, generally, sits down wearied and dissatisfied with them all, in utter despair of ever accomplishing what he wants; not knowing what to trust after so many disappointments, nor where to lay the fault—whether in the incapacity of his own nature, or the insufficiency of the enjoyments themselves.

XII.—THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL.—Dr. Guthrie.

Having scattered over an open field the bones of the human body, bring an anatomist to the scene. Observe the man of science how he fits bone to bone, and part to part; till, from those scattered members, he constructs a framework, which—apart from our horror at the eyeless sockets and fleshless form,—appears perfectly, divinely beautiful. In hands which have the patience to collect,

and the skill to arrange these materials, how perfectly they fit! bone to bone, and joint to joint,—till the whole figure rises to the polished dome, and the dumb skeleton seems to say, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

Now, as with these parts of the human frame, so is it with the doctrines of the Gospel. From the pages of Scripture over which they are scattered, let these doctrines be collected; arrange them in systematic order; how beautifully they fit! doctrine to doctrine, duty to duty; till—connected with each other, all "members one of another"—they rise into a form of perfect symmetry, presenting that very system which, with minor differences but substantial unity, is embodied in the Confessions, Creeds, and Catechisms of Evangelical Christendom.

But there is a difference, which even childhood may discern, between the manner in which the doctrines and duties of the Gospel are set forth in the Word of God, and their more formal arrangement in our Catechisms and Confessions. They are scattered here and there over the face of Scripture, much as the plants of Nature are distributed upon the surface of our globe. There, for example, we meet with nothing that corresponds to the formal order, systematic classification, and rectangular beds of a botanical garden; on the contrary, the creations of the vegetable kingdom lie mingled in what, although beautiful, appears to be wild confusion. On the same moor, on the surface of the same meadow, the naturalist collects grasses of many forms—he finds the soil enamelled with flowers of every hue; and in those primeval forests, which have been planted by the hand of God, and beneath whose silent and solemn shades man still walks in savage freedom, trees of every form and foliage stand side by side like brothers. With the Sabbath hills around us, far from the dust and din, the splendour and squalor of the city, we have sat on a rocky bank, to wonder at the varied and rich profusion with which God had clothed the scene. Nature, like Joseph, was dressed in a coat of many colours:—lichens gray, black, and yellow, clad the rock; the glossy ivy, like a child of ambition, had planted its foot on the crag, and, hanging on by a hundred arms, had climbed to its stormy summit; mosses, of hues surpassing all the colours of the loom, spread an elastic carpet around the gushing fountain; the wild thyme lent a bed to the weary, and its perfume to the air; heaths opened their blushing bosoms to the bee; the primrose,

like modesty, looked out from its leafy shade; at the foot of the weathered stone the fern raised its plumes, and on its summit the foxglove rang his beautiful bells; while the birch bent to kiss the stream, as it ran laughing to hide itself in the lake below, or stretched out her arms to embrace the mountain ash and evergreen pine. By a slight exercise of fancy, in such a scene one could see Nature engaged in her adorations;—we could hear her singing "The earth is full of the glory of God!" "How manifold are thy works, Lord God Almighty! in wisdom thou hast made them all!"

Now, although over the whole surface of our globe, plants of every form and family seem confusedly scattered; amid this apparent disorder,—the eye of science discovers a perfect system in the floral kingdom: and just as there is in Nature a botanical system, so there is as certainly, in the Bible a theological system, although its doctrines and duties are not classified according to dogmatic rules. Hence we are commanded to "search the Scriptures," to compare "spiritual things with spiritual," to dig for the treasures, and to dive for the pearls.

XIII.—THE CRUCIFIXION.—BOSSUET.

When our Redeemer expired on the cross, sympathizing Nature was convulsed! The sun was suddenly enveloped in midnight darkness, and confusion reigned! But I shall pass these terrific events, in order to lead your attention to more important objects. The Cross erected on Mount Calvary was the standard of victory, to which even Thought was to be led captive, and before which Imaginations were to be cast down;—that is to say, human wisdom and sceptic reluctance. No voice sublime was heard sounding from a thunder-bearing cloud, as of old from the heights of Sinai! No approach was observed of that formidable Majesty, before whom the mountains melt as wax! Where, where was the warlike preparation of that power, which was to subdue the world? See the whole artillery collected on Mount Calvary—in the exhibition of a Cross, of an agonizing Sufferer, and a crown of thorns!

Religious truth was exiled from the earth, and idolatry sat brooding over the moral world. The Egyptians, the fathers of philosophy; the Grecians, the inventors of the fine arts; the Romans, the conquerors of the universe; were all unfortunately celebrated for the perversion of religious worship,—for the gross errors they admitted into

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Goodness, and that there is an immortality of bliss awaiting us in another world? If this conviction be taken away, what is it that we can have recourse to, on which the mind may patiently and safely repose in the season of adversity? Where is the balm which I may apply with effect to my wounded heart, after I have rejected the aid of the Almighty Physician? Impose upon me whatever hardships you please; give me nothing but the bread of sorrow to eat; take from me the friends in whom I had placed my confidence; lay me in the cold hut of poverty, and on the thorny bed of disease; set death before me in all its terrors; do all this,—only let me trust in my Saviour, and "pillow my head on the bosom of Omnipotence,"—and I will "fear no evil"—I will rise superior to affliction,—"I will rejoice in my tribulation." But, let infidelity interpose between God and my soul, and draw its impenetrable veil over a future state of existence, and limit all my trust to the creatures of a day, and all my expectations to a few years as uncertain as they are short; and how shall I bear up, with fortitude or with cheerfulness, under the burthen of distress? Or, where shall I find one drop of consolation to put into the bitter draught, which has been given me to drink? I look over the whole range of this wilderness in which I dwell; but I see not one covert from the storm, nor one leaf for the healing of my soul, nor one cup of water to refresh me, in the weariness and the faintings of my pilgrimage.

XV.—ON WAR.—Dr. Channing.

Public war is not an evil which stands alone, or has nothing in common with other evils. It belongs to a great family. It may be said that society, through its whole extent, is deformed by war. Even in families, we see jarring interests and passions, invasions of right, resistance of authority, violence, force; and, in common life, how continually do we see men struggling with one another for property or distinction—injuring one another in word or deed—exasperated against one another by jealousies, neglects, and mutual reproach! All this is essentially war, but war restrained, hemmed in, disarmed, by the opinions and institutions of society. To limit its ravages, to guard reputation, property, and life, society has instituted government, erected the tribunal of justice, clothed the legislature with the power of enacting equal laws, put the sword into

the hands of the magistrate, and pledged its whole force to its support. Human wisdom has been manifested in nothing more conspicuously than in civil institutions for repressing war, retaliation, and passionate resort to force, among the citizens of the same state. But here it has stopped. Government, which is ever at work to restrain the citizen at home, often lets him loose, and arms him with fire and sword, against other communities; sends out hosts for desolation and slaughter, and concentrates the whole energies of a people in the work of spreading misery and death. Government, the peace-officer at home, breathes war abroad, organizes it into a science, reduces it to a system, makes it a trade, and applauds it, as if it were the most honourable work of nations. Strange, that the wisdom which has so successfully put down the wars of individuals, has never been inspired and emboldened, to engage in the task of bringing to an end the more gigantic crimes and miseries of public war! What gives these miseries pre-eminence among human woes—what should compel us to look on them with peculiar terror—is, not their awful amount, but their origin, their source. They are miseries inflicted by man on man. They spring from depravity of will. They bear the impress of cruelty, of hardness of heart. The distorted features, writhing frames, and shrieks of the wounded and dying—these are not the chief horrors of war; they sink into unimportance, compared with the infernal passions which work this woe. Death is a light evil, when not joined with crime. Had the countless millions destroyed by war been swallowed up by floods or yawning earthquakes, we should look back, awe-struck but submissive, on the mysterious Providence which had *thus* fulfilled the mortal sentence, originally passed on the human race. But that man, born of woman, bound by ties of brotherhood to man, and commanded—by an inward law and the voice of God—to love and do good, should, through selfishness, pride, or revenge, inflict these agonies, and shed these torrents of human blood;—here is an evil which combines, with exquisite suffering, fiendish guilt. All other evils fade before it.

The idea of honour is associated with war. But to whom does the honour belong? If to any, certainly not to the mass of the people, but to those who are particularly engaged in it. The mass of a people who stay at home, and hire others to fight—who sleep in their warm beds, and hire others to sleep on the cold and damp earth—who sit at

their well-spread boards, and hire others to take the chance of starving—who nurse the slightest hurt in their own bodies, and hire others to expose themselves to mortal wounds, and to linger in comfortless hospitals—certainly this mass reaps little honour from war. The honour belongs to those who are immediately engaged in it. Let me ask, then, What is the chief business of war? It is to destroy human life, to mangle the limbs, to gash and hew the body, to plunge the sword into the heart of a fellow-creature, to strew the earth with bleeding frames, and to trample them under foot with horses' hoofs. It is to batter down and burn cities, to turn fruitful fields into deserts, to level the cottage of the peasant, and the magnificent abode of the opulent, to scourge nations with famine, to multiply widows and orphans. Are these honourable deeds? Were you called to name exploits worthy of demons, would you not naturally select such as these? Grant that a necessity for them may exist: it is a dreadful necessity, such as a good man must recoil from, with instinctive horror; and though it may exempt them from guilt, it cannot turn them into glory. We have thought that it was honourable to heal, to save, to mitigate pain, to snatch the sick and sinking from the jaws of death. We have placed among the reverend benefactors of the human race, the discoverers of arts which alleviate human sufferings, which prolong, comfort, adorn, and cheer human life; and if these arts are honourable, where is the glory of multiplying and aggravating tortures and death?

XVI.—THE SLAVERY OF SIN.—Moberly.

Those who enslave the body, like those that kill the body, have no more that they can do. Their control stops with the outside: the mind and the heart of man are in such sort their own place, that the most exalted freedom of the soul is compatible with the most complete and utter subjection of the body.

But there is a slavery deeper, more inward, more painful, more hopeless by far than this,—when the soul of a man is enslaved to sin. It is deeper, for it penetrates into the recesses of the heart. There is neither thought nor feeling which is not poisoned by it; neither affection, nor natural love, nor sense of beauty, nor anything in which man naturally takes pleasure, which is not utterly debased and ruined by it. It is more inward, for its home is in the

conscience. The sinner feels the fetters upon his most secret being; the iron is upon his soul. It is more painful, because there is no pain like the constant biting of unmitigated remorse;—and it is more hopeless, because neither change of state or fortune, neither change of masters nor earthly accident, nor even death itself, offers any hope of cessation or relief.

Whosoever committeth sin is the servant, the slave, the bondman of sin. If a man allows himself to give way, time after time, to sin, and does not repent, he submits himself to a stern and terrible master, whose dominion admits of no relaxation, no comfort, and no end.

If you commit sin, brethren, and do not repent of your sin, you may boast as you will of your freedom; you may be as indignant as you please with those who would call you bondmen; you are a free citizen, a free-born Briton perhaps; you may boast of your liberty, your free press, your trial by jury, your house your castle, your freedom to move to and fro without question or passport; your very soil of freedom, the mere touch of which emancipates the slave of other lands;—you may boast as you please of all these things, and others like them,—as you do!—and yet, if you commit sin, and will not be set free from it,—if you will not accept God's loving offer of repentance and forgiveness, you can be nothing but a miserable slave within; a wretched, cowering, spirit-broken slave in heart, to Sin,—your savage, stern, and unpitying master.

XVII.—THE GRACE AND GLORY OF SALVATION.—Eyre.

It is one thing, by the sheer exercise of royal clemency, to arrest the process of law, when just passing to its uttermost exactment, and—giving free pardon to the criminal—to place him again amidst the unchallenged by justice, and the free. But it is quite another and far more difficult task for benevolence to cast out the unclean spirit, to discipline the evil habit, to reclaim and reform the character, —when vice has taken such a mastery that it has the force of nature, and, like a poison in the blood, works in every part and organ of the man's being,—and to bring the man onward to that calm of conscience, that freedom from all fear, that conscious guilelessness and integrity which speak to us through the frank countenance, the honest look, the answering eye which shrinks not from our fixed glances, and the manly open words which are the tokens

of felt, firm, independent uprightness. What profits liberty through the suspension of justice, without reformation through a godly discipline and influence? The man will be again your scourge, and his own misery and curse. You have saved the criminal, not when you have merely released him from his sentence, but when you have won him from the love and habit of his crime. Thus, salvation is not merely the deliverance of the guilty from the arrest and sentence of justice, but it is the deliverance of the man from his own former self. It is both purity and pardon; remission of sin and release from it; safeness from the wrath to come, and a title to heaven; but more than this, "*meetness* for the inheritance of the saints in light." Salvation may be resolved into two united gifts:—one is the bud, and the other the flower, of the same plant of Paradise; one is the dawn, and the other the noon, of the same endless day. One is a state of grace, the other a state of glory. Grace is the earthly part of salvation; glory is the heavenly part. Grace is the assurance of pardon and the pledge of it; glory is the enjoyment of pardon and the proof of it. Grace is the spring-tide of holiness and happiness, the sowing-time of struggle; glory is the autumn-tide of holiness and happiness, the reaping-time of their perfection. In a word, salvation is pardon, peace, and purity to a human spirit in this life; and holiness, happiness and glory perfect and eternal, in the life to come.

XVIII.—ON AUTUMN.—ALISON.

Let the young go out, in these hours, under the descending sun of the year, into the fields of Nature. Their hearts are now ardent with hope,—with the hopes of fame, of honour, or of happiness; and, in the long perspective which is before them, their imagination creates a world where all may be enjoyed. Let the scenes which they now may witness, moderate, but not extinguish their ambition; —while they see the yearly desolation of Nature, let them see it as the emblem of mortal hope;—while they feel the disproportion between the powers they possess, and the time they are to be employed, let them carry their ambitious eye beyond the world;—and while, in these sacred solitudes, a voice in their own bosom corresponds to the voice of decaying Nature, let them take that high decision which becomes those who feel themselves the inhabitants of a greater world, and who look to a being incapable of decay.

Let the busy and the active go out, and pause for a time amid the scenes which surround them, and learn the high lesson which Nature teaches in the hours of its fall. They are now ardent with all the desires of mortality; and fame, and interest, and pleasure, are displaying to them their shadowy promises; and, in the vulgar race of life, many weak and many worthless passions are too naturally engendered. Let them withdraw themselves, for a time, from the agitations of the world; let them mark the desolation of summer, and listen to the winds of winter, which begin to murmur above their heads: It is a scene, which, with all its powers, has yet no reproach;—it tells them, that such is also the fate to which they must come; that the pulse of passion must one day beat low; that the illusions of time must pass; and that "the spirit must return to Him who gave it." It reminds them, with gentle voice, of that innocence in which life was begun, and for which no prosperity of vice can make any compensation; and that Angel who is one day to stand upon the earth, and "to swear that time shall be no more," seems now to whisper to them, amid the hollow winds of the year, what manner of men ought they to be, who must meet that decisive hour.

There is "an even-tide" in human life—a season when the eye becomes dim, and the strength decays; and when the winter of age begins to shed, upon the human head, its prophetic snow. It is the season of life to which the present is most analogous; and much it becomes, and much it would profit you, to mark the instructions which the season brings. The spring and the summer of your days are gone; and with them, not only the joys they knew, but many of the friends who gave them. You have entered upon the autumn of your being; and whatever may have been the profusion of your spring, or the warm intemperance of your summer, there is yet a season of stillness and of solitude, which the beneficence of Heaven affords you, in which you may meditate upon the past and the future, and prepare yourselves for the mighty change which you are soon to undergo.

If thus you have the wisdom to use the decaying season of Nature, it brings with it consolations more valuable than all the enjoyments of former days. In the long retrospect of your journey, you have seen, every day, the shades of the evening fall, and, every year, the clouds of winter gather. But you have seen also, every succeeding day,

the morning arise in its brightness, and, in every succeeding year, the spring return to renovate the winter of Nature. It is now you may understand the magnificent language of Heaven; it mingles its voice with that of Revelation; it summons you, in these hours when the leaves fall, and the winter is gathering, to that evening study which the mercy of Heaven has provided in the book of salvation: and, while the shadowy valley opens, which leads to the abode of Death, it speaks of that hand which can comfort and can save, and which can conduct to those "green pastures, and those still waters," where there is an eternal Spring for the children of God.

XIX.—ON DEATH.—BLAIR.

Children of men! it is well known to you that you are a mortal race. Death is the law of your nature, the tribute of your being, the debt which all are bound to pay. On these terms you received life—that you should be ready to give it up, when Providence calls you to make room for others; who, in like manner, when their time is come, shall follow you. He who is unwilling to submit to death when Heaven decrees it, deserves not to have lived. You might as reasonably complain that you did not live before the time appointed for your coming into the world, as lament that you are not to live longer, when the period of your quitting it is arrived. What Divine Providence hath made necessary, human prudence ought to comply with cheerfully. Submit, at any rate, you must; and is it not better to follow of your own accord. than to be dragged reluctantly and by force? What privilege have you to plead, or what reason to urge, why you should possess an exemption from the common doom? All things around you are mortal and perishing. Cities, states, and empires, have their periods set. The proudest monuments of human Art moulder into dust. Even the works of Nature wax old and decay.

In the midst of this universal tendency to change, could you expect that, to your frame alone, a permanent duration should be given? All who have gone before you have submitted to the stroke of death. All who come after you shall undergo the same fate. The great and the good, the prince and the peasant, the renowned and the obscure, travel alike the road which leads to the grave. At the moment when you expire, thousands throughout the world, shall, with you, be yielding up their breath. Can that be held to be a great

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

conscience his only companion; that futurity, that unknown land from which no traveller has ever returned, where he knows not whom he shall find, nor what awaits him; that futurity, that fathomless abyss, in which his mind is lost and bewildered, and into which he must now plunge, ignorant of his destiny; that futurity, that tomb, that residence of horror, where he must now occupy his place amongst the ashes and the carcasses of his ancestors; that futurity, that incomprehensible eternity, even the aspect of which he cannot support; that futurity, in a word, that dreadful judgement, to which, before the wrath of God, he must now appear, and render account of a life of which every moment almost has been occupied by crimes:—Alas! while he only looked forward to this terrible futurity at a distance, he made an infamous boast of not dreading it; he continually demanded, with a tone of blasphemy and derision, Who is returned from it? He ridiculed the vulgar apprehensions, and piqued himself upon his undaunted courage. But, from the moment that the hand of God is upon him; from the moment that death approaches near, that the gates of eternity open to receive him, and that he touches upon that terrible futurity against which he seemed so fortified—ah! he then becomes either weak, trembling, dissolved in tears, raising up suppliant hands to Heaven!—or, gloomy, silent, agitated, revolving within himself the most dreadful thoughts, and no longer expecting more consolation or mercy from his weak tears and lamentations, than from his frenzies and despair!

In vain the minister of the Church endeavours to soothe his terrors, by opening to him the bosom of divine mercy; —a secret and terrible voice resounds from the bottom of his heart, and tells him that there is no salvation for the impious: his friends and relations are assembled round his bed to receive his last sighs, and he turns away from them his eyes, because he finds still amidst them the remembrance of his crimes. Death, however, approaches: the minister endeavours to support by prayer that spark of life which still remains: "Depart, Christian soul!" says he: he says not to him, "Prince, grandee of the world, depart!" During his life, the public monuments were hardly sufficient for the number and pride of his titles. In this last moment, they give him that title alone which he had received in baptism; the only one to which he had paid no attention, and the only one which can remain to him for ever. "Depart

Christian soul!" You had looked upon the Earth as your country, and it was only a place of pilgrimage from which you must depart. The Church thought to have announced glad tidings to you,—the expiration of your exilement.—in announcing the dissolution of your earthly frame. Alas! and it only brings you melancholy and frightful news, and opens the commencement of your miseries and anguish.

Then the expiring sinner, finding, in the remembrance of the past, only regrets which overwhelm him; in all which takes place around him, only images which afflict him; in the thoughts of futurity, only horrors which appal him; no longer knowing to whom to have recourse;—neither to created beings, who now leave him; nor to the world, which vanishes; nor to men, who cannot save him from death; nor to the just God, whom he looks upon as a declared enemy, and from whom he has no indulgence to expect:—a thousand horrors occupy his thoughts; he torments, he agitates himself, in order to fly from Death which grasps him, or at least to fly from himself. From his expiring eyes issues something, I know not what, of dark and gloomy, which expresses the fury of his soul; in his anguish he utters words, interrupted by sobs, which are unintelligible, and to which they know not whether repentance or despair gives birth. He deeply sighs; and they know not whether the remembrance of his past crimes, or the despair at quitting life, forces from him such groans of anguish. At last, in the midst of these melancholy exertions, his eyes fix, his features change, his countenance becomes disfigured, his livid lips convulsively separate; his whole frame quivers; and, by this last effort, his unfortunate soul tears itself reluctantly from that body of clay, falls into the hands of its God, and finds itself alone at the foot of the awful tribunal!

XXI.—SYMPATHY TAUGHT BY SUFFERING.—ALFORD

The Divine Son of God, before his incarnation in our flesh, was, in his own personal being, separate from the sons of men. One link was wanting to bind Him to us:—a gulf of vast extent lay yet between us. No cry of *suffering* had ever arisen from Him; but, from man, every hour since the Fall had sent up its utterance of woe. Personal experience is the prerogative of personal being, with which none can intermeddle, and which God himself infringes not. Ever since the dawn of thought its exercise has

been enriching each one of us. Its fruits are our own, in a manner in which nought else is our own. We live in them: we reason upon them: we respond to others by means of them. We bring into the world our personal being, as it were an untuned harp of many strings. About each of those wondrous instruments are ever busied God's messengers; the angels of His providence, and the ministering spirits of His grace. One after another, the tangled and jarring strings are brought into place and tone. First one, and then another, is made to answer to God's harmonies around us. As years pass on, the Divine Spirit touches them with a wider sweep and a firmer hand, till at last, the confusion is reduced, the work is completed, and the instrument is taken into the choir of heaven, where not a note jars in the expression of everlasting truth. But all this is according to each man's measure. In one, there may be a thousand answering notes; in another, but ten; in another, but five. Yet, many or few, these are the real possessions of a man in life: these his tokens of progress: these his own treasures, of which neither time nor eternity can rob him. And according to these, so is the man. In feeling, in sympathy, in power for good, he is as he has grown to be. Ask the poor victim of suffering and pain, where lies the charm in that face, pale, and wan, and with no outward beauty, which above all others he loves to see bending over his bed, and ministering to him? Others bring gifts: she, it may be, can bring none: others speak many words of studied kindness, she perhaps speaks but little and seldom: but, there is that in the calm face, in the ordinary casual word, in the quiet and gentle help, which is better, and more precious, and more powerful, and more beloved, than all on earth besides. Yes; that face has known sorrow; that sympathy flowing so still, comes from the deep fountains of personal suffering; that one, having suffered, knows how to succour them that suffer:—she is gifted with a power which angel never inherited, and which the Son of God left heaven to obtain.

Yes, brethren, this was the power with which it was his aim to clothe himself, when He became man. He can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, not merely because, as God, He knows them,—and not one pang of the suffering heart is hidden from Him,—but far more, because, as our Brother, He has felt them: He himself has been "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

army deserted and reduced to want; a province robbed; the civil and religious rights of a people violated.—The employment he held in Asia Minor and Pamphylia, what did it produce but the ruin of those countries? There he acted over again the scene of his quæstorship; bringing, by his bad practices, Cneius Dolabella, whose substitute he was, into disgrace with the people, and then deserting him; not only deserting, but even accusing and betraying him.—What was his conduct in his prætorship at home? Let the plundered temples and the public works neglected, that he might embezzle the money intended for carrying them on, bear witness.—How did he discharge the office of a judge? Let those who suffered by his injustice answer.

But his prætorship in Sicily crowns all his works of wickedness, and finishes a lasting monument to his infamy. His nod has decided all causes in Sicily for these three years; and his decisions have broken all law, all precedent, all right. The sums he has, by arbitrary taxes and unheard-of impositions, extorted from the industrious poor, are not to be computed.—The most faithful allies of the commonwealth have been treated as enemies. Roman citizens have, like slaves, been put to death with tortures.—The most atrocious criminals have, for money, been exempted from their deserved punishments; and men of the most unexceptionable characters condemned and banished, unheard.—The harbours, though sufficiently fortified, and the gates of strong towns, opened to pirates and ravagers.—The soldiery and sailors, belonging to a province under the protection of the commonwealth, starved to death.—Whole fleets, to the great detriment of the province, suffered to perish.—The ancient monuments, of either Sicilian or Roman greatness, the statues of heroes and princes, carried off; and even the Temples stripped of their images.

Having, by his iniquitous sentences, filled the prisons with the most industrious and deserving of the people, he then proceeded to order numbers of Roman citizens to be strangled in the gaols; so that the exclamation, "I am a citizen of Rome," which has often, in the most distant regions, and among the most barbarous people, been a protection, was of no service to them; but, on the contrary, brought a speedier and more severe punishment. Had any prince, or any state, committed the same outrage against the privilege of Roman citizens, should we not think we had sufficient ground for declaring immediate war against

it? What punishment ought then to be inflicted upon a tyrannical and wicked prætor, who dared, at no greater distance than Sicily, within sight of the Italian coast, to put to the infamous death of crucifixion, that unfortunate and innocent citizen, Publius Gavius Cosanus, only for his having asserted his privilege of citizenship, and declared his intention of appealing to the justice of his country against a cruel oppressor, who had unjustly confined him in prison at Syracuse, whence he had just made his escape? It was in vain that the unhappy man cried out, "I am a Roman Citizen; I have served under Lucius Pretius, who will attest my innocence." The blood-thirsty prætor, deaf to all defence, ordered the infamous punishment to be inflicted.

O liberty!—O sound once delightful to every Roman earl—O sacred privilege of Roman citizenship!—Once sacred!—now trampled upon!—But what then? Is it come to this? Shall neither the cries of innocence expiring in agony, nor the tears of pitying spectators, nor the majesty of the Roman commonwealth, nor the fear of the justice of his country, restrain the licentious and wanton cruelty of a monster, who, in confidence of his riches, strikes at the root of liberty, and sets mankind at defiance? I conclude with expressing my hopes that your wisdom and justice, Fathers, will not, by suffering the atrocious and unexampled insolence of Caius Verres to escape due punishment, leave room to apprehend the danger of a total subversion of authority, and introduction of general anarchy and confusion.

II.—ON PHILIP OF MACEDON.—Demosthenes.

If there is a man in this assembly, who thinks that we must find a formidable enemy in Philip, while he views on one hand the numerous armies which surround him, and on the other the weakness of our state, despoiled of so much of its dominions, I cannot deny that he thinks justly. Yet let him reflect on this;—there was a time, Athenians! when many of the states now subjected to him were free and independent, and more inclined to our alliance than to his. If Philip, at that time weak in himself and without allies, had *desponded* of success against you, he would never have engaged in those enterprises which are now crowned with success, nor could have raised himself to that pitch of grandeur at which you now behold him. But he knew well

that the strongest places are only prizes laid between the combatants, and ready for the conqueror. He knew that the dominions of the absent devolve naturally to those who are in the field; the possessions of the supine, to the active and intrepid. Animated by these sentiments, he overturns whole nations.

If you, my countrymen, will now, at length, be persuaded to entertain the like sentiments; if each of you be disposed to approve himself a useful citizen, to the utmost that his station and abilities enable him; if the rich will be ready to contribute, and the young to take the field; in one word, if you will be yourselves, and banish those hopes which every single person entertains, that the active part of public business may lie upon others, and he remain at ease;—you may then, by the assistance of the gods, recal those opportunities which your supineness hath neglected, regain your dominions, and chastise the insolence of this man.

But when, O my countrymen! will you begin to exert your vigour? Do you wait till roused by some dire event? till forced by some necessity? What then are we to think of our present condition? To free men, the disgrace attending on misconduct is, in my opinion, the most urgent necessity. Or say, is it your sole ambition to wander through the public places, each inquiring of the other, "What new advices?" Can anything be more new than that a man of Macedon should conquer the Athenians, and give law to Greece? "Is Philip dead?" "No—but he is sick." Pray, what is it to you whether Philip is sick or not? Supposing he should die, you would raise up another Philip, if you continue thus regardless of your interest.

Some cry, Philip hath joined with the Lacedemonians, and they are concerting the destruction of Thebes. Others assure us, he hath sent an embassy to the king of Persia; others, that he is fortifying places in Illyria. I do believe, indeed, Athenians! that he is intoxicated with his greatness, and does entertain his imagination with many such visionary projects, because he sees no power rising to oppose him. But I cannot be persuaded that he hath so taken his measures, that the weakest among us (for the weakest they are who spread such rumours) know what he is next to do. Let us disregard their tales. Let us only be persuaded of this, that he is our enemy; that we have long been subject to his insolence; that whatever we expected to have been done for us by others, hath turned against us; that all the resource

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

senate—not the voice of the country—not ancient precedents—not living law. But we are wanting—I say it more loudly—we, the consuls ourselves.

Conscript Fathers, a camp is pitched against the Roman republic within Italy. The commander of that encampment walks within the walls of Rome, takes his seat in this senate, the heart of Rome; and, with venomous mischief, rankles in the inmost vitals of the commonwealth. Catiline, should I, on the instant, order my lictors to seize and drag you to the stake, some men might, even then, blame me for having procrastinated punishment; but no man could criminate me—for a faithful execution of the laws. They shall be executed. But I will neither act, nor will I suffer, without full and sufficient reason. Trust me, they shall be executed; and then, even then, when there shall not be found a man so flagitious, so much a Catiline, as to say, you were not ripe for execution.

Good and great gods, where are we? What city do we inhabit? Under what government do we live? Here—here, Conscript Fathers, mixed and mingled with us all—in the centre of this most grave and venerable assembly—are men sitting, quietly incubating a plot against my life, against all your lives—the life of every virtuous senator and citizen; while I, with the whole nest of traitors, brooding beneath my eyes, am parading in the petty formalities of debate; and the very men appear scarcely vulnerable by my voice, who ought long since to have been cut down with the sword. Proceed, Catiline, in your honourable career. Go where your destiny and your desire are driving you. Evacuate the city for a season. The gates stand open. Begone! Take all your loving friends along with you; or, if that be a vain hope, take, at least, as many as you can, and cleanse the city for some short time. Let the walls of Rome be the mediators between me and thee; for, at present, you are much too near.

Lucius Catiline, away! Begin as soon as you are able this shameful and unnatural war. Begin it, on your part, under the shade of every dreadful omen; on mine, with the sure and certain hope of safety to my country, and glory to myself: and, when this you have done, then, do Thou, whose altar was first founded by the founder of our state—Thou, the establisher of this city, pour out thy vengeance upon this man, and all his adherents. Save us from his fury; our public altars, our sacred temples, our

houses, and household gods, our liberties, our lives. Pursue, Tutelar God! pursue them—these foes to the gods and goodness—these plunderers of Italy—these assassins of Rome! Erase them out of this life; and, in the next, let thy vengeance pursue them, insatiable, implacable, immortal!

IV.—SCIPIO TO THE ROMAN ARMY.

Were you, soldiers, the same army that I had with me in Gaul, I might well forbear saying anything to you at this time. For, what occasion could there be to use exhortation to a cavalry that had so signally vanquished the squadrons of the enemy upon the Rhone—or to legions by whom that same enemy, flying before them to avoid a battle, did, in effect, confess themselves conquered? But as these troops, having been enrolled for Spain, are there, (as was the will of the senate and people of Rome,) I, that you might have a consul for your captain against Hannibal and the Carthaginians, have freely offered myself for this war. You, then, have a new general, and I, a new army. On this account, a few words from me to you will be neither improper nor unseasonable.

That you may not be unapprised of what sort of enemies you are going to encounter, or of what is to be feared from them,—they are the very same whom, in a former war, you vanquished both by land and sea; the same from whom you took Sicily and Sardinia, and who have been these twenty years your tributaries. Conquered and enslaved, it is not boldness, but necessity, that urges them to battle; unless you can believe, that those who avoided fighting when their army was entire, have acquired better hope by the loss of two-thirds of their horse and foot in the passage of the Alps.

But you have heard, perhaps, that, though they are few in number, they are men of stout hearts and robust bodies—heroes of such strength and vigour, as nothing is able to resist. Mere effigies! nay, shadows of men! wretches emaciated with hunger, and benumbed with cold! bruised and battered to pieces among the rocks and craggy cliffs; their weapons broken, and their horses weak and foundered! Such are the cavalry, and such the infantry, with which you are going to contend: not enemies, but the fragments of enemies. There is nothing which I more apprehend, than that it will be thought Hannibal was vanquished by the Alps, before we had any conflict with him. But, per-

haps, it was fitting that it should be so; and that, with a people and a leader who had violated leagues and covenants, the gods themselves, without man's help, should begin the war, and bring it to a near conclusion; and that we, who, next to the gods, have been injured and offended, should happily finish what they have begun. I could wish, indeed, that the war we are now engaged in concerned only our glory, and not our preservation. But the contest at present is not for the possession of Sicily and Sardinia, but of Italy itself. Nor is there behind us another army, which, if we should not prove the conquerors, may make head against our victorious enemies. There are no more Alps for them to pass, which might give us leisure to raise new forces. No, soldiers; here you must make your stand, as if you were just now before the walls of Rome. Let every one reflect that he is now to defend, not his own person only, but his wife, his children, his helpless infants. Yet let not private considerations alone possess our minds. Let us remember that the eyes of the senate and people of Rome are upon us; and that, as our force and courage shall now prove, such will be the fortune of that city, and of the Roman empire.

V.—THE SCYTHIAN AMBASSADORS TO ALEXANDER.

Q. Curtius.

If your person were as gigantic as your desires, the world itself would not contain you. Your right hand would touch the East, and your left the West, at the same time. You grasp at more than you are equal to. From Europe you reach to Asia; from Asia you lay hold on Europe. And if you should conquer all mankind, you seem disposed to wage war with woods and snows, with rivers and wild beasts, and to attempt to subdue Nature. But have you considered the usual course of things? Have you reflected that great trees are many years in growing to their height, and are cut down in an hour? It is foolish to think of the fruit only, without considering the height you have to climb to come at it. Take care lest, while you strive to reach the top, you fall to the ground with the branches you have laid hold on. The lion when dead is devoured by ravens; and rust consumes the hardness of iron. There is nothing so strong, but it is in danger from what is weak. It will, therefore, be your wisdom, to take care how you venture beyond your reach

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

You may therefore consider with yourself, whether you had better have a people of such a character, and so situated, as to have it in their power either to serve you or to annoy you, according as you treat them, for allies, or for enemies.

VI.—HANNIBAL TO HIS SOLDIERS.—Livy.

I know not, soldiers, whether you or your prisoners be encompassed by fortune with the stricter bonds and necessities. Two seas enclose you on the right and left;—not a ship to flee to for escaping. Before you is the Po, a river broader and more rapid than the Rhone; behind you are the Alps, over which, even when your numbers were undiminished, you were hardly able to force a passage.—Here then, soldiers, you must either conquer or die, the very first hour you meet the enemy. But the same fortune which has laid you under the necessity of fighting, has set before your eyes those rewards of victory, than which no men are ever wont to wish for greater from the immortal gods. Should we by our valour recover only Sicily and Sardinia, which were ravished from our fathers, those would be no inconsiderable prizes. Yet, what are these? The wealth of Rome, whatever riches she has heaped together in the spoils of nations, all these, with the masters of them, will be yours. You have been long enough employed in driving the cattle upon the vast mountains of Lusitania and Celtiberia; you have hitherto met with no reward worthy of the labours and dangers you have undergone. The time is now come to reap the full recompense of your toilsome marches over so many mountains and rivers, and through so many nations, all of them in arms. This is the place which fortune has appointed to be the limit of your labours; it is here that you will finish your glorious warfare, and receive an ample recompense of your completed service. For I would not have you imagine, that victory will be as difficult as the name of a Roman war is great and sounding. It has often happened, that a despised enemy has given a bloody battle, and the most renowned kings and nations have by a small force been overthrown. And if you but take away the glitter of the Roman name, what is there wherein they may stand in competition with you? For, from the very Pillars of Hercules, from the ocean, from the utmost bounds of the earth, through so many warlike nations of Spain and Gaul, are you not come hither victorious?

And with whom are you now to fight? With raw soldiers, an undisciplined army, beaten, vanquished, besieged by the Gauls the very last summer; an army unknown to their leader, and unacquainted with him.

On what side soever I turn my eyes, I behold all full of courage and strength;—a veteran infantry, a most gallant cavalry; you, my allies, most faithful and valiant; you, Carthaginians, whom not only your country's cause, but the justest anger, impels to battle. The hope, the courage of assailants, is always greater than that of those who act upon the defensive. With hostile banners displayed, you are come down upon Italy; you bring the war. Grief, injuries, indignities, fire your minds, and spur you forward to revenge.—First, the Romans demand me; that I, your general, should be delivered up to them; next, all of you who had fought at the siege of Saguntum;—that they may put us to death by the extremest tortures. Proud and cruel nation! You are to prescribe to us with whom we shall make war, with whom we shall make peace! You are to set us bounds; to shut us up within hills and rivers; but you—you are not to observe the limits which yourselves have fixed! "Pass not the Iberus." What next? "Touch not the Saguntines:" is Saguntum upon the Iberus? "Move not a step towards that city." Is it a small matter, then, that you have deprived us of our ancient possessions, Sicily and Sardinia? you would have Spain too? Well, we shall yield Spain; and then—you will pass into Africa! Will pass, did I say?—this very year they ordered one of their consuls into Africa, the other into Spain. No, soldiers! there is nothing left for us but what we can vindicate with our swords. Come on, then;—be men! The Romans may with more safety be cowards; they have their own country behind them, have places of refuge to flee to, and are secure from danger in the roads thither; but for you there is no middle fortune between death and victory. Let this be but well fixed in your minds, and, once again I say, you are conquerors!

VII.—ON NEGRO SLAVERY.—BROUGHAM.

I trust that, at length, the time is come, when parliament will no longer bear to be told that slave-owners are the best lawgivers on slavery; no longer suffer our voice to roll across the Atlantic, in empty warnings and fruitless orders. Tell me not of rights—talk not of the property of the planter in his slaves. I deny his right—I acknowledge not the

property. The principles, the feelings of our common nature, rise in rebellion against it. Be the appeal made to the understanding or to the heart, the sentence is the same—that rejects it! In vain you tell me of laws that sanction such a claim! There is a law, above all the enactments of human codes—the same, throughout the world—the same, in all times: such as it was, before the daring genius of Columbus pierced the night of ages, and opened, to one world, the sources of power, wealth, and knowledge; to another, all unutterable woes,—such is it at this day: it is the law written by the finger of God on the heart of man; and by that law, unchangeable and eternal—while men despise fraud, and loathe rapine, and hate blood—they shall reject, with indignation, the wild and guilty fantasy, that man can hold property in man!

In vain you appeal to treaties—to covenants between nations. The covenants of the Almighty, whether the old covenant or the new, denounce such unholy pretensions. To these laws did they of old refer, who maintained the African trade. Such treaties did they cite—and not untruly; for, by one shameful compact, you bartered the glories of Blenheim for the traffic in blood. Yet, in despite of law and of treaty, that infernal traffic is now destroyed, and its votaries put to death like other pirates. How came this change to pass? Not, assuredly, by parliament leading the way. But the country at length awoke; the indignation of the people was kindled; it descended in thunder, and smote the traffic, and scattered its guilty profits to the winds. Now, then, let the planters beware—let their assemblies beware—let the government at home beware—let the parliament beware! The same country is once more awake—awake to the condition of Negro slavery; the same indignation kindles in the bosom of the same people; the same cloud is gathering, that annihilated the slave trade; and if it shall descend again, they on whom its crash may fall will not be destroyed before I have warned them: but I pray that their destruction may turn away from us the more terrible judgements of God!

VIII.—ON LAW REFORM.—Brougham.

After a long interval of various fortune, and filled with vast events, we are again called to the grand labour of surveying and amending our laws. For this task, it well becomes us to begird ourselves, as the honest representatives

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

sword of craft and oppression,—left it the staff of honesty, and the shield of innocence! To me, much reflecting on these things, it has always seemed a worthier honour to be the instrument of making you bestir yourselves in this high matter, than to enjoy all that office can bestow—office, of which the patronage would be irksome incumbrance, the emoluments superfluous, to one, content, with the rest of his industrious fellow-citizens, that his own hands minister to his wants: and as for the power supposed to follow it—I have lived nearly half a century, and I have learned that power and place may be severed. But, one power I do prize—that of being the advocate of my countrymen here, and their fellow-labourer elsewhere, in those things which concern the best interests of mankind. That power, I know full well, no government can give—no change take away!

IX.—ON CONCILIATING THE COLONIES.—Burke.

My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties, which, though light as air, yet are as strong as the links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government,—they will cling and grapple to you; and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood, that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another; that these two things may exist without any mutual relation;—the cement is gone, the cohesion is loosened; and every thing hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, wherever that chosen race—the sons of England—worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends will you have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere: it is a weed that grows in every soil. But, until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true act of navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the colonies; and, through them, secures to you the wealth of the world. It is the spirit of the English constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, per-

vades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.

Is it not the same virtue which does every thing for us here in England? Do you imagine that it is the land-tax act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the committee of supply which gives you your army? or that it is the mutiny bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No! surely no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy; and infuses into both that liberal obedience, without which your army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical, to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us; a sort of people, who think that nothing exists, but what is gross and material; and who, therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But, to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling principles—which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence—are, in truth, every thing, and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom: and a great empire, and little minds, go ill together. We ought to elevate our thoughts to the greatness of that trust, to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire; and have made the most extensive, and the only honourable conquests, not by destroying, but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness of the human race.

X.—ON THE SLAVE TRADE.—Canning.

Little, indeed, did I expect to hear the remote origin and long duration of the Slave Trade brought forward with triumph; to hear the advocates of the Slave Trade put in their claim for the venerableness of age, and the sacredness of prescription. What are the principles upon which we allow a certain claim to our respect, to belong to any institution which has subsisted from remote times? What is the reason why, when any such institutions had, by the change of circumstances, or of manners, become useless, we

still tolerated them, nay, cherished them, with something of affectionate regard, and even when they became burdensome, did not remove them without regret? What, but because, in such institutions, for the most part, we saw the shadow of departed worth or usefulness; the monument and memorial of what had, in its origin, or during its vigour, been of service or credit to mankind. Was this the case with the Slave Trade? was the Slave Trade originally begun upon some principle of public justice or national honour, which the lapse of time, which the mutations of the world, have alone impaired and done away? Has it to plead former merits, services and glories, in behalf of its present foulness and disgrace? Was its infancy lovely, or its manhood useful, though, in its age, it is become thus loathsome and perverse? No; its infant lips were stained with blood. Its whole existence has been a series of rapacity, cruelty, and murder. And in what cases is it, where any existing order of things, though violent and unjust in its original institution had, by lapse of time, been so meliorated and softened down, and reconciled to the feelings of mankind—that the remembrance of its original usurpation was lost, in the experience of present harmlessness or utility? Conquest was often of this nature. Violent and unjustifiable in its introduction, it often happened that the conquerors and the conquered became blended into one people, and that a system of common interest arose out of the conciliated differences of parties, originally hostile. But, was this the case with the Slave Trade? Was it in its outset only, that it had any thing of violence, of injustice, or of oppression? —Are the wounds which Africa felt in the first conflict, healed, and skinned over? Or, are they fresh and green, as at the moment when the first slave-ship began its ravages upon the coast? Are the oppressors and the oppressed so reconciled to each other, that no trace of enmity remains? Or, is it in reason, or in common sense, to claim a prescriptive right,—not to the fruits of an ancient and forgotten crime, committed long ago, and traceable only in its consequences;—but to a series of new violences, to a chain of fresh enormities, to cruelties—continued—repeated; and of which every individual instance, inflicted a fresh calamity, and constituted a fresh, a separate, and substantive crime? Certainly not;—and I cannot conceive, that, in refusing to sanction the continuance of such a system, the House will feel itself, in the smallest degree, impairing the respect

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XII.—ON THE THEATRE.—CHANNING.

In its present state, the theatre deserves no encouragement. In saying this, I do not mean that the amusement is radically, essentially evil. I can conceive of a theatre which would be the noblest of all amusements, and would take a high rank among the means of refining the taste and elevating the character of a people. The deep woes, the mighty and terrible passions, and the sublime emotions of genuine tragedy, are fitted to thrill us with human sympathies, with profound interest in our nature, with a consciousness of what man can do, and dare, and suffer—with an awed feeling of the fearful mysteries of life. The soul of the spectator is stirred from its depths; and the lethargy in which so many live is roused, at least for a time, to some intenseness of thought and sensibility. The Drama answers a high purpose, when it places us in the presence of the most solemn and striking events of human history, and lays bare to us the human heart in its most powerful, appalling, or glorious workings. But how little does the Theatre accomplish this end! How often is it disgraced by monstrous distortions of human nature; and still more disgraced by profaneness, coarseness, indelicacy, and low wit, such as none take pleasure in without self-degradation. That the theatre exists in its present condition is a reproach to the community. Were it to fall, a better drama might spring up in its place. In the meantime, is ther, not an amusement, having an affinity with the drama, which might be usefully introduced among us? I mean, Recitation. A work of genius, recited by a man of fine taste, enthusiasm, and powers of elocution, is a very pure and high gratification. Were this art cultivated and encouraged, great numbers, now insensible to the most beautiful compositions, might be waked up to their excellence and power. It is not easy to conceive of a more effectual way of spreading a refined taste through a community. The drama undoubtedly appeals more strongly to the passions than recitation; but the latter brings out the meaning of the author more. Shakspere, worthily recited, would be better understood than on the stage. Then, in recitation, we escape the weariness of listening to incompetent performers, who, after all, fill up most of the time at the theatre. Recitation, sufficiently varied, so as to include pieces of chaste wit, as well as of pathos, beauty, and sublimity, is adapted to our present intellectual progress, as much as the drama falls below it.

Should this exhibition be introduced among us successfully, the result would be, that the power of recitation would be extensively called forth, and this would be a valuable addition to our social and domestic pleasures.

XIII.—ON THE AMERICAN WAR.—Chatham.

I cannot, my Lords, I will not, join in congratulation on misfortune and disgrace. This, my Lords, is a perilous and tremendous moment. It is not a time for adulation: the smoothness of flattery cannot save us in this rugged and awful crisis. It is now necessary to instruct the throne in the language of truth. We must, if possible, dispel the delusion and darkness which envelop it; and display, in its full danger and genuine colours, the ruin which is brought to our doors. Can ministers still presume to expect support in their infatuation? Can parliament be so dead to its dignity and duty, as to give its support to measures thus obtruded and forced upon it? Measures, my Lords, which have reduced this late flourishing empire to scorn and contempt! "But yesterday, and Britain might have stood against the world: now, none so poor as do her reverence!"—The people, whom we at first despised as rebels, but whom we now acknowledge as enemies, are abetted against us, supplied with every military store, have their interests consulted, and their ambassadors entertained, by our inveterate enemy; and ministers do not—and dare not—interpose with dignity or effect. The desperate state of our army abroad is in part known. No man more highly esteems and honours the British troops than I do; I know their virtues and their valour; I know they can achieve any thing but impossibilities; and I know that the conquest of British America is an impossibility. You cannot, my Lords, you can not conquer America. What is your present situation there? We do not know the worst; but we know that in three campaigns we have done nothing, and suffered much. You may swell every expense, accumulate every assistance, and extend your traffic to the shambles of every German despot: your attempts will be for ever vain and impotent—doubly so, indeed, from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your adversaries, to over-run them with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty. If I were an American, as I am an

Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms;—never, never, never!

But, my Lords, who is the man, that, in addition to the disgraces and mischiefs of the war, has dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage?—to call into civilized alliance the wild and inhuman inhabitant of the woods?—to delegate, to the merciless Indian, the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren? My Lords, these enormities cry aloud for redress and punishment. But, my Lords, this barbarous measure has been defended, not only on the principles of policy and necessity, but also on those of morality; "for it is perfectly allowable," says Lord Suffolk, "to use all the means which God and nature have put into our hands." I am astonished, I am shocked, to hear such principles confessed; to hear them avowed in this House, or in this country. My Lords, I did not intend to encroach so much on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation—I feel myself impelled to speak. My Lords, we are called upon, as members of this House, as men, as Christians, to protest against such horrible barbarity!—"That God and nature have put into our hands!" What ideas of God and nature that noble Lord may entertain, I know not; but I know, that such detestable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! to attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife!—to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his mangled victims! Such notions shock every precept of morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of honour. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation.

I call upon that Right Reverend, and this most Learned Bench, to vindicate the religion of their God,—to support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops, to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn;—upon the judges, to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the Genius of the Constitution! From the tapestry

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled, by the irresistible genius of "Universal Emancipation."

XV.—ON PRECEDENTS—ERSKINE.

Gentlemen—If precedents in bad times are to be followed, why should the Lords and Commons have investigated these charges, and the Crown have put them into this course of judicial trial? since, without such a trial, and even after an acquittal upon one, they might have attainted all the prisoners by act of parliament: they did so in the case of Lord Strafford. There are precedents, therefore, for all such things; but such precedents as could not, for a moment, survive the times of madness and distraction which gave them birth; and which, as soon as the spurs of the occasion were blunted, were repealed and execrated even by parliaments, which, little as I think of the present, ought not to be compared with it;—parliaments sitting in the darkness of former times—in the night of freedom—before the principles of government were developed, and before the constitution became fixed. The last of these precedents, and all the proceedings upon it, were ordered to be taken off the file and burned, to the intent that the same might no longer be visible in after-ages: an order dictated, no doubt, by a pious tenderness for national honour, and meant as a charitable covering for the crimes of our fathers. But it was a sin against posterity, it was a treason against society; for, instead of commanding them to be burned, they should rather have directed them to be blazoned, in large letters, upon the walls of our courts of justice; that, like the characters deciphered by the Prophet to the Eastern tyrant, they might enlarge and blacken in your sights, to terrify you from acts of injustice.

In times, when the whole habitable earth is in a state of change and fluctuation; when deserts are starting up into civilized empires around you; and when men—no longer slaves to the prejudices of particular countries, much less to the abuses of particular governments—enlist themselves, like the citizens of an enlightened world, into whatever communities their civil liberties may be best protected; it never can be for the advantage of this country to prove that the strict, unextended letter of her laws, is no security to her inhabitants. On the contrary, when so dangerous a hire is everywhere holding out to emigration, it will be found to be the wisest policy of Great Britain to set up her

happy constitution—the strict letter of her guardian laws, and the proud condition of equal freedom, which her highest and her lowest subjects ought alike to enjoy;—it will be her wisest policy, to set up these first of human blessings, against those charms of change and novelty, which the varying condition of the world is hourly displaying, and which may deeply affect the population and prosperity of our country. In times when the subordination to authority is said to be everywhere too little felt, it will be found to be the wisest policy of Great Britain, to instil into the governed an almost superstitious reverence for the strict security of the laws; which, from their equality of principle, beget no jealousies or discontents; which, from their equal administration, can seldom work injustice; and which, from the reverence growing out of their mildness and antiquity, acquire a stability in the habits and affections of men, far beyond the force of civil obligations: whereas, severe penalties, and arbitrary constructions of laws intended for security, lay the foundations of alienation from every human government, and have been the cause of all calamities that have come, and are coming, upon the earth.

To conclude, my fervent wish is, that we may not conjure up a Spirit to destroy ourselves. Let us cherish the old and venerable laws of our forefathers; let our judicial administration be strict and pure; and let the jury of the land preserve the life of a fellow subject, who only asks it from them upon the same terms under which they hold their own lives, and all that is dear to them and their posterity for ever. Let me repeat the wish, with which I began my address to you, and which proceeds from the very bottom of my heart:—May it please Him, who is the Author of all mercies to mankind—whose Providence, I am persuaded, guides and superintends the transactions of the world, and whose Guardian Spirit has ever hovered over this prosperous Island—to direct and fortify your judgements!

XVI.—ON NATIONAL CHARACTER.—EVERETT.

How is the spirit of a free people to be formed, and animated, and cheered, but out of the store-house of its historic recollections! Are we to be eternally ringing the changes upon Marathon and Thermopylæ; and going back to read, in obscure texts of Greek and Latin, of the exemplars of patriotic virtue? We can find them nearer home, in our own country, on our own soil;—strains of the noblest

sentiment that ever swelled in the breast of man, are breathing to us out of every page of our country's history, in the native eloquence of our mother tongue. Here we ought to go for our instruction:—the lesson is plain, it is clear, it is applicable. When we go to ancient history, we are bewildered with the difference of manners and institutions. We are willing to pay our tribute of applause to the memory of Leonidas, who fell nobly for his country in the face of his foe. But, when we trace him to his home, we are confounded at the reflection, that the same Spartan heroism to which he sacrificed himself at Thermopylæ, would have led him to tear his own child, if it had happened to be a sickly babe,—the very object for which all that is kind and good in man rises up to plead,—from the bosom of its mother, and carry it out to be eaten by the wolves. We feel a glow of admiration at the heroism displayed at Marathon, by the ten thousand champions of invaded Greece; but we cannot forget that the tenth part of the number were slaves, unchained from the work-shops and door-posts of their masters, to go and fight the battles of freedom. I do not mean that these examples are to destroy the interest with which we read the history of ancient times; they possibly increase the interest by the very contrast they exhibit: but they *do* warn us, if we need the warning, to seek our great practical lessons of patriotism at home; out of the exploits and sacrifices of which our own country is the theatre; out of the characters of our own fathers. Them we know,—the high-souled, natural, unaffected, the citizen-heroes. We know what happy firesides they left for the cheerless camp. We know with what pacific habits they dared the perils of the field. There is no mystery, no romance, no madness under the name of chivalry, about them. It is all resolute, manly resistance, for conscience' and liberty's sake, not merely of an overwhelming power, but of all the force of long-rooted habits, and native love of order and peace.

Above all, their blood calls to us from the soil which we tread; it beats in our veins; it cries to us not merely in the thrilling words of one of the first victims in this cause,—"My sons, scorn to be slaves!"—but it cries with a still more moving eloquence,—"My sons, forget not your fathers!"

XVII.—ON LITERATURE AND LIBERTY.—EVERETT.

Literature is the voice of the age and the state. The

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

repelled—in the Thermopylæ of the world. As far as the interests of freedom are concerned—the most important by far of sublunary interests—you, my countrymen, stand in the capacity of the representatives of the human race; for you it is to determine—under God—in what condition the latest posterity shall be born. It remains with you to decide, whether that Freedom, at whose voice the kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages, to run a career of virtuous emulation in everything great and good—that Freedom which dispelled the mists of superstition, and invited the nations to behold their God, and whose magic torch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm of poetry, and the flame of eloquence—that Freedom which poured into our lap opulence and arts, and embellished life with innumerable institutions and improvements, till it became a theatre of wonders;—it is for you to decide, whether that Freedom shall yet survive, or be covered with a funeral pall, and wrapped in eternal gloom.

It is not necessary to await your determination. In the solicitude you feel to approve yourselves worthy of such a trust, every thought of what is afflicting in warfare, every apprehension of danger, must vanish; you are impatient to mingle in the battle of the civilised world. Go then, ye defenders of your country, accompanied by every auspicious omen; advance with alacrity into the field, where God himself musters the host to war. Religion is too much interested in your success, not to lend you her aid. She will shed over this enterprise her selectest influence. While you are engaged in the field, many will repair to the closet—many to the sanctuary. The faithful of every name will employ that prayer which has power with God. The feeble hand, unequal to any other weapon, will grasp the sword of the Spirit; from myriads of humble contrite hearts, the voice of intercession, supplication, and weeping, will mingle in its ascent to heaven, with the shouts of battle, and the shock of arms.

The extent of your resources, under God, is equal to the justice of your cause. But, should Providence determine otherwise, should you fall in this struggle, should the *nation* fall—you will have the satisfaction—the purest allotted to man—of having performed your part; your names will be enrolled with the most illustrious dead, while posterity to the end of time, as often as they revolve the events of this period—and they will incessantly revolve them—will turn

to you a reverential eye, while they mourn over the freedom entombed in your sepulchre.

XIX.—ON BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA.—HENRY.

Mr President—It is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that Syren, till she transforms us to beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern our temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future, but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the House? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be "betrayed with a kiss!" Ask yourselves, How this gracious reception of our petition, comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land? Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled, that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation, the last arguments to which kings resort.

I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and to rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing.

We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer. Sir, we have done every thing that could be done, to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending; if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained, we must fight; I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms, and to the God of Hosts, is all that is left us!

They tell us, sir, that we are weak—"unable to cope with so formidable an adversary!" But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance, by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of Nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of Liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just Power who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

scholar, also, if you would have it large and liberal, should come in contact with other minds. It is better that his armour should be somewhat bruised even by rude encounters, than hang for ever rusting on the wall. Nor will his themes be few or trivial, because apparently shut-in between the walls of houses, and having merely the decorations of street scenery. A ruined character is as picturesque as a ruined castle. There are dark abysses and yawning gulfs in the human heart, which can be rendered passable only by bridging them over with iron nerves and sinews; as island channels and torrent ravines are spanned with chain bridges. These are the great themes of human thought; not green grass, and flowers, and moonshine. Besides, the mere external forms of Nature we make our own, and carry with us into the city, by the power of memory

---

XXI.—ON THE BRITISH PRESS.—MACKINTOSH.

Unfortunately for the repose of mankind, great states are compelled to consider the military spirit and martial habits of their people, as one of the main objects of their policy. Frequent hostilities seem almost the necessary condition of greatness; and, without being great, they cannot remain safe. Smaller states, exempted from this necessity, devoted themselves to the arts of peace, to the cultivation of literature, and the improvement of reason. They became places of refuge for free and fearless discussion; they were the impartial spectators and judges of the various contests of ambition, which, from time to time, disturbed the quiet of the world. If wars of aggrandizement were undertaken, their authors were arraigned in the sight of Europe. If acts of internal tyranny were perpetrated, they resounded, from a thousand presses, throughout all civilized countries.

Princes, on whose will there were no legal checks, thus found a moral restraint which the most powerful of them could not brave with absolute impunity. No elevation of power, no depravity however consummate, no innocence however spotless, can render man wholly independent of the praise or blame of his fellows. These feeble states, these monuments of the justice of Europe, the asylum of peace, of industry, and of literature, the organs of public reason, the refuge of oppressed innocence and persecuted truth,—have perished, with those ancient principles which were their sole guardians and protectors. They have been swallowed up by that fearful convulsion, which has shaken

the uttermost corners of the earth. They are destroyed and gone for ever!

One asylum of free discussion is still inviolate.—There is still one spot in Europe where man can freely exercise his reason on the most important concerns of society; where he can boldly publish his judgements on the acts of the proudest and most powerful tyrants. The press of England is still free. It is guarded by the free constitution of our forefathers; it is guarded by the hearts and arms of Englishmen; and I trust I may venture to say, that, if it be to fall, it will fall only under the ruins of the British empire.—It is an awful consideration, gentlemen!—every other monument of European liberty has perished. That ancient fabric, which has been gradually reared by the wisdom and virtue of our fathers, still stands;—it stands, thanks be to Heaven! solid and entire—but—it stands alone,—and it stands amid ruins!

XXII.—ON NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.—PHILLIPS.

He is fallen! We may now pause before that splendid prodigy, which towered amongst us like some ancient ruin, whose frown terrified the glance its magnificence attracted. Grand, gloomy, and peculiar, he sat upon the throne, a sceptred hermit, wrapped in the solitude of his own originality. A mind bold, independent, and decisive—a will, despotic in its dictates,—an energy that distanced expedition, and a conscience pliable to every touch of interest, marked the outline of this extraordinary character—the most extraordinary, perhaps, that, in the annals of the world, ever rose, or reigned, or fell.

Flung into life in the midst of a Revolution that quickened every energy of a people who acknowledged no superior, he commenced his course a stranger by birth, and a scholar by charity. With no friend but his sword, and no fortune but his talents, he rushed into the lists where rank and genius had arrayed themselves; and competition fled from him as from the glance of destiny. He knew no motive but interest—he acknowledged no criterion but success—he worshipped no God but ambition; and with an Eastern devotion he knelt at the altar of his idolatry. Subsidiary to this, there was no creed that he did not profess—there was no opinion that he did not promulgate. In the hope of a dynasty, he upheld the Crescent; for the sake of a divorce, he bowed before the Cross; the orphan of St Louis, he became the

adopted child of the Republic; and, with a parricidal ingratitude, on the ruins both of the crown and the tribune, he reared the throne of his despotism. A professed Catholic, he imprisoned the Pope; a pretended patriot, he impoverished the country; and under the name of Brutus, he grasped without remorse, and wore without shame, the diadem of the Cæsars!

Cradled in the field he was to the last hour the darling of the army; and whether in the camp or the cabinet, he never forsook a friend, or forgot a favour. Of all his soldiers, not one abandoned him, till affection was useless; and their first stipulation was for the safety of their favourite. They knew well that, if he was lavish of them, he was prodigal of himself; and that if he exposed them to peril, he repaid them with plunder. For the soldier, he subsidized every people; to the people, he made even pride pay tribute. The victorious veteran glittered with his gains; and the capital, gorgeous with the spoils of art, became the miniature metropolis of the universe. In this wonderful combination, his affectation of literature must not be omitted. The gaoler of the press, he affected the patronage of letters; the proscriber of books, he encouraged philosophy; the persecutor of authors, and the murderer of printers, he yet pretended to the patronage of learning. Such a medley of contradictions, and at the same time such an individual consistency, were never united in the same character. A royalist, a republican, and an emperor—a Mahometan, a Catholic, and a patron of the Synagogue—a traitor and a tyrant—a Christian and an Infidel—he was, through all his vicissitudes, the same stern, impatient, inflexible original—the same mysterious, incomprehensible self—the man without a model, and without a shadow. His fall, like his life, baffled all speculation. In short, his whole history was like a dream to the world; and no man can tell how or why he was awakened from the reverie.

Kings may learn from him that their safest study, as well as their noblest, is the interest of the people; the people are taught by him that there is no despotism, however stupendous, against which they have not a resource; and to those who would rise upon the ruins of both, he is a living lesson, that, if ambition can raise them from the lowest station, it can also prostrate them from the highest.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

am of opinion that if I *had* acted a borrowed part, I should have avoided their censure: the heat which offended them is the ardour of conviction, and that zeal for the service of my country which neither hope nor fear shall influence me to suppress. I will not sit unconcerned while my liberty is invaded, nor look in silence upon public robbery.—I will exert my endeavours, at whatever hazard, to repel the aggressor, and drag the thief to justice, whoever may protect him in his villany, and whoever may partake of his plunder.

XXIV.—ON IRISH VALOUR AND LOYALTY. (REPLY TO LORD LYNDHURST.)—SHEIL.

The Duke of Wellington is not, I am inclined to believe, a man of excitable temperament. His mind is of a cast too martial to be easily moved; but, notwithstanding his habitual inflexibility, I cannot help thinking, that, when he heard his countrymen, (for we are his countrymen,) designated by a phrase as offensive as the abundant vocabulary of his eloquent confederate could supply—I cannot help thinking that he ought to have recollected the many fields of fight in which we have been contributors to his renown. Yes, "the battles, sieges, fortunes," that he has passed, ought to have brought back upon him—he ought to have remembered—that, from the earliest achievement in which he displayed that military genius which has placed him foremost in the annals of modern warfare, down to that last and surpassing combat which has made his name imperishable—from Assaye to Waterloo—the Irish soldiers, with whom our armies are filled, were the inseparable auxiliaries to the glory with which his unparalleled successes have been crowned. Whose were the athletic arms that drove your bayonets at Vimiera through those phalanxes that never reeled in the shock of war before? What desperate valour climbed the steeps and filled the moats of Badajos? All—all his victories should have rushed and crowded back upon his memory:—Vimiera, Badajos, Salamanca, Albuera, Toulouse, and last of all the greatest!—Tell me, for you were there,—I appeal to the gallant soldier* before me, from whose opinions I differ, but who bears, I know, a generous heart in an intrepid breast; tell me, for you must needs remember,—on that day, when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance—while death fell in showers upon them—when the artillery of France,

* Sir H. Hardinge.

levelled with a precision of the most deadly science, played upon them—when her legions, incited by the voice, and inspired by the example of their mighty leader, rushed again and again to the onset—tell me, if, for an instant, when to hesitate for that instant was to be lost, the "aliens" blenched? And when at length the moment for the last and decisive movement had arrived, and the valour which had so long been wisely checked was at length let loose—when with words familiar but immortal, the great captain exclaimed: "Up, lads, and at them!"—tell me, if Ireland, with less heroic valour than the natives of your own glorious Isle, precipitated herself upon the foe? The blood of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland, flowed in the same stream—on the same field. When the still morning dawned, their dead lay cold and stark together—in the same deep pit their bodies were deposited;—the green corn of spring is now breaking from their commingled dust—the dew falls from heaven upon their union in the grave. Partakers in every peril—in the glory shall we not be permitted to participate? and shall we be told as a requital, that we are estranged from the noble country for whose salvation our life-blood was poured out?

XXV.—ON THE CONDITION OF INDIA.—SHERIDAN.

Had a stranger, at this time, gone into the province of Oude, ignorant of what had happened since the death of Sujah Dowla—that man who, with a savage heart, had still great lines of character; and who, with all his ferocity in war, had yet, with a cultivating hand, preserved to his country the riches which it derived from benignant skies and a prolific soil;—if this stranger, ignorant of all that had happened in the short interval, and observing the wide and general devastation, and all the horrors of the scene—of plains unclothed and brown—of vegetables burned up and extinguished—of villages depopulated and in ruins—of temples unroofed and perishing—of reservoirs broken down and dry, he would naturally inquire, What war has thus laid waste the fertile fields of this once beautiful and opulent country?—what civil dissensions have happened, thus to tear asunder and separate the happy societies that once possessed these villages?—what disputed succession, what religious rage, has, with unholy violence, demolished those temples, and disturbed fervent, but unobtruding piety, in the exercise of its duties?—what merciless enemy has thus

spread the horrors of fire and sword?—what severe visitation of Providence has dried up the fountain, and taken from the face of the earth every vestige of verdure?—Or, rather, what monsters have stalked over the country, tainting and poisoning, with pestiferous breath, what the voracious appetite could not devour?

To such questions, what must be the answer? No wars have ravaged these lands, and depopulated these villages—no civil discords have been felt—no disputed succession—no religious rage, no merciless enemy—no affliction of Providence, which, while it scourged for the moment, cut off the sources of resuscitation—no voracious and poisoning monsters;—no!—all this has been accomplished by the friendship, generosity, and kindness of the English nation. They have embraced us with their protecting arms, and, lo! —those are the fruits of their alliance. What, then! shall we be told, that, under such circumstances, the exasperated feelings of a whole people, thus goaded and spurred-on to clamour and resistance, were excited by the poor and feeble influence of the Begums? When we hear the description of the fever—paroxysm—delirium, into which despair had thrown the natives, when, on the banks of the polluted Ganges, panting for death, they tore more widely open the lips of their gaping wounds to accelerate their dissolution; and, while their blood was issuing, presented their ghastly eyes to Heaven,—breathing their last and fervent prayer, that the dry earth might not be suffered to drink their blood, but that it might rise up to the throne of God, and rouse the eternal Providence to avenge the wrongs of their country:—will it be said that this was brought about by the incantations of those Begums, in their secluded Zenana? or that they could inspire this enthusiasm and this despair, into the breasts of a people who felt no grievance, and had suffered no torture? What motive, then, could have such influence in their bosom? What motive! That, which Nature—the common parent—plants in the bosom of man; and which, though it may be less active in the Indian than in the Englishman, is still congenial with, and makes part of, his being. That feeling, which tells him, that man was never made to be the property of man; but that when, through pride and insolence of power, one human creature dares to tyrannize over another, it is a power usurped, and resistance is a duty. That feeling, which tells him that all power is delegated for the good,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Sir, the sentiment is just. Every escape from slavery necessarily and instinctively awakens the regard of all who love freedom. The endeavour, though unsuccessful, reveals courage, manhood, character. No story is read with more interest than that of our own Lafayette, when, aided by a gallant South Carolinian, in defiance of the despotic ordinances of Austria, kindred to our Slave Act, he strove to escape from the bondage of Olmutz. Literature pauses with exultation over the struggles of Cervantes, the great Spaniard, while a slave in Algiers, to regain the liberty for which he says, in his immortal work, "we ought to risk life itself, slavery being the greatest evil that can fall to the lot of man." Science, in all her manifold triumphs, throbs with pride and delight, that Arago, the astronomer and philosopher—devoted republican also—was redeemed from barbarous slavery to become one of her greatest sons. Religion rejoices serenely, with joy unspeakable, in the final escape of Vincent de Paul. Exposed in the public square of Tunis to the inspection of the traffickers in human flesh, this illustrious Frenchman was subjected to every vileness of treatment,—like a horse compelled to open his mouth, to show his teeth, to trot, to run, to exhibit his strength in lifting burthens, and then, like a horse, legally sold in market overt. Passing from master to master, after a protracted servitude, he achieved his freedom, and, regaining France, commenced that resplendent career of charity by which he is placed among the great names of Christendom. Princes and orators have lavished panegyrics upon this fugitive slave; and the Catholic Church, in homage to his extraordinary virtues, has introduced him into the company of saints.

Less by genius or eminent services, than by sufferings, are the fugitive slaves of our country now commended. For them every sentiment of humanity is aroused: rude and ignorant they may be; but in their very efforts for freedom, they claim kindred with all that is noble in the past. They are among the heroes of our age. Romance has no stories of more thrilling interest than theirs. Classical antiquity has preserved no examples of adventurous trial more worthy of renown. Among them are men whose names will be treasured in the annals of their race. By the eloquent voice they have already done much to make their wrongs known, and to secure the respect of the world. History will soon lend them her avenging pen. Proscribed

by you during life, they will proscribe you through all time. Sir, already judgement is beginning. A righteous public sentiment palsies your enactment.

XXVII.—ON THE INFLUENCE OF GREAT ACTIONS.—WEBSTER.

Great actions and striking occurrences, having excited a temporary admiration, often pass away and are forgotten, because they leave no lasting results, affecting the welfare of communities. Such is frequently the fortune of the most brilliant military achievements. Of the ten thousand battles which have been fought; of all the fields fertilized with carnage; of the banners which have been bathed in blood; of the warriors who have hoped that they had risen from the field of conquest to a glory as bright and as durable as the stars, how few continue long to interest mankind! The victory of yesterday is reversed by the defeat of to-day; the star of military glory, rising like a meteor, like a meteor has fallen; disgrace and disaster hang on the heels of conquest and renown; victor and vanquished presently pass away to oblivion, and the world holds on its course, with the loss only of so many lives and so much treasure.

But there are enterprises, military as well as civil, that sometimes check the current of events; that give a new turn to human affairs, and transmit their consequences through ages. We see their importance in their results, and call them great, because great things follow. There have been battles which have fixed the fate of nations. These come down to us in history with a solid and permanent influence, not created by a display of glittering armour, the rush of adverse battalions, the sinking and rising of pennons, the flight, the pursuit, and the victory; but by their effect in advancing or retarding human knowledge, in overthrowing or establishing despotism, in extending or destroying human happiness. When the traveller pauses on the plains of Marathon, what are the emotions which strongly agitate his breast? what is that glorious recollection that thrills through his frame, and suffuses his eyes? Not, I imagine, that Grecian skill and Grecian valour were here most signally displayed; but that Greece herself was saved. It is because to this spot, and to the event which has rendered it immortal, he refers all the succeeding glories of the republic. It is because, if that day had gone otherwise, Greece had perished. It is because he perceives that her philosophers

and orators, her poets and painters, her sculptors and architects, her government and free institutions, point backward to Marathon, and that their future existence seems to have been suspended on the contingency, whether the Persian or Grecian banner should wave victorious in the beams of that day's setting sun. And as his imagination kindles at the retrospect, he is transported back to the interesting moment; he counts the fearful odds of the contending hosts; his interest for the result overwhelms him; he trembles as if it were still uncertain, and seems to doubt whether he may consider Socrates and Plato, Demosthenes, Sophocles, and Phidias, as secure yet, to himself and to the world.

XXVIII.—ON TRUE ELOQUENCE.—LOVELL.

When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions; when great interests are at stake, and strong passions excited; nothing is valuable, in speech, farther than it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness, are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from afar. Labour and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire after it—they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbreaking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments, and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country, hang on the decision of the hour. Then, words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent; then, self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, outrunning the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object—this, this is eloquence; or rather, it is something greater and higher than all eloquence,—it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

more than motion? Has it thought, judgement, and genius? Is it deeply learn'd in mathematics? Has it framed such laws, which, but to guess, a Newton made immortal?—If so, how each sage atom laughs at me, who think a clod inferior to a man! If art, to form,—and counsel, to conduct,—and that with greater far than human skill,—resides not in each block; a Godhead reigns. And, if a God there is, that God how great!

II.—THE MESSIAH.—Pope.

Ye nymphs of Solyma, begin the song:
To heavenly themes sublimer strains belong.
The mossy fountains and the sylvan shades,
The dreams of Pindus and the Aonian maids,
Delight no more—O Thou my voice inspire,
Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!
Rapt into future times, the Bard begun:—
A virgin shall conceive, a virgin bear a son!

From Jesse's root behold a branch arise,
Whose sacred flower with fragrance fills the skies;
The ethereal Spirit o'er its leaves shall move,
And on its top descends the mystic Dove.
Ye heavens! from high the dewy nectar pour,
And in soft silence shed the kindly shower!
The sick and weak the healing plant shall aid,
From storms a shelter, and from heat a shade.
All crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail;
Returning Justice lift aloft her scale;
Peace o'er the world her olive-wand extend,
And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend.
Swift fly the years, and rise the expected morn!
Oh, spring to light; auspicious Babe, be born!
See, Nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring,
With all the incense of the breathing spring:
See lofty Lebanon his head advance,
See nodding forests on the mountains dance;
See spicy clouds from lowly Sharon rise,
And Carmel's flowery top perfume the skies!

Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers:
"Prepare the way! a God—a God appears!"
"A God—a God!" the vocal hills reply,
The rocks proclaim the approaching Deity.

Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies!
Sink down, ye mountains! and, ye valleys, rise!
With heads declined, ye cedars, homage pay;
Be smooth, ye rocks! ye rapid floods, give way!
The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:
Hear him, ye deaf! and, all ye blind, behold!
He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day:
'Tis he the obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
And bid new music charm the unfolding ear:
The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
And leap exulting, like the bounding roe.
No sigh, no murmur, the wide world shall hear;
From every face he wipes off every tear:
In adamantine chains shall Death be bound,
And hell's grim tyrant feel the eternal wound.

As the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
Seeks freshest pasture, and the purest air,
Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,
By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
The tender lambs he raises in his arms,
Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms;
Thus shall mankind His guardian care engage,
The promised Father of the future age.

No more shall nation against nation rise,
Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes;
Nor fields with gleaming steel be cover'd o'er,
The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more;
But useless lances into scythes shall bend,
And the broad falchion in a ploughshare end.

Then palaces shall rise; the joyful son
Shall finish what his short-lived sire begun;
Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield,
And the same hand that sow'd, shall reap the field:
The swain in barren deserts with surprise
See lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And start, amidst the thirsty wilds, to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear.

On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.
Waste sandy valleys, once perplex'd with thorn,
The spiry fir and stately box adorn;

To leafless shrubs the flowering palms succeed,
And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed.
The lambs with wolves shall graze the verdant mead,
And boys in flowery bands the tiger lead.
The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.
The smiling infant in his hand shall take
The crested basilisk and speckled snake;
Pleased, the green lustre of their scales survey,
And with their forky tongue shall innocently play.

Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem, rise!
Exalt thy towery head, and lift thine eyes!
See a long race thy spacious courts adorn;
See future sons, and daughters yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies!
See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;
See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
And heap'd with products of Sabæan springs!
For thee Idumè's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow.
See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day.
No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,
Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze,
O'erflow thy courts: the Light Himself shall shine
Reveal'd, and God's eternal day be thine!

The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fix'd His word, His saving power remains;
—Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own MESSIAH reigns!

III.—THANATOPSIS,—A VIEW OF DEATH.—BRYANT.

To him who, in the love of Nature, holds communion with her visible forms, she speaks a various language: for his gayer hours, she has a voice of gladness, and a smile, and eloquence of beauty; and she glides into his darker musings, with a mild and gentle sympathy, that steals away their sharpness ere he is aware. When thoughts of

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

yet all these shall leave their mirth and their employments, and shall come and make their bed with thee. As the long train of ages glides away, the sons of men,—the youth in life's green spring, and he who goes in the full strength of years; matron and maid; the bowed with age; the infant in the smiles and beauty of its innocent life cut off,—shall, one by one, be gathered to thy side, by those who, in their turn, shall follow them.

"So live, that,—when thy summons comes to join the innumerable caravans that move to the pale realms of Shade, where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of Death,—thou go, not like the quarry-slave at night, scourged to his dungeon; but, sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

IV.—HUMAN LIFE.—Rogers.

The lark has sung his carol in the sky,
The bees have hummed their noontide lullaby:
Still, in the vale, the village bells ring round,
Still, in Llewellyn-hall, the jests resound:
For, now, the caudle-cup is circling there;
Now, glad at heart, the gossips breathe their prayer
And, crowding, stop the cradle, to admire
The babe,—the sleeping image of his sire!

A few short years, and then these sounds shall hail
The day again, and gladness fill the vale;
So soon the child a youth, the youth a man,
Eager to run the race his fathers ran:
Then, the huge ox shall yield the broad sirloin;
The ale (now brewed) in floods of amber shine;
And, basking in the chimney's ample blaze,
'Mid many a tale told of his boyish days,
The Nurse shall cry, of all her ills beguiled,
"'Twas on these knees he sat so oft and smiled!"

And soon, again, shall music swell the breeze:
Soon, issuing forth, shall glitter through the trees
Vestures of nuptial white; and hymns be sung,
And violets scattered round; and old and young,
In every cottage porch, with garlands green,
Stand still to gaze, and, gazing, bless the scene;
While, her dark eyes declining, by his side
Moves, in her virgin veil, the gentle bride.

And once, alas! nor in a distant hour,
Another voice shall come from yonder tower;
When, in dim chambers, long black weeds are seen,
And weepings heard, where only joy hath been;
When, by his children borne, and from his door
Slowly departing to return no more,
He rests in holy earth, with them who went before.
And such is Human Life! So gliding on,
It glimmers, like a meteor—and is gone!

V.—ON PROCRASTINATION.—YOUNG.

Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer: next day, the fatal precedent will plead; thus on,—till Wisdom is pushed out of life. Procrastination is the thief of Time. Year after year it steals, till all are fled; and, to the mercies of a moment, leaves the vast concerns of an eternal scene.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears the palm,—That all men are about to live: for ever on the brink of being born. All pay themselves the compliment to think, they, one day, shall not drivel; and their pride on this reversion takes up ready praise; at least their own: their future selves applaud, how excellent that life—they ne'er will lead! Time lodged in their own hands is Folly's vails; that lodged in Fate's, to Wisdom they consign: the thing they can't but purpose, they postpone. 'Tis not in Folly not to scorn a fool, and scarce in human Wisdom to do more. All promise is—poor dilatory man, and that through every stage. When young, indeed, in full content we sometimes nobly rest, unanxious for ourselves; and only wish, as duteous sons, our fathers were more wise. At thirty, man suspects himself a fool; knows it at forty, and reforms his plan; at fifty, chides his infamous delay; pushes his prudent purpose to resolve; in all the magnanimity of thought, resolves, and re-resolves, then—dies the same!

And why? Because he thinks himself immortal. All men think all men mortal, but themselves; themselves, when some alarming shock of fate strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden dread: but, their hearts wounded, —like the wounded air,—soon close: where passed the shaft, no trace is found. As from the wing no scar the sky retains, the parted wave no furrow from the keel; so dies in human hearts the thought of death. Even with the tender tear, which Nature sheds o'er those we love, we drop it—in their grave!

VI.—TO-MORROW.—Cotton.

To-morrow, didst thou say?
Methought I heard Horatio say, To-morrow.
Go to—I will not hear of it—To-morrow!
'Tis a sharper, who stakes his penury
Against thy plenty; who takes thy ready cash,
And pays thee nought, but wishes, hopes, and promises,—
The currency of idiots: injurious bankrupt,
That gulls the easy creditor!—To-morrow!
It is a period no-where to be found
In all the hoary registers of Time,
Unless, perchance, in the fool's calendar!
Wisdom disclaims the word, nor holds society
With those who own it. No, my Horatio,
'Tis Fancy's child, and folly is its father;
Wrought of such stuff as dreams are, and baseless
As the fantastic visions of the evening.
But soft, my friend—arrest the present moments;
For, be assured, they all are arrant tell-tales:
And, though their flight be silent, and their path
Trackless as the wingèd couriers of the air,
They post to heaven, and there record thy folly;—
Because, though stationed on the important watch,
Thou, like a sleeping, faithless sentinel,
Didst let them pass, unnoticed, unimproved.
And know, for that thou slumberedst on the guard,
Thou shalt be made to answer, at the bar,
For every fugitive; and when thou thus
Shalt stand impleaded at the high tribunal
Of hood-winked Justice, who shall tell thy audit?
Then, stay the present instant, dear Horatio!
Imprint the marks of wisdom on its wings;
'Tis of more worth than kingdoms! far more precious
Than all the crimson treasures of life's fountain!—
O! let it not elude thy grasp; but, like
The good old patriarch upon record,
Hold the fleet angel fast, until he bless thee!

VI.—ADDRESS TO INDEPENDENCE.—Smollett.

Thy spirit, Independence, let me share: lord of the lion heart and eagle eye! thy steps I follow with my bosom bare, nor heed the storm that howls along the sky. Thou, guardian genius, thou didst teach my youth pomp and her

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart:
It does not feel for man. That natural bond
Of brotherhood is severed, as the flax
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty—of a skin
Not coloured like his own; and, having power
To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause,
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith,
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
And, worse than all, and most to be deplored,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes—that Mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps, when she sees inflicted on a beast!
Then, what is man? And what man seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head, to think himself a man?
I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earned.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave,
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home—then why abroad?
And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall!
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
And let it circulate through every vein
Of all your empire; that, where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

IX.—THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.—Hood.

One more unfortunate, weary of breath, rashly importunate, gone to her death! Take her up tenderly—lift her with care: fashioned so slenderly, young, and so fair! Look at her garments, clinging like cerements; whilst the wave constantly drips from her clothing. Take her up instantly, loving, not loathing. Touch her not scornfully, think of her mournfully, gently and humanly; not of the stains of her:—all that remains of her now is pure womanly. Make no deep scrutiny into her mutiny, rash and undutiful: past all dishonour, Death has left on her only the beautiful. Still,—for all slips of hers, one of Eve's family,—wipe those poor lips of hers, oozing so clammily. Loop up her tresses escaped from the comb—her fair auburn tresses!—whilst wonderment guesses, Where was her home? who was her father? who was her mother? had she a sister? had she a brother? or was there a dearer one still, and a nearer one yet than all other? Alas! for the rarity of Christian charity under the sun! Oh! it was pitiful! near a whole city full, home she had none. Sisterly, brotherly, fatherly, motherly feelings had changed: love, by harsh evidence, thrown from its eminence: even God's providence seeming estranged!

Where the lamps quiver so far in the river, with many a light from window and casement, from garret to basement, she stood with amazement, houseless by night. The bleak wind of March made her tremble and shiver; but not the dark arch, or the black-flowing river: mad from life's history, glad to death's mystery; swift to be hurled any where, any where, out of the world! In she plunged boldly, no matter how coldly the rough river ran:—over the brink of it, picture it, think of it, dissolute Man! lave in it, drink of it, then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly, lift her with care: fashioned so slenderly, young, and so fair! Ere her limbs frigidly stiffen too rigidly, decently, kindly, smooth and compose them; and her eyes—close them, staring so blindly! Dreadfully staring, through muddy impurity; as when, with the daring last look of despairing, fixed on futurity. Perishing gloomily; spurred by contumely, cold inhumanity, burning insanity, into her rest.—Cross her hands humbly, as if praying dumbly, over her breast; owning her weakness, her evil behaviour—and leaving, with meekness, her sins to her Saviour!

X.—DAVID AND ABSALOM.—Willis.

The pall was settled. He who slept beneath
Was straightened for the grave; and, as the folds
Sunk to the still proportions, they betrayed
The matchless symmetry of Absalom.
His hair was yet unshorn, and silken curls
Were floating round the tassels as they swayed
To the admitted air; as glossy now
As when, in hours of gentle dalliance, bathing
The snowy fingers of Judea's girls.
His helm was at his feet; his banner, soiled
With trailing through Jerusalem, was laid
Reversed beside him: and the jewel'd hilt,
Whose diamonds lit the passage of his blade,
Rested, like mockery, on his covered brow.
The soldiers of the king trod to and fro,
Clad in the garb of battle; and their chief,
The mighty Joab, stood beside the bier,
And gazed upon the dark pall steadfastly,
As if he feared the slumberer might stir.
—A slow step startled him! He grasped his blade
As if a trumpet rang; but the bent form
Of David entered,—and he gave command,
In a low tone, to his few followers,
Who left him with his dead. The king stood still
Till the last echo died: then, throwing off
The sackcloth from his brow, and laying back
The pall from the still features of his child,
He bowed his head upon him, and broke forth
In the resistless eloquence of woe:

"Alas! my noble boy, that thou shouldst die!
Thou, who wert made so beautifully fair!
That death should settle in thy glorious eye,
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair!
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb,
My proud boy, Absalom!

"Cold is thy brow, my son; and I am chill,
As to my bosom I have tried to press thee.
How was I wont to feel my pulses thrill,—
Like a rich harpstring,—yearning to caress thee;
And hear thy sweet "*my father*" 'rom these dumb
And cold lips, Absalom!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

that thorn hath put forth larger studs; that lilac's cleaving cones have burst, the milk-white flowers revealing; even now upon my senses first, methinks their sweets are stealing. The very earth, the steamy air, are all with fragrance rife; and grace and beauty every where are bursting into life. Down, down they come, those fruitful stores, those earth-rejoicing drops: a momentary deluge pours, then thins, decreases, stops; and ere the dimples on the stream have circled out of sight, lo! from the west, a parting gleam breaks forth of amber light.

XII.—ON MAN.—Pope.

Let us (since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us, and to die)
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of Man:
A mighty maze! but not without a plan;
A wild, where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot;
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore,
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;
Eye Nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;
But vindicate the ways of God to Man.

Say, first, of God above, or Man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know?
Of Man, what see we, but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer?
Through worlds unnumbered though the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace Him only in our own.
He, who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns;
What varied being peoples every star,—
May tell why Heaven has made us as we are.
But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
The strong connexions, nice dependencies,
Gradations just,—has thy pervading soul
Looked through? or, can a part contain the whole?
Is the great chain that draws all to agree,
And, drawn, supports, upheld by God, or thee?

Presumptuous Man! the reason wouldst thou find
Why formed so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,
Why formed no weaker, blinder, and no less.
Ask of thy mother Earth, why oaks are made
Taller and stronger than the weeds they shade?
Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's satellitès are less than Jove?
Of systems possible, if 'tis confessed
That wisdom infinite must form the best;
Where all must fall, or not coherent be,
And all that rises, rise in due degree;
Then, in the scale of reasoning life, 'tis plain
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man:
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this—If God has placed him wrong?
Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
May—must, be right, as relative to all.
In human works, though laboured-on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain:
In God's, one single can its end produce,
Yet serves to second too some other use.
So Man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:
'Tis but a part we see, and not the whole.
When the proud steed shall know why Man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god;
Then shall Man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's use and end;
Why doing, suffering; checked, impelled; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.
Then say not Man's imperfect, Heaven in fault;
Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought;
His knowledge measured to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.

XIII.—THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.—Pope.

Vital spark of heavenly flame, quit, oh, quit this mortal frame!—trembling, hoping,—lingering, flying; oh, the pain, the bliss of dying! Cease, fond nature! cease thy strife and let me languish into life!——Hark, they whisper!

Angels say, "Sister spirit, come away!"——What is this absorbs me quite, steals my senses, shuts my sight, drowns my spirit, draws my breath? Tell me, my soul—can this be death? The world recedes!—it disappears!—heaven opens on my eyes!—my ears with sounds seraphic ring! Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!——O Grave! where is thy victory? O Death! where is thy sting?

XIV.—THE SKYLARK.—James Hogg.

Bird of the wilderness, blithesome and cumberless, sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea: emblem of happiness, blest is thy dwelling-place—oh to abide in the desert with thee! Wild is thy lay, and loud, far in the downy cloud; love gives it energy, love gave it birth. Where, on the dewy wing,—where art thou journeying? thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth. O'er fell and fountain sheen, o'er muir and mountain green, o'er the red streamer that heralds the day, over the cloudlet dim, over the rainbow's rim, musical cherub, soar, singing away! Then, when the gloaming comes, low in the heather blooms, sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be! Emblem of happiness, blest is thy dwelling-place—oh to abide in the desert with thee!

XV.—THE THREE SONS.—Moultrie.

I have a son, a little son, a boy just five years old,
With eyes of thoughtful earnestness, and mind of gentle mould;
They tell me that unusual grace in all his ways appears,
That my child is grave and wise of heart, beyond his childish years.
I cannot say how this may be: I know his face is fair,
And yet his chiefest comeliness is his sweet and serious air.
I know his heart is kind and fond; I know he loveth me,
But loveth yet his mother more, with grateful fervency:
But that which others most admire, is the thought which fills his mind;
The food for grave inquiring speech, he everywhere doth find.
Strange questions doth he ask of me, when we together walk;
He scarcely thinks as children think, or talks as children talk.
Nor cares he much for childish sports, dotes not on bat or ball,
But looks on manhood's ways and works, and aptly mimics all.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

I cannot tell what form his is, what looks he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns his shining seraph brow.
The thoughts that fill his sinless soul, the bliss which he doth feel,
Are number'd with the secret things which God will not reveal.
But I know (for God hath told me this) that he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants are—on their Saviour's loving breast.
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of flesh,
But his sleep is bless'd with endless dreams of joy forever fresh.
I know the angels fold him close beneath their glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of heaven's divinest things.
We trust that we shall meet our babe, (his mother dear and I,)
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from every eye.
Whate'er befals his brethren twain, *his* bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but his is certain peace.
When we think of what our darling is, and what we still must be;
When we muse on *that* world's perfect bliss, and *this* world's misery;
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel this grief and pain;
Oh! we'd rather lose our other two, than have him here again.

XVI.—THE MOTHER AND HER DEAD CHILD.—Moir.

With ceaseless sorrow, uncontrolled, the mother mourned her lot; she wept, and would not be consoled, because her child was not. She gazed upon its nursery floor—but there it did not play; the toys it loved, the clothes it wore, all void and vacant lay. Her house, her heart, were dark and drear, without their wonted light; the little star had left its sphere, that there had shone so bright. Her tears, at each returning thought, fell like the frequent rain; Time on its wings no healing brought, and Wisdom spoke in vain. Even in the middle hour of night she sought no soft relief; but, by the taper's misty light, sat nourishing her grief. 'Twas then a sight of solemn awe rose near her like a cloud:—the image of her child she saw, wrapped in its little shroud! It sat within its favourite chair; it sat, and seemed to sigh; and turned upon its mother there a meek, imploring eye. "O child! what brings that breathless

form back from its place of rest? for, well I know, no life can warm again that livid breast. The grave is now your bed, my child; go, slumber there in peace!"—"I cannot go," it answered mild, "until your sorrow cease. I've tried to rest in that dark bed, but rest I cannot get; for always, with the tears you shed, my winding-sheet is wet. The drops, dear mother! trickle still into my coffin deep: it feels so comfortless, so chill, I cannot go to sleep!" "O child! those words—that touching look, my fortitude restore: I feel and own the blest rebuke, and weep thy loss no more." She spoke, and dried her tears the while; and, as her passion fell, the vision wore an angel smile, and looked a fond farewell!

XVII.—DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST.—Shirley.

The glories of our birth and state, are shadows, not substantial things: there is no armour against fate: Death lays his icy hands on kings;—sceptre and crown must tumble down, and in the dust be equal made with the poor crooked scythe and spade. Some men with swords may reap the field, and plant fresh laurels where they kill; but their strong nerves at last must yield: they tame but one another still: early or late, they stoop to Fate; and must give up their murmuring breath, when they, pale captives, creep to death. The garlands wither on your brow, then boast no more your mighty deeds; upon Death's purple altar, now, see where the victor victim bleeds. All heads must come to the cold tomb; only the actions of the just smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

XVIII.—RETREAT OF THE FRENCH ARMY FROM MOSCOW.—Dr. Croly.

Magnificence of ruin! What has time,
In all it ever gazed upon,—of war,
Of the wild rage of storm, or deadly clime,
Seen, with that battle's vengeance to compare?
How glorious shone the *invaders'* pomp afar!
Like pampered lions from the spoil they came;
The land before them, silence and despair,
The land behind them, massacre and flame:
Blood will have tenfold blood:—What are they now? A name.

Homeward by hundred thousands,—column deep,
Broad square, loose squadron,—rolling like the flood

When mighty torrents from their channels leap,
Rushed through the land the haughty multitude,
Billow on endless billow: on, through wood,
O'er rugged hill, down sunless marshy vale,
The death-devoted moved; to clangour rude
Of drum, and horn, and dissonant clash of mail,
Glancing disastrous light before that sunbeam pale.

Again they reached thee, Borodino! Still
Upon the loaded soil the carnage lay;
The human harvest, now stark, stiff, and chill—
Friend, foe, stretched thick together, clay to clay!
In vain the startled legions burst away;
The land was all one naked sepulchre:
The shrinking eye still glanced on grim decay—
Still did the hoof and wheel their passage tear,
Thro' cloven helms, and arms, and corpses mouldering drear

The field was as they left it: fosse and fort
Streaming with slaughter still, but desolate;
The cannon flung dismantled by its port:
Each knew the mound, the black ravine, whose strait
Was won, and lost, and thronged with dead; till Fate
Had fixed upon the victor, half undone.
There was the hill, from which their eyes elate
Had seen the burst of Moscow's golden zone;—
But Death was at their heels!—they shuddered and rushed on.

The hour of vengeance strikes! Hark to the gale,
As it bursts hollow through the rolling clouds,
That from the north in sullen grandeur sail,
Like floating Alps! Advancing darkness broods
Upon the wild horizon; and the woods,
Now sinking into brambles, echo shrill,
As the gust sweeps them; and those upper floods
Shoot on the leafless boughs the sleet-drops chill,
That, on the hurrying crowds, in freezing showers distil.

They reach the wilderness! The majesty
Of solitude is spread before their gaze—
Stern nakedness, dark earth, and wrathful sky!
If ruins were there, they had ceased to blaze;
If blood were shed, the ground no more betrays,
E'en by a skeleton, the crime of man:
Behind them, rolls the deep and drenching haze,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

she learned to melt at others' woe. Scared at thy frown terrific, fly self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,—wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,—and leave us leisure to be good. Light they disperse; and with them go the summer friend, the flattering foe; by vain Prosperity received, to her they vow their truth, and are again believed. Wisdom, in sable garb arrayed, immersed in rapturous thought profound; and Melancholy, silent maid, with leaden eye that loves the ground; still on thy solemn steps attend:—warm Charity, the general friend; with Justice, to herself severe; and Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear. Oh, gently, on thy suppliant's head, dread Goddess, lay thy chastening hand! not in thy Gorgon terrors clad, not circled with the vengeful band (as by the impious thou art seen) with thundering voice and threatening mien; with screaming Horror's funeral cry, Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly Poverty! Thy form benign, oh Goddess, wear! thy milder influence impart! thy philosophic train be there, to soften, not to wound my heart. The generous spark, extinct, revive; teach me to love, and to forgive; exact my own defects to scan; what others are, to feel; and know myself—a man!

XX.—INSTABILITY OF FRIENDSHIP.—Thomas Moore.

Alas! how light a cause may move dissension between hearts that love! Hearts, that the world in vain had tried, and sorrow but more closely tied; that stood the storm when waves were rough, yet in a sunny hour fall off:—like ships that have gone down at sea, when heaven is all tranquillity! A something light as air—a look—a word unkind, or wrongly taken—oh! love, that tempests never shook, a breath, a touch like this, hath shaken. And ruder words will soon rush in, to spread the breach that words begin; and eyes forget the gentle ray they wore in courtship's smiling day; and voices lose the tone that shed a tenderness round all they said; till, fast declining, one by one, the sweetnesses of love are gone; and hearts, so lately mingled, seem like broken clouds—or like the stream that smiling left the mountain's brow, as though its waters ne'er could sever; yet, ere it reach the plain below, breaks into floods, that part for ever!

XXI.—ODE IN IMITATION OF ALCŒUS.—Sir W. Jones.

What constitutes a state?
Not high-raised battlement, or laboured mound,
Thick wall, or moated gate;
Not cities proud, with spires and turrets crowned;
Not bays, and broad-armed ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
Not starred and spangled courts,
Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride:—
No:—Men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued,
In forest, brake, or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude:
Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing dare maintain;
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain.
These constitute a state;
And sovereign Law, that state's collected will,
O'er thrones and globes elate
Sits empress, crowning Good, repressing Ill:
Smit by her sacred frown
The fiend, Dissension, like a vapour, sinks;
And e'en the all-dazzling Crown
Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.—
Such was this heaven-loved Isle,
Than Lesbos fairer, and the Cretan shore:
No more shall Freedom smile?
Shall Britons languish, and be men no more?
Since all must life resign,
Those sweet rewards which decorate the brave
'Tis folly to decline,
And steal inglorious to the silent grave.

XXII.—THE CLOUD.—Shelley.

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers, from the seas and the streams; I bear light shade for the leaves, when laid in their noon-day dreams. From my wings are shaken the dews that waken the sweet birds every one, when rocked to rest on their mother's breast, as she dances about the sun. I wield the flail of lashing hail, and whiten the green plains under; and then again I dissolve it in rain, and laugh as I pass in thunder. I sift the snow on the mountains below, and their great pines groan aghast; and

all the night 'tis my pillow white, while I sleep in the arms of the blast. Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers, Lightning, my pilot, sits; in a cavern under is fettered the Thunder; it struggles and howls by fits: over earth and ocean, with gentle motion, this pilot is guiding me, lured by the love of the genii that move in the depths of the purple sea: over the rills, and the crags, and the hills, over the lakes and the plains, wherever he dream, under mountain or stream, the Spirit he loves remains;—and I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile, whilst he is dissolving in rains. The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor-eyes, and his burning plumes outspread, leaps on the back of my sailing rack, when the morning star shines dead:—as on the jag of a mountain-crag, which an earthquake rocks and swings, an eagle alit, one moment may sit in the light of its golden wings. And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath, its ardours of rest and of love, and the crimson pall of eve may fall from the depth of heaven above; with wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest, as still as a brooding dove. That orbèd maiden with white fire laden, whom mortals call the Moon, glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor, by the midnight breezes strewn; and wherever the beat of her unseen feet, which only the angels hear, may have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof, the stars peep behind her and peer; and I laugh to see them whirl and flee, like a swarm of golden bees, when I widen the rent in my wind-built tent, till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas, like strips of the sky fallen through me on high, are each paved with the moon and these. I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone, and the moon's with a girdle of pearl; the volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim, when the whirlwinds my banner unfurl. From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape, over a torrent sea, sunbeam proof, I hang like a roof—the mountains its columns be. The triúmphal arch through which I march with hurricane, fire, and snow, when the powers of the air are chained to my chair, is the million-coloured bow; the sphere-fire above its soft colours wove, while the moist earth was laughing below. I am the daughter of earth and water and the nursling of the sky; I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores; I change, but I cannot die. For after the rain, when, with never a stain, the pavilion of heaven is bare, and the winds and sunbeams, with their convex gleams, build up the blue

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

clime dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime; the image of Eternity, the throne of the Invisible! Even from out thy slime the monsters of the deep are made; each zone obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless—alone!

XXIV.—TO THE NIGHTINGALE.—KEATS.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, aud sunburnt Mirth!
O, for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
And purple stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with *thee* fade away, into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known—
The weariness, the fever, and the fret,
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where Palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs;
Where Youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think, is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,—
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,—
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! Tender is the night,
And haply the queen Moon is on her throne
Clustered around by all her starry fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown,
Through verdurous blooms, and winding mossy ways.

Darkling, I listen; and, for many a time,
I have been half in love with easeful Death;
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;

Now, more than ever, seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While *thou* art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod!

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night, was heard
In ancient days, by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song, that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in fairy lands forlorn.

"Forlorn!"—The very sound is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self:
Adieu!—the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! Thy plaintive anthem fades—
Past the near meadows,—over the still stream,—
Up the hill side;—and now, 'tis buried deep
In the next valley's glades:—
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music!—Do I wake or sleep?

XXV.—THE SKYLARK.—SHELLEY.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit! bird thou never wert; that, from heaven, or near it, pourest thy full heart in profuse strains of unpremeditated art. Higher still and higher from the earth thou springest; like a cloud of fire the blue deep thou wingest, and singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest. In the golden lightening of the sunken sun, o'er which clouds are brightening, thou dost float and run, like an unbodied Joy whose race is just begun. The pale purple Even melts around thy flight; like a star of heaven in the broad daylight, thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:—keen as are the arrows of that silver sphere, whose intense lamp narrows in the white dawn clear, until we hardly see, we feel that it is there. All the earth and air with thy voice is loud,

as, when night is bare, from one lonely cloud the moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art, we know not;—what is most like thee?—From rainbow-clouds there flow not drops so bright to see, as from thy presence showers a rain of melody!—Like a poet hidden in the light of thought, singing hymns unbidden, till the world is wrought to sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not. Like a high-born maiden in a palace tower, soothing her love-laden soul in secret hour, with music, sweet as love, which overflows her bower. Like a glow-worm golden in a dell of dew, scattering unbeholden its aërial hue among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view. Like a rose embowered in its own green leaves, by warm Winds deflowered, till the scent it gives makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves. Sound of vernal showers on the twinkling grass, rain-awakened flowers, all that ever was joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass!

Teach us, sprite or bird, what sweet thoughts are thine? I have never heard praise of love or wine that panted forth a flood of rapture so divine. Chorus hymeneal, or triumphal chant, matched with thine, would be all but an empty vaunt—a thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.——What objects are the fountains of thy happy strain? what fields, or waves, or mountains? what shapes of sky or plain? what love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain? With thy clear keen joyance, languor cannot be: shadow of annoyance never came near thee: thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety. Waking or asleep, thou of death must deem things more true and deep than we mortals dream; or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after, and pine for what is not: our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught; our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought. Yet, if we could scorn hate, and pride, and fear; if we were things born not to shed a tear; I know not how thy joys we ever should come near. Better than all measures of delightful sound, better than all treasures that in books are found, thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground! Teach me half the gladness that thy brain must know; such harmonious madness from my lips would flow, the world should listen then—as I am listening now!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

How the lit lake shines,—a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XXVIII.—ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE.—WORDSWORTH.

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length of five long winters; and again I hear these waters, rolling from their mountain-springs with a sweet inland murmur. Once again do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, which, on a wild secluded scene, impress thoughts of more deep seclusion, and connect the landscape with the quiet of the sky. The day is come when I again repose here, under this dark sycamore, and view these plots of cottage ground, these orchard-tufts; which, at this season, with their unripe fruits, are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves among the woods and copses, nor disturb the wild green landscape. Once again I see these hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms, green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke sent up in silence from among the trees, with some uncertain notice, as might seem, of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, or of some hermit's cave, where, by his fire, the hermit sits alone.

Though absent long, these forms of beauty have not been to me as is a landscape to a blind man's eye; but oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din of towns and cities, I have owed to them, in hours of weariness, sensations sweet, felt in the blood, and felt along the heart, and passing even into my purer mind with tranquil restoration:—feelings, too, of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps, as may have had no trivial influence on that best portion of a good man's life—his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust, to them I may have owed another gift of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood in which the burthen of the mystery, in which the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world, is lightened;—that serene and blessed mood in which the affections gently lead us on, until the breath of this corporeal frame, and even the motion of our human blood, almost suspended, we are laid asleep in body, and become a living soul; while, with an eye made quiet by the power

of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things.

If this be but a vain belief—yet, oh! how oft, in darkness, and amid the many shapes of joyless daylight, when the fretful stir unprofitable, and the fever of the world, have hung upon the beatings of my heart, how oft in spirit have I turned to thee, O sylvan Wye!—thou wanderer through the woods; how often has my spirit turned to thee! And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought, with many recognitions dim and faint, and somewhat of a sad perplexity, the picture of the mind revives again; while here I stand, not only with the sense of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts that, in this moment, there is life and food for future years. And so I dare to hope, though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first I came among these hills; when like a roe I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides of the deep rivers and the lonely streams—wherever Nature led; more like a man flying from something that he dreads, than one who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then (the coarser pleasures of my boyish days, and their glad animal movements all gone by) to me was all in all. I cannot paint what then I was. The sounding cataract haunted me like a passion; the tall rock, the mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood, their colours, and their forms, were then to me an appetite; a feeling and a love, that had no need of a remoter charm by thought supplied, or any interest unborrowed from the eye. That time is past, and all its aching joys are now no more, and all its dizzy raptures. Not for this faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts have followed—for such loss, I would believe, abundant recompense. For I have learned to look on nature, not as in the hour of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes the still sad music of humanity, nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power to chasten and subdue. And I have felt a presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused, whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, and the round ocean, and the living air, and the blue sky, and in the mind of man; a motion and a spirit that impels all thinking things, all objects of all thought, and rolls through all things. Therefore am I still a lover of the meadows, and the woods, and mountains, and of all that we behold from this green earth; of all the mighty world of eye and ear, both what they half create and what

perceive; well pleased to recognise, in Nature and the language of the sense, the anchor of my purest thoughts—the nurse, the guide, the guardian of my heart—and soul of all my moral being.

XXIX.—BEAUTY AND EXPRESSION.—Thomas Moore.

There's a beauty for ever unchangingly bright, like the long, sunny lapse of a summer-day's light, shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender: that was not her beauty—that sameness of splendour; but the loveliness ever in motion, which plays like the light upon autumn's soft shadowy days; now here and now there giving warmth, as it flies from the lips to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes. When pensive, it seemed as if that very grace, that charm of all others, was born with her face; and when angry,—for e'en in the tranquilest climes light breezes will ruffle the flowers sometimes—the short, passing anger but seemed to awaken new beauty, like flowers that are sweetest when shaken. If tenderness touched her, the dark of her eye at once took a darker, a heavenlier dye; from the depth of whose shadow, like holy revealings from innermost shrines, came the light of her feelings. Then her mirth—oh! 'twas sportive as ever took wing from the heart with a burst, like the wild-bird in spring; while her laugh, full of life, without any control but the sweet one of gracefulness, rung from her soul: and where it most sparkled no glance could discover, in lip, cheek, or eyes; for she brightened all over, like any fair lake that the breeze is upon, when it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun.

XXX.—THE DESERTED VILLAGE.—Goldsmith.

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain;
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please;
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm;—
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topped the neighbouring hill;

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

gazed upon thee, till thou, still present to the bodily sense, didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer, I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody, so sweet we know not we are listening to it, thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought, yea, with my life and life's own secret joy; till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused into the mighty vision passing,—there, as in her natural form, swelled vast to heaven.

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise thou owest! not alone these swelling tears, mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake, voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn!

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale! O, struggling with the darkness all the night, and visited all night by troops of stars, or when they climb the sky, or when they sink;—companion of the morning-star at dawn, thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn co-herald,—wake. O wake, and utter praise!—Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth? Who filled thy countenance with rosy light? Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad! who called you forth from night and utter death? from dark and icy caverns called you forth, down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks, for ever shattered, and the same for ever? Who gave you your invulnerable life, your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy; unceasing thunder and eternal foam? And who commanded (and the silence came), "Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?"

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow adown enormous ravines slope amain—torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty Voice, and stopped at once amid their maddest plunge! motionless torrents! silent cataracts!—who made you glorious as the gates of heaven, beneath the keen. full moon? Who bade the sun clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet!—God!——Let the torrents, like a shout of nations, answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!—God! Sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice! ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds! And they, too, have a voice, yon piles of snow, and in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers, that skirt the eternal frost! ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest! ye eagles, playmates

of the mountain-storm! ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds! ye signs and wonders of the element!—utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Once more, hoar mount, with thy sky-pointing peaks, oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard, shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast—thou too, again, stupendous mountain! thou, that, as I raise my head, awhile bowed low in adoration, upward from thy base slow travelling, with dim eyes suffused with tears, solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud, to rise before me,—rise, O ever, rise! rise like a cloud of incense from the earth! Thou kingly spirit, throned among the hills! thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven! great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky, and tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun, Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God!

XXXII.—THE FOUNTAIN.—Wordsworth.

We talked with open heart, and tongue affectionate and true;—a pair of friends, though I was young, and Matthew seventy-two. We lay beneath a spreading oak, beside a mossy seat; and from the turf a fountain broke, and gurgled at our feet. "Now, Matthew," said I, "let us match this water's pleasant tune, with some old Border song or catch, that suits a summer's noon; or, of the church-clock and the chimes, sing here beneath the shade that half-mad thing of witty rhymes, which thou last April made." In silence Matthew lay, and eyed the spring beneath the tree; and thus the dear old man replied, the gray-haired man of glee: "Down to the vale this water steers: how merrily it goes! 'twill murmur-on a thousand years, and flow as now it flows. And here on this delightful day, I cannot choose but think, how oft, a vigorous man, I lay beside this fountain's brink. My eyes are dim with childish tears, my heart is idly stirred; for the same sound is in my ears, which in those days I heard. Thus fares it still in our decay; and yet the wiser mind mourns less for what age takes away, than what it leaves behind. The blackbird in the summer trees, the lark upon the hill, let loose their carols when they please—are quiet when they will. With Nature never do they wage a foolish strife; they see a happy youth, and their old age is beautiful and free: but we are pressed by heavy laws, and often, glad no more, we wear a face of joy, because we have been glad of

yore. If there is one who need bemoan his kindred laid in earth—the household hearts that were his own, it is the man of mirth. My days, my friend, are almost gone; my life has been approved, and many love me; but by none am I enough beloved." "Now both himself and me he wrongs, the man who thus complains! I live and sing my idle songs upon these happy plains: and, Matthew, for thy children dead, I'll be a son to thee!" At this he grasped my hand, and said, "Alas, that cannot be." We rose up from the fountain side, and down the smooth descent of the green sheep-track did we glide, and through the woods we went; and, ere we came to Leonard's Rock, we sang these witty rhymes about the crazy old church-clock, and the bewildered chimes.

XXXIII.—POMPEII.—Lyrical Gems.

The shroud of years thrown back, thou dost revive,
Half-raised, half-buried, dead, yet still alive!
Gathering the world around thee, to admire
Thy disinterment, and, with hearts on fire,
To catch the form and fashion of the time
When Pliny lived, and thou wert in thy prime;
So strange thy resurrection, it may seem
Less waking life than a distressful dream.
Hushed is this once-gay scene, nor murmur more
The city's din, the crowd's tumultuous roar,
The laugh convivial, and the chiming sound
Of golden goblets with Falernian crowned;
The mellow breathings of the Lydian flute,
And the sweet drip of fountains, as they shoot
From marble basements,—these, all these are mute!
Closed are her springs, unnumbered fathoms deep,
Her splendid domes are one dismantled heap,
Her temples soiled, her statues in the dust,
Her tarnished medals long devoured by rust;
Its rainbow-pavements broken from the bath,
The once-thronged Forum—an untrodden path;
The fanes of love—forgotten cells; the shrines
Of vaunted gods—inurned in sulphur mines;
The abodes of art, of luxury, and taste—
Tombs of their once glad residents—a waste,
O'er which compassionate years have gradual thrown
The trailing vine, and bid the myrtle moan.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

channels deeper wear. My Mary! dear, departed shade! where is thy blissful place of rest? See'st thou thy lover lowly laid? hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

XXXVI.—THE COUNTRY CLERGYMAN.—GOLDSMITH.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village Preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train;
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain.
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won!
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave, ere charity began.
  Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But, in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all:
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt her new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
  Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;

Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway;
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The Service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile:
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven:
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

XXXVII.—THE LAST MINSTREL.—Scott.

The way was long, the wind was cold, the Minstrel was infirm and old; his withered cheek and tresses gray seemed to have known a better day: the harp, his sole-remaining joy, was carried by an orphan boy: the last of all the bards was he, who sung of Border chivalry. For, well-a-day! their date was fled, his tuneful brethren all were dead; and he, neglected and oppressed, wished to be with them, and at rest. No more, on prancing palfrey borne, he carolled, light as lark at morn; no longer, courted and caressed, high-placed in hall, a welcome guest, he poured, to lord and lady gay, the unpremeditated lay; old times were changed—old manners gone—a stranger filled the Stuarts' throne. The bigots of the iron time had called his harmless art—a crime: a wandering harper, scorned and poor, he begged his bread from door to door; and tuned, to please a peasant's ear, the harp, a king had loved to hear.

He passed, where Newark's stately tower looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower: the Minstrel gazed with wishful eye—no humbler resting-place was nigh. With hesitating step, at last, the embattled portal-arch he passed; whose ponderous grate and massy bar had oft rolled back the tide of war, but never closed the iron door against the desolate and poor. The Duchess marked his weary pace, his timid

mien and reverend face; and bade her page the menials tell that they should tend the old man well:—for she had known adversity, though born in such a high degree; in pride of power, in beauty's bloom, had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.

When kindness had his wants supplied, and the old man was gratified, began to rise his minstrel pride; and he began to talk, anon, of good Earl Francis, dead and gone; and of Earl Walter—rest him God!—a braver ne'er to battle rode: and how full many a tale he knew of the old warriors of Buccleugh; and, would the noble Duchess deign to listen to an old man's strain, though stiff his hand, his voice though weak, he thought, even yet,—the sooth to speak,—that, if she loved the harp to hear, he could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtained; the aged Minstrel audience gained; but when he reached the room of state, where she, with all her ladies, sat, perchance he wished his boon denied; for, when to tune his harp he tried, his trembling hand had lost the ease which marks security to please; and scenes, long past, of joy and pain, came wildering o'er his aged brain;—he tried to tune his harp, in vain.

Amid the strings his fingers strayed, and an uncertain warbling made; and, oft, he shook his hoary head. But when he caught the measure wild, the old man raised his face, and smiled; and lighted up his faded eye, with all a poet's ecstacy! In varying cadence, soft or strong, he swept the sounding chords along; the present scene, the future lot, his toils, his wants, were all forgot; cold diffidence, and age's frost, in the full tide of soul were lost; each blank in faithless memory's void, the poet's glowing thought supplied; and, while his harp responsive rung, 'twas thus the latest Minstrel sung:—

"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, This is my own, my native land!—whose heart hath ne'er within him burned, as home his footsteps he hath turned from wandering on a foreign strand? If such there breathe, go—mark him well; for him, no minstrel-raptures swell: high though his titles, proud his name, boundless his wealth, as wish can claim; despite those titles, power and pelf, the wretch, concentred all in self, living, shall forfeit fair renown, and, doubly dying, shall go down to the vile dust from whence he sprung, unwept, unhonoured, and unsung!"

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

how dearly I abide that boast so vain; under what torments inwardly I groan, while they adore me on the throne of hell. With diadem and sceptre high advanced, the lower still I fall—only supreme in misery! Such joy ambition finds!

But say I could repent, and could obtain, by act of grace, my former state; how soon would height recal high thoughts! how soon unsay what feigned submission swore! Ease would recant vows made in pain, as violent and void; —for never can true reconcilement grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep;—which would but lead me to a worse relapse and heavier fall: so should I purchase dear short intermission—bought with double smart! This knows my Punisher, therefore as far from granting, He—as I from begging, peace! All hope excluded thus, behold, —instead of us, outcast! exiled!—his new delight, Mankind, created, and for him this world. So, farewell hope! and, with hope, farewell fear! Farewell remorse! all good to me is lost; Evil, be thou my Good! by thee, at least divided empire with heaven's King I hold; by thee, and more than half perhaps, will reign—as man ere long, and this new world, shall know!

XXXIX.—THE PULPIT.—Cowper.

I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
Co-incident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause.
To such I render more than mere respect,
Whose actions say that they respect themselves.
But, loose in morals, and in manners vain,
In conversation frivolous, in dress
Extreme, at once rapacious and profuse;
Frequent in park with lady at his side,
Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes!
But rare at home, and never at his books,
Or with his pen, save when he scrawls a card;
Constant at routs, familiar with a round
Of ladyships—a stranger to the poor;
Ambitious of preferment for its gold;
And well prepared, by ignorance and sloth,
By infidelity and love of world,
To make God's work a sinecure; a slave
To his own pleasures and his patron's pride:—
From such apostles, oh, ye mitred heads,

Preserve the Church! and lay not careless hands
On skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn.
  Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impressed
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty man.
Behold the picture!—Is it like?—Like whom?
The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then, skip down again; pronounce a text;
Cry—hem; and, reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well-bred whisper close the scene!
  In man or woman, but far most in man,
And most of all in man that ministers
And serves the altar, in my soul I loathe
All affectation. 'Tis my perfect scorn;
Object of my implacable disgust.
What!—will a man play tricks—will he indulge
A silly, fond conceit of his fair form,
And just proportion, fashionable mien,
And pretty face, in presence of his God?
Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes,
As with the diamond on his lily hand;
And play his brilliant parts before my eyes,
When I am hungry for the bread of life?
He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames
His noble office, and, instead of truth,
Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock!
Therefore, avaunt all attitude, and stare,
And start theatric, practised at the glass!
I seek divine simplicity in him
Who handles things divine; and all besides,
Though learn'd with labour, and though much admired
By curious eyes and judgements ill-informed,
To me is odious,—as the nasal twang

Heard at conventicle, where worthy men,
Misled by custom, strain celestial themes
Through the pressed nostril spectacle-bestrid.
Some, decent in demeanour while they preach,
That task performed, relapse into themselves;
And, having spoken wisely, at the close
Grow wanton, giving proof to every eye,
Whoe'er was edified, themselves were not!
Forth comes the pocket mirror. First, we stroke
An eye-brow; next, compose a straggling lock;
Then, with an air most gracefully performed,
Fall back into our seat, extend an arm,
And lay it at its ease,
With handkerchief in hand depending low:
The better hand, more busy, gives the nose
Its bergamot, or aids the indebted eye
With opera-glass, to watch the moving scene,
And recognise the slow-retiring fair.—
Now, this is fulsome; and offends me more
Than in a churchman slovenly neglect
And rustic coarseness would. A heavenly mind
May be indifferent to her house of clay,
And slight the hovel as beneath her care;
But how a body so fantastic, trim,
And quaint, in its deportment and attire,
Can lodge a heavenly mind—demands a doubt.

XL. WAITING FOR THE MAY.—D. F. M'CARTHY

Ah! my heart is weary waiting, waiting for the May waiting for the pleasant rambles, where the fragrant haw thorn-brambles, with the woodbine alternating, scent th dewy way. Ah! my heart is weary waiting, waiting for th May.——Ah! my heart is sick with longing, longing fo the May—longing to escape from study to the fair youn face and ruddy, and the thousand charms belonging to th summer's day. Ah! my heart is sick with longing, longin for the May.——Ah! my heart is sore with sighing, sighin for the May—sighing for their sure returning when th summer-beams are burning, hopes and flowers that dead o dying all the winter lay. Ah! my heart is sore wit sighing, sighing for the May.——Ah! my heart is paine with throbbing, throbbing for the May—throbbing for th seaside billows, or the water-wooing willows, where in laughing and in sobbing glide the streams away. Ah

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

The little flames still fitfully play through the sable mound,
And fitfully you still may see the grim smiths ranking round;
All clad in leathern panoply, their broad hands only bare—
Some rest upon their sledges here, some work the windlass there.
The windlass strains the tackle chains, the black mound heaves below,
And red and deep a hundred veins burst out at every throe:
It rises, roars, rends all outright—O, Vulcan, what a glow!
'Tis blinding white, 'tis blasting bright—the high sun shines not so!
"Hurrah!" they shout, "leap out—leap out;" bang, bang the sledges go;
Hurrah! the jetted lightnings are hissing high and low—
Swing in your strokes in order, let foot and hand keep time;
Your blows make music sweeter far than any steeple's chime.
But while you sling your sledges, sing—and let the burden be,
"The anchor is the anvil king, and royal craftsmen we!"
Strike in, strike in—the sparks begin to dull their rustling red;
Our hammers ring with sharper din, our work will soon be sped.
Our anchor soon must change his bed of fiery rich array,
For a hammock at the roaring bows, or an oozy couch of clay.
In livid and obdurate gloom he darkens down at last;
A shapely one he is, and strong, as e'er from cat was cast.
O trusted and trustworthy guard, if thou hadst life like me,
What pleasures would thy toils reward beneath the deep green sea!
O Lodger in the sea-kings' halls, couldst thou but understand
Whose be the white bones by thy side, or who that dripping band
Slow swaying in the heaving wave, that round about thee bend,
With sounds like breakers in a dream blessing their ancient friend—
Oh, couldst thou know what heroes glide with larger steps round thee,
Thine iron side would swell with pride; thou'dst leap within the sea!
Give honour to their memories who left the pleasant strand
To shed their blood so freely for the love of Father-land—
Who left their chance of quiet age and grassy church-yard grave
So freely, for a restless bed amid the tossing wave—
Oh, though our anchor may not be all I have fondly sung,
Honour him for their memory, whose bones he goes among!

XLIII.—THE CATARACT OF LODORE.—SOUTHEY.

How does the water come down at Lodore? From its sources which well in the tarn on the fell; from its fountains in the mountains, its rills and its gills; through moss and through brake, it runs and it creeps for awhile, till it sleeps in its own little lake. And thence at departing, awakening and starting, it runs through the reeds, and away it proceeds through meadow and glade, in sun and in shade, and through the wood-shelter, among crags in its flurry, helter-skelter, hurry-skurry. Here it comes sparkling, and there it lies darkling; now smoking and frothing its tumult and wrath in; till, in this rapid race on which it is bent, it reaches the place of its steep descent. The cataract strong then plunges along; striking and raging, as if a war waging its caverns and rocks among; rising and leaping, sinking and creeping, swelling and sweeping, showering and springing, flying and flinging, writhing and ringing, eddying and whisking, spouting and frisking, turning and twisting, around and around with endless rebound: smiting and fighting, a sight to delight in, confounding, astounding, dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound: collecting, projecting, receding and speeding, and shocking and rocking, and darting and parting, and threading and spreading, and whizzing and hissing, and dripping and skipping, and hitting and splitting, and shining and twining, and rattling and battling, and shaking and quaking, and pouring and roaring, and waving and raving, and tossing and crossing, and flowing and going, and running and stunning, and foaming and roaming, and dinning and spinning, and dropping and hopping, and working and jerking, and guggling and struggling, and heaving and cleaving, and moaning and groaning; and glittering and frittering, and gathering and feathering, and whitening and brightening, and quivering and shivering, and hurrying and skurrying, and thundering and floundering; dividing and gliding and sliding, and falling and brawling and sprawling, and driving and riving and striving, and sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling, and sounding and bounding and rounding, and bubbling and troubling and doubling, and grumbling and rumbling and tumbling, and clattering and battering and shattering; retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting, delaying and straying and playing and spraying, advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing, recoiling, turmoiling, and toiling and boiling,

and gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming, and rushing and flushing and brushing and pushing, and flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping, and curling and whirling and purling and twirling, and thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping, and dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;—and so never ending, but always descending, sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending, all at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar; and this way, the water comes down at Lodore.

XLV.—OUR COUNTRY AND OUR HOME.—MONTGOMERY.

There is a land, of every land the pride,
Beloved by Heaven o'er all the world beside;
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
And milder moons emparadise the night:
A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,
Time-tutored age, and love-exalted youth:
The wandering mariner, whose eye explores
The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,
Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,
Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air:
In every clime, the magnet of his soul,
Touched by remembrance, trembles to that pole;
For in this land of Heaven's peculiar grace,
The heritage of Nature's noblest race,
There is a spot of earth supremely blest,—
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest:
Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride,
While in his softened looks benignly blend
The sire, the son, the husband, brother, friend;
Here woman reigns; the mother, daughter, wife,
Strew with fresh flowers the narrow way of life;
In the clear heaven of her delightful eye,
An angel-guard of loves and graces lie;
Around her knees domestic duties meet,
And fire-side pleasures gambol at her feet.
"Where shall that land, that spot of earth be found?"
Art thou a man?—a patriot?—look around;
O thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
That land *thy* Country, and that spot thy *Home*.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

IV.—THE STAR OF HEAVEN.—Callanan.

Shine on, thou bright beacon, unclouded and free,
From thy high place of calmness, o'er Life's troubled sea;
Its morning of promise, its smooth waves are gone,
And the billows roar wildly; then, bright one, shine on!

The wings of the tempest may rush o'er thy ray,
But tranquil thou smilest, undimmed by its sway;
High, high o'er the worlds where storms are unknown,
Thou dwellest, all beauteous, all glorious,—alone.

From the deep womb of darkness the lightning-flash leaps
O'er the bark of my fortunes each mad billow sweeps,
From the port of her safety by warring-winds driven;
And no light o'er her course—but yon lone one of Heaven.

Yet fear not, thou frail one! the hour may be near,
When our own sunny head-land far off shall appear;
When the voice of the storm shall be silent and past,
In some island of Heaven we may anchor at last.

But, bark of eternity, where art thou now?
The wild waters shriek o'er each plunge of thy prow,
On the world's dreary ocean thus shatter'd and tost;—
Then, lone one, shine on! "If I lose thee, I'm lost!"

V.—THE DYING CHIEF.—Mrs Maclean.

The stars looked down on the battle-plain, where night-winds were deeply sighing: and with shattered lance, near his war-steed slain, lay a youthful Chieftain—dying! He had folded round his gallant breast the banner, once o'er him streaming; for a noble shroud, as he sunk to rest on the couch that knows no dreaming. Proudly he lay on his broken shield, by the rushing Guadalquiver; while, dark with the blood of his last red field, swept on the majestic river. There were hands which came to bind his wound, there were eyes o'er the warrior weeping; but he raised his head from the dewy ground, where the land's high hearts were sleeping! And "Away!" he cried;—"your aid is vain; my soul may not brook recalling.—I have seen the stately flower of Spain, like the autumn vine-leaves falling! I have seen the Moorish banners wave o'er the halls where my youth was cherished; I have drawn a sword that could not save; I have stood, where my king hath perished! Leave me to die with the free and brave, on the banks of my own bright river! ye can give me nought but a warrior's grave, by the chainless Guadalquiver!"

VI.—THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.—Byron.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow—in the glance of the Lord!

VII.—THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.—H. Kirke White.

When, marshalled on the nightly plain, the glittering host bestud the sky, one star alone, of all the train, can fix the sinner's wandering eye. Hark! hark!—to God the chorus breaks, from every host, from every gem; but one alone the Saviour speaks—it is the Star of Bethlehem! Once on the raging seas I rode; the storm was loud—the night was dark—the ocean yawned—and rudely blowed the wind, that tossed my foundering bark. Deep horror then my vitals froze;—death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem,—when, suddenly, a Star arose!—it was the Star of Bethlehem! It was my guide—my light—my all! it bade my dark forebodings cease; and through the storm, and danger's thrall, it led me to the port of peace. Now, safely moored, my perils o'er, I'll sing, first in night's diadem, for ever, and for evermore, the Star—the Star of Bethlehem!

VIII.—CASABIANCA.—Mrs Hemans.

The boy stood on the burning deck, whence all but him had fled;
The flames that lit the battle's wreck, shone round him o'er the dead;
Yet beautiful and bright he stood, as born to rule the storm,—
A creature of heroic blood; a proud, though child-like form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below, his voice no longer heard.
He called aloud:—"Say, father, say, if yet my task is done?"
He knew not that the chieftain lay unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father!" once again he cried, "if I may yet be gone?"
But now the booming shots replied, and fast the flames rolled on.
Upon his brow he felt their breath, and in his waving hair,
And looked from that lone post of death in still but brave despair;

And shouted but once more aloud, "My father! must I stay?"
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud, the wreathing fires made way.
They wrapped the ship in splendour wild, they caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child, like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder-sound;—the boy—oh! where was he?
Ask of the winds that far around with fragments strewed the sea!—
With mast, and helm, and pennon fair, that well had borne their part;
But the noblest thing that perished there was—that young faithful heart.

IX.—THE ORPHAN BOY.—Mrs Opie.

Stay, Lady! stay for mercy's sake, and hear a helpless Orphan's tale! Ah! sure, my looks must pity wake; 'tis want that makes my cheek so pale. Yet I was once a mother's pride, and my brave father's hope and joy; but in the Nile's proud fight he died—and I am now an Orphan Boy! Poor, foolish child! how pleased was I, when news of Nelson's victory came, along the crowded streets to fly, and see the lighted windows flame! To force me home my mother sought; she could not bear to see my joy, for with my father's life 'twas bought—and made me a poor Orphan Boy! The people's shouts were long and loud; my mother, shuddering, closed her ears: "Rejoice! rejoice!" still cried the crowd; my mother answered with her tears. "Why are you crying thus," said I, "while others laugh, and shout with joy?" She kissed me, and, with such a sigh, she called me her poor Orphan Boy! "What is an orphan boy?" I said; when, suddenly, she gasped for breath, and her eyes closed —I shrieked for aid, but, ah! her eyes were closed in death! And now they've tolled my mother's knell, and I'm no more a parent's joy:—oh Lady!—I have learned too well what 'tis to be an Orphan Boy! Oh were I by your bounty fed—nay, gentle Lady, do not chide; trust me, I mean to earn my bread; the sailor's orphan boy has pride! Lady, you weep!—Ha!—this to me? You'll give me clothing, food, employ? Look down, dear parents! look and see your happy, happy Orphan Boy!

X.—THE SOLDIER'S FUNERAL.—Mrs Maclean

The muffled drum rolled on the air,
Warriors with stately step were there;
On every arm was the black crape bound,
Every carbine was turned to the ground:
Solemn the sound of their measured tread,
As silent and slow they followed the dead.
The riderless horse was led in the rear,
There were white plumes waving over the bier,
Helmet and sword were laid on the pall,
For it was a Soldier's funeral.

That soldier had stood on the battle-plain,
Where every step was over the slain:
But the brand and the ball had passed him by,
And he came to his native land—to die!
'Twas hard to come to that native land,
And not clasp one familiar hand!
'Twas hard to be numbered amid the dead,
Or ere he could hear his welcome said!
But 'twas something to see its cliffs once more,
And to lay his bones on his own loved shore;
To think that the friends of his youth might weep
O'er the green grass turf of the soldier's sleep.

The bugles ceased their wailing sound
As the coffin was lowered into the ground;
A volley was fired, a blessing said,
One moment's pause—and they left the dead!—
I saw a poor and aged man,
His step was feeble, his lip was wan;
He knelt him down on the new-raised mound,
His face was bowed to the cold damp ground:
He raised his head, his tears were done,—
The FATHER had prayed o'er his only son.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

die,—that I may meet you all on high!" Like arrow from the bended bow he sprang upon the bloody pile:—like sun-rise on the morning's snow, was that heroic mother's smile. He died,—nor feared the tyrant's nod—for Judah's law and Judah's God.

XIV.—MIRIAM'S SONG.—Moore.

Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed—His people are free!
Sing!—for the pride of the tyrant is broken:
His chariots, his horsemen, all splendid and brave,—
How vain was their boasting!—the Lord hath but spoken,
And chariots and horsemen are sunk in the wave.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed—His people are free!

Praise to the Conqueror, praise to the Lord!
His word was our arrow, his breath was our sword!
Who shall return to tell Egypt the story
Of those she sent forth in the hour of her pride?
For the Lord hath looked out from his pillar of glory,
And all her brave thousands are dashed in the tide.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea
Jehovah has triumphed—His people are free!

XV.—A PSALM OF LIFE.—Longfellow.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers, "Life is but an empty dream!" for the soul is dead that slumbers, and things are not what they seem. Life is real! life is earnest! and the grave is not its goal: "Dust thou art, to dust returnest," was not spoken of the soul. Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, is our destined end or way; but to act, that each To-morrow finds us farther than To-day. Art is long, and time is fleeting; and our hearts, though stout and brave, still, like muffled drums, are beating funeral marches to the grave. In the world's broad field of battle, in the bivouac of Life, be not like dumb, driven cattle! be a hero in the strife! Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant! let the dead Past bury its dead! Act—act in the living Present! heart within, and God o'erhead! Lives of great men all remind us we can make our lives sublime; and, departing, leave behind us footprints on the sands of time;—footprints that perhaps another, sailing o'er Life's solemn main, a forlorn and shipwrecked brother, seeing, shall take heart again. Let us then be up and doing, with a heart for any fate; still achieving, still pursuing,—learn to labour and to wait.

XVI.—GERTRUDE VON DER WART.—Mrs Hemans.

Her hands were clasped, her dark eyes raised, the breeze threw back her hair;
Up to the fearful wheel she gazed;—all that she loved was there!
The night was round her clear and cold, the holy heaven above;
Its pale stars watching to behold the might of earthly love.

"And bid me not depart," she cried: "my Rudolph, say not so;
This is no time to quit thy side; peace—peace: I cannot go.
Hath the world aught for me to fear, when death is on thy brow?
The world—what means it?—mine is here; I will not leave thee now!

"I have been with thee in thine hour of glory and of bliss;
Doubt not its memory's living power, to strengthen me through this:
And thou, mine honoured lord and true, bear on, bear nobly on!
We have the blessed heaven in view, whose rest shall soon be won!"

And were not these high words to flow from woman's breaking heart?
Through all that night of bitterest woe, she bore her lofty part;
But, oh! with such a glazing eye, with such a curdling cheek,
Love, love, of mortal agony, thou, only thou, shouldst speak!

The wind rose high, but with it rose her voice that he might hear:
Perchance that dark hour brought repose to happy bosoms near,
While she sat pining with despair, beside his tortured form,
And pouring her deep soul in prayer, forth on the rushing storm.

Oh! lovely are ye, Love and Faith, enduring to the last!
She had her meed! one smile in death—and his worn spirit passed!
While, even as o'er a martyr's grave, she knelt on that sad spot;
And, weeping, blessed the God who gave strength to forsake it not!

XVII.—EXCELSIOR.—Longfellow.

The shades of night were falling fast, as through an Alpine village passed a youth, who bore 'mid snow and ice, a banner with the strange device, Excelsior! His brow was sad; his eye beneath, flashed like a falchion from its sheath; and like a silver clarion rung the accents of that unknown tongue, Excelsior! In happy homes he saw the light of household fires gleam warm and bright; above, the spectral glaciers shone; and from his lips escaped a groan, Excelsior! "Try not the pass," the old man said: "dark lowers the tempest overhead, the roaring torrent is deep and wide!" and loud that clarion voice replied, Excelsior! "Oh, stay," the maiden said, "and rest thy weary head upon this breast!" A tear stood in his bright blue eye; but still he answered with a sigh, Excelsior! "Beware the pine-tree's withered branch! beware the awful avalanche!" This was the peasant's last good night; a voice replied far up the height, Excelsior! At break of day, as heavenward the pious monks of Saint Bernard uttered the oft-repeated prayer, a voice cried through the startled air, Excelsior! A traveller, by the faithful hound, half-buried in the snow was found; still grasping in his hand of ice, the banner with the strange device, Excelsior! There in the twilight cold and grey, lifeless, but beautiful, he lay; and from the sky, serene and far, a voice fell, like a falling star, Excelsior!

XVIII.—THE SPRING JOURNEY.—Bishop Heber.

O green was the corn as I rode on my way,
And bright were the dews on the blossoms of May,
And dark was the sycamore's shade to behold,
And the oak's tender leaf was of emerald and gold.

The thrush from his holly, the lark from his cloud,
Their chorus of rapture sang jovial and loud:
From the soft vernal sky to the soft grassy ground,
There was beauty above me, beneath, and around.

The mild southern breeze brought a shower from the hill;
And yet, though it left me all dripping and chill,
I felt a new pleasure as onward I sped,
To gaze where the rainbow gleamed broad over head.

O such be Life's journey, and such be our skill,
To lose in its blessings the sense of its ill;
Through sunshine and shower may our progress be even,
And our tears add a charm to the prospect of Heaven!

XIX.—THE JACKDAW.—Cowper.

There is a bird, that, by his coat, and by the hoarseness of his note, might be supposed a crow; a great frequenter of the church,—where, bishop-like, he finds a perch, and dormitory too. Above the steeple shines a plate that turns and turns, to indicate from what point blows the weather: look up—your brains begin to swim; 'tis in the clouds—that pleases him; he chooses it the rather. Fond of the speculative height, thither he wings his airy flight; and thence securely sees the bustle and the raree-show that occupy mankind below—secure, and at his ease. You think, no doubt, he sits and muses on future broken bones and bruises, if he should chance to fall: no, not a single thought like that employs his philosophic pate, or troubles it at all. He sees that this great round-about, the world, with all its motley rout, church, army, physic, law, its customs and its businesses, are no concern at all of his; and says—what says he? —Caw. Thrice happy bird! I, too, have seen much of the vanities of men; and, sick of having seen them, would cheerfully these limbs resign, for such a pair of wings as thine, and—such a head between them.

XX.—JERUSALEM.—Moore.

Fallen is thy throne, O Israel! silence is o'er thy plains!
Thy dwellings all lie desolate, thy children weep in chains.
Where are the dews that fed thee on Etham's barren shore?
That fire from heaven, which led thee, now lights thy path no more!

Lord, thou didst love Jerusalem; once she was all thine own:
Her love Thy fairest heritage, her power Thy glory's throne,
Till evil came, and blighted thy long-loved olive-tree,
And Salem's shrines were lighted for other gods than Thee.

Then sank the star of Solyma; then passed her glory's day,
Like heath that, in the wilderness, the light wind whirls away.
Silent and waste her bowers, where once the mighty trod;
And sunk those guilty towers, where Baal reigned as God.

"Go," said the Lord, "ye conquerors! steep in her blood your swords,
And raze to earth her battlements, for they are not the Lord's!
Till Zion's mournful daughter o'er kindred bones shall tread,
And Hinnom's vale of slaughter shall hide but half her dead."

But soon shall other pictured scenes in brighter vision rise,
When Zion's sun shall sevenfold shine on all her mourners' eyes;
And on her mountains beauteous stand messengers of peace;
"Salvation by the Lord's right hand!" they shout and never cease.

XXI.—THE HOMES OF ENGLAND.—Mrs Hemans.

The stately Homes of England!—how beautiful they stand! amidst their tall ancestral trees, o'er all the pleasant land. The deer across their greensward bound through shade and sunny gleam; and the swan glides past them with the sound of some rejoicing stream. The merry Homes of England!—around their hearths by night, what gladsome looks of household love meet in the ruddy light! There woman's voice flows forth in song, or childhood's tale is told, or lips move tunefully along some glorious page of old. The blessed Homes of England!—how softly on their bowers is laid the holy quietness that breathes from sabbath hours! Solemn, yet sweet, the church-bell's chime floats through their woods at morn; all other sounds, in that still time, of breeze and leaf are born. The cottage Homes of England!—by thousands on her plains, they are smiling o'er the silvery brooks, and round the hamlet-fanes. Through glowing orchards forth they peep, each from its nook of leaves, and fearless there the lowly sleep, as the bird beneath their eaves. The

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XXIV.—THE PILGRIM FATHERS.—Mrs Hemans.

The breaking waves dash'd high on a stern and rock-bound coast;
And the woods, against a stormy sky, their giant branches toss'd;
And the heavy night hung dark, the hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moor'd their bark on the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes, they, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums, and the trumpet that sings of fame;
Not as the flying come, in silence, and in fear;—
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom with their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang: this the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang to the anthem of the free.
The ocean-eagle soar'd, from his nest by the white wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roar'd:—such was their welcome home.

There were men with hoary hair amidst that pilgrim band:
Why had they come to wither there, away from their childhood's land?
There was woman's fearless eye, lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high, and the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar? Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas? the spoils of war?—No—'twas a faith's pure shrine.
Yes, call that holy ground,—which first their brave feet trod!
They have left unstain'd what there they found—Freedom to worship God!

XXV.—THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM.—Southey.

It was a summer evening, old Kaspar's work was done; and he before his cottage door was sitting in the sun, and by him sported on the green his little grandchild Wilhelmine. She saw her brother Peterkin roll something large and round, which he beside the rivulet in playing there had found: he came to ask what he had found, that was so large, and smooth, and round. Old Kaspar took it from the boy, who stood expectant by; and then the old man shook his head, and with a natural sigh, "'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he, "who fell in the great victory! I find them in the garden, for there's many here about; and often when I go to plough, the ploughshare turns them out: for many thousand men," said he, "were slain in that great victory." "Now tell us what 'twas all about," young Peterkin he cries; and little Wilhelmine looks up with wonder-waiting eyes: "Now tell us all about the war, and what they fought each other for?" "It was the English," Kaspar cried, "who put the French to rout; but what they fought each other for, I could not well make out; but everybody said," quoth he, "that 'twas a famous victory. My father lived at Blenheim then, yon little stream hard by; they burnt his dwelling to the ground, and he was forced to fly: so with his wife and child he fled, nor had he where to rest his head. With fire and sword the country round was wasted far and wide, and many a widowed mother then, and new-born baby, died!—but things like that, you know, must be at every famous victory. They say it was a shocking sight, after the field was won; for many thousand bodies here lay rotting in the sun: but things like that, you know, must be after a famous victory. Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won, and our good Prince Eugene"—"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!" said little Wilhelmine. "Nay—nay—my little girl," quoth he, "it was a famous victory. And everybody praised the Duke who this great fight did win." "But what good came of it at last?" quoth little Peterkin. "Why, that I cannot tell," said he, "but 'twas a famous victory!"

XXVI.—LOOK ALOFT.—Jonathan Lawrence.

In the tempest of life, when the wave and the gale
Are around and above, if thy footing should fail,
If thine eye should grow dim, and thy caution depart,
"Look aloft," and be firm, and be fearless of heart.

If the friend, who embraced in prosperity's glow,
With a smile for each joy and a tear for each woe,
Should betray thee when sorrows like clouds are arrayed,
"Look aloft" to the friendship which never shall fade.

Should the vision which hope spreads in light to thine eye,
Like the tints of the rainbow, but brighten to fly,
Then turn, and, through tears of repentant regret,
"Look aloft" to the sun that is never to set.

Should they who are dearest, the son of thy heart,
The wife of thy bosom, in sorrow depart,
"Look aloft" from the darkness and dust of the tomb,
To that soil where "affection is ever in bloom."

And oh! when death comes in his terrors, to cast
His fears on the future, his pall on the past,
In that moment of darkness, with hope in thy heart
And a smile in thine eye, "look aloft," and depart!

XXVII.—BRUCE AND THE SPIDER.—Eliza Cook.

King Bruce of Scotland flung himself down in a lonely mood to think; 'tis true he was monarch, and wore a crown, but his heart was beginning to sink. For he had been trying to do a great deed to make his people glad; he had tried and tried, but couldn't succeed, and so he became quite sad. He flung himself down in low despair, as grieved as man could be; and after a while as he pondered there, "I'll give it all up," said he. Now just at that moment a spider dropped, with its silken cobweb clue; and the king, in the midst of his thinking, stopped to see what the spider would do. 'Twas a long way up to the ceiling dome; and it hung by a rope so fine, that how it would get to its cobweb home, King Bruce could not divine. It soon began to cling and crawl straight up with strong endeavour,—but down it came, with a slipping sprawl, as near to the ground as ever. Again it fell and swung below, but again it quickly mounted; till up and down, now fast, now slow, nine brave attempts were counted. "Sure," cried the king, "that foolish thing will strive no more to climb, when it toils so hard to reach and cling, and tumbles every time." Up again it went, inch by inch, higher and higher he got; and a bold little run at the very last pinch, put him into his native spot. "Bravo, bravo!" the king cried out, "all honour to those who try: the spider up there defied despair; he conquered, and why shouldn't I?" Again King Robert roused his soul; and history tells the tale, that he tried once more,—'twas at Bannockburn,—and that time he did not fail!

XXVIII.—NO WORK THE HARDEST WORK.—C. F. Orne.

Ho! ye who at the anvil toil, and strike the sounding blow,
Where from the burning iron's breast the sparks fly to and fro,
While answering to the hammer's ring, and fire's intenser glow—
Oh! while ye feel 'tis hard to toil and sweat the long day through,
Remember it is harder still to have no work to do.

Ho! ye who till the stubborn soil, whose hard hands guide the plough,
Who bend beneath the summer sun, with burning cheek and brow—
Ye deem the curse still clings to earth from olden time till now—
But while ye feel 'tis hard to toil and labour all day through,
Remember it is harder still to have no work to do.

Ho! ye who plough the sea's blue field, who ride the restless wave
Beneath whose gallant vessel's keel there lies a yawning grave,
Around whose bark the wintry winds like fiends of fury rave—
Oh! while ye feel 'tis hard to toil and labour long hours through,
Remember it is harder still to have no work to do.

Ho! ye upon whose fevered cheeks the hectic glow is bright,
Whose mental toil wears out the day and half the weary night;
Who labour for the souls of men, champions of truth and right—
Although ye feel your toil is hard, even with this glorious view,
Remember it is harder still to have no work to do.

Ho! all who labour, all who strive, ye wield a lofty power;
Work with your might, work with your strength, fill every golden hour
The glorious privilege to do, is man's most noble dower.
Oh! to your birthright and yourselves, to your own souls, be true!
A weary, wretched life is theirs, who have no work to do.

XXIX.—THE WIND AND THE WEATHERCOCK.—S. Lover.

The summer wind lightly was playing round the battlement high of the tower, where a vane, like a lady, was staying,—a lady vane perch'd in her bower. To peep round the corner the sly wind would try, but vanes, you know, never look in the wind's eye; and so she kept turning shyly away;—thus they kept playing all through the day. The summer wind said, She's coquetting; but each belle has her points to be found; before evening, I'll venture on betting, she will not then GO, but COME round." So he tried from the east, and he tried from the west, and the north and the south, to see which was best; but still she kept turning shyly away:—thus they kept playing all through the day. At evening, her hard heart to soften, he said, "You're a flirt, I am sure; but if vainly you're changing so often, no lover you'll ever secure." "Sweet sir," said the vane, "it is you who begin: when YOU change so often, in ME 'tis no sin. If you cease to flutter, and steadily sigh, and only be constant—I'm sure so will I."

XXX.—THE MARINER'S HYMN.—Mrs Southey.

Launch thy bark, Mariner! Christian, God speed thee!
Let loose the rudder-bands!—good angels lead thee!
Set thy sails warily; tempests will come;
Steer thy course steadily! Christian, steer home!

Look to the weather-bow, breakers are round thee!
Let fall the plummet now—shallows may ground thee.
Reef-in the fore-sail there! hold the helm fast!
So—let the vessel ware! there swept the blast.

What of the night, watchman? What of the night?
"Cloudy—all quiet—no land yet—all's right."
Be wakeful, be vigilant!—danger may be
At an hour when all seemeth securest to thee.

How! gains the leak so fast? Clean out the hold—
Hoist up thy merchandise—heave out thy gold!
There—let the ingots go!—now the ship rights.
Hurrah! the harbour's near—lo, the red lights!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

For though in dreadful whirls we hung high on the broken wave,
I knew Thou wert not slow to hear, nor impotent to save.
The storm was laid, the winds retired, obedient to Thy will;
The sea, that roared at Thy command, at Thy command was still.

In midst of dangers, fears, and deaths, Thy goodness I'll adore;
And praise thee for Thy mercies past, and humbly hope for more.
My life,—if Thou preserv'st my life,—Thy sacrifice shall be;
And death,—since death must be my doom,—shall join my soul to Thee.

XXXIV.—THE COMMON LOT.—James Montgomery.

Once, in the flight of ages past, there lived a man; and who was he? Mortal! howe'er thy lot be cast, that man resembled thee. Unknown the region of his birth; the land in which he died, unknown: his name has perished from the earth: This truth survives alone;—that joy, and grief, and hope, and fear, alternate triumphed in his breast: his bliss, and woe—a smile, a tear: oblivion hides the rest. The bounding pulse, the languid limb, the changing spirits' rise and fall; we know that these were felt by him, for these are felt by all. He suffered—but his pangs are o'er; enjoyed—but his delights are fled; had friends—his friends are now no more; had foes—his foes are dead. He loved—but whom he loved, the grave hath lost in its unconscious womb: O, she was fair! but nought could save her beauty from the tomb. He saw—whatever thou hast seen; encountered—all that troubles thee; he was—whatever thou hast been; he is—what thou shalt be! The rolling seasons, day and night, sun, moon, and stars, the earth and main,—erewhile his portion, —life and light, to him exist in vain. The clouds and sunbeams, o'er his eye that once their shades and glory threw, have left, in yonder silent sky, no vestige where they flew. The annals of the human race, their ruins since the world began, of him afford no other trace than this,—THERE LIVED A MAN!

XXXV.—COURAGE IN POVERTY.—Pope.

In Anna's wars, a soldier, poor and old,
Had dearly earned a little purse of gold:
Tired with a tedious march, one luckless night
He slept, poor dog! and lost it, every mite.
This put the man in such a desperate mind,
Between revenge, and grief, and hunger joined,
Against the foe, himself, and all mankind,
He leaped the trenches, scaled a castle-wall,
Tore down a standard, took the fort and all.
"Prodigious well!" his great Commander cried,
Gave him much praise, and some reward beside.
Next, pleased his Excellence a town to batter,
(Its name I know not, and 'tis no great matter);
"Go on, my friend, (he cried), see yonder walls,
"Advance and conquer! go, where glory calls!
"More honours, more rewards, attend the brave."
Don't you remember what reply he gave?
"D'ye think me, noble General, such a sot?
"Let him take castles who has ne'er a groat?

XXXVI.—THE TREASURES OF THE DEEP.—Mrs Hemans.

What hid'st thou in thy treasure caves and cells, thou hollow-sounding and mysterious Main?—pale glistening pearls, and rainbow-coloured shells; bright things which gleam unreck'd of, and in vain. Keep, keep thy riches, melancholy Sea! we ask not such from thee.—Yet more, the

Depths have more! What wealth untold, far down and shining through their stillness lies! Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold, won from ten thousand royal argosies. Sweep o'er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main; earth claims not these again!——Yet more, the Depths have more! Thy waves have rolled above the cities of a world gone by! Sand hath filled up the palaces of old, sea-weed o'ergrown the halls of revelry! Dash o'er them, Ocean! in thy scornful play: man yields them to decay!——Yet more! the Billows and the Depths have more! High hearts and brave are gathered to thy breast! They hear not now the booming waters roar; the battle-thunders will not break their rest: keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy Grave—give back the true and brave! ——Give back the lost and lovely! those for whom the place was kept at board and hearth so long; the prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom, and the vain yearning woke 'midst festal song! Hold fast thy buried isles, thy towers o'erthrown,—but all is not thine own! ——To thee the love of woman hath gone down; dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head, o'er youth's bright locks and beauty's flowery crown;—yet must thou hear a Voice—"Restore the Dead!" Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee: "Restore the Dead, thou Sea!"

XXXVII.—ALL HOLLOW.—Anonymous.

I stood beneath a hollow tree, the blast it hollow blew;
I thought upon the hollow world, and all its hollow crew,
Ambition and its hollow schemes, the hollow hopes we follow;
Imagination's hollow dreams, all hollow, hollow, hollow

A crown it is a hollow thing, and hollow heads oft wear it,
The hollow title of a king, what hollow hearts oft bear it!
No hollow wiles, nor honey'd smiles, of ladies fair I follow;
For beauty sweet still hides deceit; 'tis hollow, hollow, hollow!

The hollow leader but betrays the hollow dupes who heed him;
The hollow critic vends his praise to hollow fools who feed him;
The hollow friend who takes your hand, is but a summer swallow;
Whate'er I see is like this tree,—all, hollow, hollow, hollow!

XXXVIII.—THE COW AND THE ASS.—Miss Taylor.

Hard by a green meadow a stream used to flow, so clear one might see the white pebbles below; to this cooling stream the warm cattle would stray, to stand in the shade on a hot summer's day. A cow, quite oppressed with the heat of the sun, came here to refresh, as she often had done; and standing stock still, leaning over the stream, was musing perhaps, or perhaps she might dream. But soon a brown ass of respectable look, came trotting up also to taste of the brook, and to nibble a few of the daisies and grass: "How d'ye do?" said the cow; "How d'ye do?" said the ass. "Take a seat," cried the cow, gently waving her hand; "By no means, dear madam," said he, "while you stand;" then stooping to drink, with a complaisant bow, "Ma'am, your health," said the ass;—"Thank you, sir," said the cow. When a few of these compliments more had been past, they laid themselves down on the herbage at last; and waiting politely, as gentlemen must, the ass held his tongue, that the cow might speak first. Then with a deep sigh, she directly began, "Don't you think, Mr Ass, we are injured by man? 'Tis a subject that lies with a weight on my mind: we certainly are much oppressed by mankind. Now what is the reason? I see none at all, that I always must go when Suke chooses to call: whatever I'm doing, 'tis certainly hard, at once I must go to be milked in the yard. I've no will of my own, but must do as they please, and give them my milk to make butter and cheese; I've often a vast mind to knock down the pail, or give Suke a box on the ear

with my tail." "But, ma'am," said the ass, "not presuming to teach—O dear, I beg pardon,—pray finish your speech,—I thought you had done, ma'am, indeed," said the swain, "go on, and I'll not interrupt you again." "Why, sir, I was only about to observe, I'm resolved that these tyrants no longer I'll serve; but leave them for ever to do as they please, and look somewhere else for their butter and cheese." Ass waited a moment, to see if she'd done, and then, "Not presuming to teach"—he begun—"with submission, dear madam, to your better wit, I own I am not quite convinced by it yet. That you're of great service to them is quite true, but surely they, too, are of service to you; 'tis their nice green meadows in which you regale; they feed you in winter when grass and weeds fail. 'Tis under their shelter you snugly repose, when, without it, dear ma'am, you perhaps might be froze: for my own part, I know, I receive much from man, and for him, in return, I do all that I can." The cow upon this cast her eyes on the grass, not pleased at thus being reproved by an ass; yet, thought she, "I'm determined I'll benefit by't, for I really believe that the fellow is right."

XXXIX.—THE GLUTTONOUS DUCK.—Miss Taylor.

A duck once had got such a habit of stuffing,
That all the day long she was panting and puffing;
And, by every creature who did her great crop see,
Was thought to be galloping fast for the dropsy.

One day, after eating a plentiful dinner,—
With full twice as much as there should have been in her,—
Whilst up to the eyes in a gutter a-roking
She was greatly alarmed by the symptoms of choking!

There was an old fellow, much famed for discerning,
A Drake—who had taken a liking for learning;
And high in respect with his feathery friends,
Was called Doctor Drake:—for this doctor she sends.

In a hole in the dunghill was Dr Drake's shop,
Where he kept a few simples for curing the crop;—
Small pebbles, and two or three different gravels,
With certain famed plants he had found in his travels.

"Dear Sir," said the duck with a delicate quack,—
Just turning a little way round on her back,
And leaning her head on a stone in the yard;
"My case, Dr Drake, is exceedingly hard.

"I feel so distended with wind, and oppressed,—
So squeamish and faint, such a load at my chest:
And day after day, it certainly is hard
To suffer with patience these pains in my gizzard!"

"Give me leave,"—said the Doctor with medical look,
As her cold flabby paw in his fingers he took;
"By the feel of your pulse, your complaint, I am thinking
Must surely be owing to eating and drinking!"

"Oh no, Sir! believe me!" the lady replied,
Quite alarmed for her stomach, as well as her pride;
"I am sure, it arises from nothing I eat.
But I rather suspect I got wet in my feet.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XLI.—THE INFANT ORATOR.—Everett.

You'd scarce expect one of my age, to speak in public on the stage; and if I chance to fall below Demosthenes or Cicero, don't view me with a critic's eye, but pass my imperfections by. Large streams from little fountains flow; tall oaks from little acorns grow: and though I now am small and young, of judgement weak, and feeble tongue, yet all great learned men, like me once learned to read their A, B, C. But why may not Victoria's reign bring back the good old days again; exceed what Greece and Rome have done, or any land beneath the sun? Or, where's the town, go far and near, that does not find a rival here? or, where's the boy, but three feet high, who's made improvements more than I? These thoughts inspire my youthful mind to be the greatest of mankind; great, not like Cæsar, stained with blood; but only great, as I am good.

XLII.—OCCASIONAL PROLOGUE.—Anonymous.

Dear friends, we thank you for your condescension, in deigning thus to lend us your attention; and hope the various pieces we recite, (boys though we are,) will yield you some delight. The powers of eloquence can charm the soul, inspire the virtuous, and the bad control; can rouse the passions, or their rage can still, and mould a stubborn mob to one man's will. Nor to the senate or the bar confined, the pulpit shows its influence o'er the mind; such glorious deeds can eloquence achieve; such fame, such deathless laurels, it can give. Then say not this our weak attempt is vain, for frequent practice will perfection gain; the fear to speak in public it destroys, and drives away the bashfulness of boys. Various the pieces we to-night repeat, and in them various excellences meet; some rouse the soul—some gently soothe the ear, "from grave to gay, from lively to severe." We would your kind indulgence then bespeak for awkward manner, and for utterance weak; our powers, indeed, are feeble,—but our aim is not to rival Greek or Roman fame; our sole ambition aims at your applause: we are but young—let youth then plead our cause; and, if your approbation be obtained, our wish is answered, and our end is gained.

XLIII.—OCCASIONAL EPILOGUE.—Anonymous.

Our parts are performed, and our speeches are ended,—
  We are monarchs, and courtiers, and heroes no more;
To a much humbler station again we've descended,
  And are now but the schoolboys you've known us before.

Farewell then our greatness—'tis gone like a dream;
  'Tis gone;—but remembrance will often retrace
The indulgent applause which rewarded each theme,
  And the heart-cheering smiles that enlivened each face.

We thank you!—Our gratitude words cannot tell,
  But deeply we feel it—to you it belongs;
With heartfelt emotion we bid you farewell,
  And our feelings now thank you much more than our tongues.

We will strive to improve, since applauses thus cheer us,
  That our juvenile efforts may gain your kind looks;
And we hope to convince you, the next time you hear us
  That praise has but sharpened our relish for books.

RECITATIONS FOR SENIOR PUPILS.

I.—THE VOICE AND PEN.—D. F. M'CARTHY.

Oh! the orator's Voice is a mighty power as it echoes from shore to shore—and the fearless Pen has more sway o'er men than the murderous cannon's roar. What bursts the chain far o'er the main, and brightens the captive's den? 'Tis the fearless Voice and the Pen of power—Hurrah! for the Voice and Pen! hurrah! hurrah! for the Voice and Pen! The tyrant knaves who deny our rights, and the cowards who blanch with fear, exclaim with glee, "No arms have ye—nor cannon, nor sword, nor spear! Your hills are ours; with our forts and towers, we are masters of mount and glen." Tyrants beware! for the arms we bear are the Voice and the fearless Pen! Though your horsemen stand with their bridles in hand, and your sentinels walk around—though your matches flare in the midnight air, and your brazen trumpets sound; oh! the orator's tongue shall be heard among these listening warrior men; and they'll quickly say, "Why should we slay our friends of the Voice and Pen?"——When the Lord created the earth and sea, the stars and the glorious sun, the Godhead SPOKE, and the universe woke—and the mighty work was done! Let a word be flung from the orator's tongue, or a drop from the fearless Pen, and the chains accurs'd asunder burst, that fettered the minds of men! Oh! these are the swords with which we fight,—the arms in which we trust; which no tyrant hand will dare to brand, which time cannot dim or rust! When these we bore, we triumphed before; with these we'll triumph again; and the world will say, "No power can stay the Voice and the fearless Pen!" Hurrah! hurrah! for the Voice and Pen!

II.—THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.—WOLFE.

Not a drum was heard—not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the ramparts we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly, at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moon-beam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin inclosed his breast;
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay—like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow:
But we steadfastly gazed on the face of the dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit-that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him;
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him!

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the bell tolled the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone, with his glory!

III.—THE ARAB MAID'S SONG.—Thomas Moore.

Fly to the desert! fly with me! Our Arab tents are rude for thee; but, oh! the choice what heart can doubt of tents with love, or thrones without? Our rocks are rough—but, smiling there, the acacia waves her yellow hair, lonely and sweet; nor loved the less for flowering in a wilderness. Our sands are bare—but, down their slope the silvery-footed antelope as gracefully and gaily springs, as o'er the marble courts of kings. Then, come!—thy Arab maid will be the loved and lone acacia-tree; the antelope, whose feet shall bless, with their light sound, thy loneliness. Oh! there are looks and tones, that dart an instant sunshine through the heart; as if the soul that minute caught some treasure, it through life had sought; as if the very lips and eyes, predestined to have all our sighs, and never be forgot again, sparkled, and spoke before us then! So came thy every glance and tone, when first on me they breathed and shone; new—as if brought from other spheres, yet welcome—as if loved for years! Then fly with me!—if thou hast known no other flame, nor falsely thrown a gem away, that thou hast sworn should ever in thy heart be worn: come!—if the love thou hast for me is pure and fresh, as mine for thee—fresh, as the fountain under ground, when first 'tis by the lapwing found;—but if, for me, thou dost forsake some other maid, and rudely break her worshipped image from its base, to give to me the ruined place, then fare thee well!—I'd rather make my bower upon some icy lake, when thawing suns begin to shine, than trust to love so false as thine!

IV.—THE BATTLE OF HOHENLINDEN.—Campbell.

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden showed another sight
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery!

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade;
And, furious, every charger neighed
To join the dreadful revelry!

Then shook the hills, with thunder riven;
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven;
And, louder than the bolts of heaven,
Far flashed the red artillery

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Why did the object of his quest still mock his wistful eye?—
Too long, alas! he tarried in the street of By-and-bye.

"My projects thrive," the merchant said;—"when doubled is my store
How freely shall my ready gold be showered among the poor!"
Vast grew his wealth, yet strove he not the mourner's tear to dry;
He never journeyed onward from the street of By-and-bye!

"Forgive thy erring brother, he has wept and suffered long!"
I said to one; who answered—"He hath done me grievous wrong;
Yet will I seek my brother, and forgive him ere I die:"
Alas! Death shortly found him in the street of By-and-bye!

The wearied worldling muses upon lost and wasted days,
Resolved to turn HEREAFTER from the error of his ways,
To lift his grovelling thoughts from earth, and fix them on the sky;
Why does he linger fondly in the street of By-and-bye?

Then shun the spot, my youthful friends; work on while yet you may;
Let not old age o'ertake you as you slothfully delay,
Lest you should gaze around you, and discover with a sigh,
You have reached the house of "Never"—by the street of By-and-bye!

VII.—LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER.—CAMPBELL.

A chieftain, to the Highlands bound, cries, "Boatman, do not tarry! and I'll give thee a silver pound, to row us o'er the ferry." "Now, who be ye would cross Loch-Gyle, this dark and stormy water?" "O! I'm the chief of Ulva's Isle, and this Lord Ullin's daughter: and fast before her father's men three days we've fled together; for, should he find us in the glen, my blood would stain the heather. His horsemen hard behind us ride; should they our steps discover, then who will cheer my bonny bride, when they have slain her lover?" Out spoke the hardy Highland wight, "I'll go, my chief—I'm ready:—it is not for your silver bright, but for your winsome lady: and, by my word! the bonny bird in danger shall not tarry; so, though the waves are raging white, I'll row you o'er the ferry." By this the storm grew loud apace, the water-wraith was shrieking; and, in the scowl of heaven, each face grew dark as they were speaking. But still as wilder blew the wind, and as the night grew drearer, adown the glen rode armed men,—their trampling sounded nearer! "O haste thee! haste!" the lady cries; "though tempests round us gather, I'll meet the raging of the skies, but not an angry father."—The boat has left a stormy land,—a stormy sea before her!—when, oh! too strong for human hand, the tempest gathered o'er her! And still they rowed, amidst the roar of waters fast prevailing. Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore—his wrath was changed to wailing; for, sore dismayed, through storm and shade, his child he did discover: one lovely arm she stretched for aid, and one was round her lover. "Come back! come back!" he cried in grief, across this stormy water: "and I'll forgive your Highland chief—my daughter! oh, my daughter!" 'Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore, return or aid preventing; the waters wild went o'er his child,—and he was left lamenting.

VIII.—THE LAST OF THE RED MEN.—BRYANT.

The sun's last ray was glowing fair, on crag, and tree, and flood;
And fell in mellow softness where the lonely Indian stood.
Beneath his eye, in living gold, the broad Pacific lay;
Unruffled there, a skiff might hold its bright and fearless way.

Far, far behind him, mountains blue in shadowy distance melt;
And far beyond, the dark woods grew, where his forefathers dwelt!
No breathing sound was in the air, as, leaning on his bow,
A lone and weary pilgrim there, he murmur'd stern and low:

"Far by Ohio's mighty river, bright star, I've worshipp'd thee!
My native stream—its bosom never the Red Man more may see
The Pale-face rears his wigwam where our Indian hunters roved;
His hatchet fells the forest fair, our Indian maidens loved;

A thousand warriors bore in war the token of my sires:
On all the hills were seen afar their blazing council-fires!
The foeman heard their war-whoop shrill, and held his breath in fear;
And in the wood, and on the hill, their arrows pierced the deer.

Where are they now?—the stranger's tread is on their silent place!
Yon fading light on me is shed, the last of all my race!
Where are they now?—in Summer's light, go, seek the Winter's snow!
Forgotten is our name and might, and broken is our bow!

The White Man came; his bayonets gleam where Sachems held their sway;
And, like the shadow of a dream, our tribe has passed away!
Curs'd be their race! to faith untrue! false heart! deceitful tongue!—
Hear me, O evil Manitou—revenge the Indian's wrong!

I hear him in the hollow moan of the dark heaving sea;
And whispers murmur in the tone, of vengeance yet to be!
What if no stone shall mark the spot where lonely sleep the brave?
Their mighty arm is unforgot, their glory has no grave!

But to our foes we leave a shame!—disgrace can never die;
Their sons shall blush to hear a name, still blackened with a lie!
So be it ever to their race,—false friends, and bitter cares!
By fraud they have the Indian's place; the Indian's curse is theirs!'

IX.—CRESCENTIUS.—L. E. L. (Mrs Maclean.)

I looked upon his brow;—no sign of guilt or fear was there; he stood as proud by that death-shrine, as even o'er despair he had a power; in his eye there was a quenchless energy—a spirit, that could dare the deadliest form that death could take, and dare it for the daring's sake. He stood, the fetters on his hand—he raised them haughtily; and had that grasp been on the brand, it could not wave on high with freer pride than it waved now. Around he looked, with changeless brow, on many a torture nigh—the rack, the chain, the axe, the wheel, and, worst of all, his own red steel! I saw him once before; he rode upon a coal-black steed, and tens of thousands thronged the road, and bade their warrior speed. His helm, his breast-plate, were of gold, and graved with many a dent, that told of many a soldier's deed; the sun shone on his sparkling mail, and danced his snow-plume in the gale. But now he stood chained and alone; the headsman by his side: the plume, the helm, the charger, gone; the sword, that had defied the mightiest, lay broken near; and yet no sign or sound of fear came from that lip of pride: and never king or conqueror's brow wore higher look, than his did now. He bent beneath the headsman's stroke with an uncovered eye; a wild shout from the numbers broke, that thronged to see him die. It was a people's loud acclaim, the voice of anger and of shame—a nation's funeral cry;—Rome's wail above her only son, her patriot—and her latest one!

X.—BRUCE TO HIS ARMY.—Burns.

Scots! wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to glorious victory!

Now's the day and now's the hour!
See the front of battle lower!
See, approach proud Edward's power—
Edward!—chains and slavery!

Wha will be a traitor-knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be—a slave?
Traitor! coward! turn and flee!

Wha, for Scotland's king and law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand or Freeman fa'?
Caledonian!—on wi' me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall—they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Forward!—let us do, or die!

XI.—THE GHEBERS' ATTACK.—Moore.

But see! he starts;—what heard he then? That dreadful shout!—across the glen from the land-side it comes, and loud rings through the chasm; as if the crowd of fearful things that haunt that dell, its Gholes, and Divcs, and shapes of hell, had all in one dread howl broke out, so loud, so terrible that shout! "They come—the Moslems come!"—he cries; his proud soul mounting to his eyes:—"Now, Spirits of the Brave! who roam enfranchised through yon starry dome, rejoice—for souls of kindred fire are on the wing to join your choir!" He said—and, light as bride-grooms bound, with eager haste reclimbed the steep, and gained the shrine:—his Chiefs stood round—their swords, as with instinctive leap, together, at that cry accurs'd, had, from their sheaths, like sunbeams, burst! And hark!—again—again it rings; near and more near, its echoings peal through the chasm.—Oh! who that then had seen those listening warrior-men, with their swords grasped, their eyes of flame turned on their Chief—could doubt the shame, the indignant shame, with which they thrill, to hear those shouts, and yet stand still?

He read their thoughts—they were his own:—"What! while our arms can wield these blades, shall we die tamely? die alone? without one victim to our shades—one Moslem heart, where, buried deep, the sabre from its toil may sleep? No!—God of Iran's burning skies! thou scorn'st the inglorious sacrifice. No!—though of all earth's hopes bereft, life, swords, and vengeance, still are left! We'll make yon valley's reeking caves live in the awe-struck minds of men; till tyrants shudder, when their slaves tell of the Ghebers' bloody glen. Follow, brave hearts!—this pile remains, our refuge still from life and chains; but his the best, the holiest bed, who sinks entombed in Moslem dead!"

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XIII.—THE FLIGHT OF XERXES.—Miss Jewsbury.

I saw him on the battle-eve, when like a king he bore him;—proud hosts in glittering helm and greave, and prouder chiefs before him! The warrior, and the warrior's deeds, the morrow, and the morrow's meeds—no daunting thoughts came o'er him: he looked around him, and his eye defiance flashed to earth and sky! He looked on ocean,—its broad breast was covered with his fleet: on earth,—and saw from east to west his bannered millions meet: while rock, and glen, and cave, and coast, shook with the war-cry of that host,—the thunder of their feet! He heard the imperial echoes ring—he heard, and felt himself a king!

I saw him next alone:—nor camp nor chief his steps attended: nor banners' blaze, nor coursers' tramp, with war-cries proudly blended. He stood alone, whom fortune high so lately seemed to deify; he who with Heaven contended, fled, like a fugitive and slave; behind, the foe!—before, the wave! He stood—fleet, army, treasure, gone,—alone, and in despair! while wave and wind swept ruthless on, for they were monarchs there; and Xerxes, in a single bark, where late his thousand ships were dark, must all their fury dare!—What a revenge!—a trophy this, for thee, immortal Salamis!

XIV.—GLENARA.—Campbell.

O, heard ye yon pibroch sound sad on the gale,
Where a band cometh slowly with weeping and wail?
'Tis the chief of Glenara laments for his dear,
And her sire and her people are called to the bier.

Glenara came first with the mourners and shroud:
Her kinsmen they followed, but mourned not aloud:
Their plaids all their bosoms were folded around;
They marched all in silence—they looked to the ground.

In silence they reached over mountain and moor,
To a heath where the oak-tree grew lonely and hoar:
"Now here let us place the grey stone of her cairn:
Why speak ye no word?" said Glenara the stern.

"And tell me, I charge you, ye clan of my spouse,
Why fold ye your mantles? why cloud ye your brows?"
So spake the rude chieftain; no answer is made,
But each mantle unfolding, a dagger displayed!

"I dreamed of my lady, I dreamt of her shroud,"
Cried a voice from the kinsmen all wrathful and loud;
"And empty that shroud and that coffin did seem:
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

Oh, pale grew the cheek of the chieftain, I ween,
When the shroud was unclosed, and no body was seen!
Then a voice from the kinsmen spoke louder in scorn,—
'Twas the youth that had loved the fair Ellen of Lorn:

"I dreamed of my lady, I dreamed of her grief,
I dreamed that her lord was a barbarous chief;
On a rock of the ocean fair Ellen did seem:—
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

In dust low the traitor has knelt to the ground,
And the desert revealed where his lady was found:
From a rock of the ocean that beauty is borne:
Now joy to the house of fair Ellen of Lorn!

XV.—WAR-SONG OF THE GREEKS.—Procter (Barry Cornwall.)

Awake! 'tis the terror of war! The crescent is tossed on the wind; but our flag flies on high, like the perilous star of the battle. Before and behind, wherever it glitters, it darts bright death into tyrannous hearts. Who are they that now bid us be slaves? They are foes to the good and the free. Go, bid them first fetter the might of the waves! The sea may be conquered; but we have spirits untameable still, aud the strength to be free,—and the will! The Helots are come: in their eyes proud hate and fierce massacre burn; they hate us,—but shall they despise? They are come; shall they ever return? O God of the Greeks! from thy throne look down, and we'll conquer alone! Our fathers—each man was a god, his will was a law, and the sound of his voice, like a spirit's, was worshipped: he trod, and thousands fell worshippers round: from the gates of the West to the Sun, he bade, and his bidding was done. And we—shall we die in our chains, who once were as free as the wind? Who is it that threatens?—who is it arraigns? Are they princes of Europe or Ind? Are they kings to the uttermost pole? They are dogs, with a taint on their soul!

XVI.—HARMOSÁN.—Trench.

Now the third and fatal conflict for the Persian throne was done,
And the Moslems' fiery valour had the crowning victory won:
Harmosan, the last of foemen, and the boldest to defy,
Captive, oVerborne by numbers, they were bringing forth to die.

Then exclaimed that noble Satrap, "Lo, I perish in my thirst;
Give me but one drink of water, and let then arrive the worst."—
In his hand he took the goblet, but awhile the draught forbore,
Seeming doubtfully the purpose of the Victors to explore.

"But what fear'st thou?" cried the Caliph: "dost thou dread a secret blow
Fear it not; our gallant Moslems no such treacherous dealings know.
Thou mayst quench thy thirst securely: for thou shalt not die, before
Thou hast drunk that cup of water: this reprieVe is thine—no more."

Quick the Satrap dashed the goblet down to earth with ready hand,
And the liquid sunk,—for ever lost, amid the burning sand:
"Thou hast said that mine my life is, till the water of that cup
I have drained:—then bid thy serVants that spilled water gather up."

For a moment stood the Caliph, as by doubtful passions stirred:
Then exclaimed, "For ever sacred must remain a Monarch's word.
Bring forth another cup, and straightway to the noble Persian give:—
Drink, I said before, and perish:—now, I bid thee drink and live!"

XVII.—DEATH OF DE BOUNE.—Scott.

Oh! gay, yet fearful to behold,—flashing with steel, and rough with gold, and bristled o'er with bills and spears, with plumes and pennons waving fair,—was that bright battle-front! for there rode England's king and peers: and who, that saw that monarch ride, his kingdom battled by his side, could then his direful doom foretell! Fair was his seat in knightly selle; and in his sprightly eye was set some spark of the Plantagenet. Though light and wandering was his glance, it flashed, at sight of shield and lance. "Know'st thou," he said, "De Argentine, yon knight who marshals thus their line?" "The tokens on his helmet tell the Bruce, my liege; I know him well." "And shall the audacious traitor brave the

presence where our banners wave?" "So please my liege," said Argentine, "were he but horsed on steed like mine, to give him fair and knightly chance, I would adventure forth my lance." "In battle-day," the king replied, "nice tourney rules are set aside. Still must the rebel dare our wrath? Set on him—sweep him from our path!" And, at king Edward's signal, soon dashed from the ranks Sir Henry Boune. He spurred his steed, he couched his lance, and darted on the Bruce at once.—As motionless as rocks, that bide the wrath of the advancing tide, the Bruce stood fast.—Each breast beat high, and dazzled was each gazing eye.—The heart had hardly time to shrink, the eye-lid scarce had time to wink, while on the king, like flash of flame, spurred to full speed the war-horse came! The partridge may the falcon mock, if that slight palfrey stand the shock! But, swerving from the knight's career, just as they met, Bruce shunned the spear. Onward the baffled warrior bore his course—but soon his course was o'er! High in his stirrups stood the king, and gave his battle-axe the swing. Right on De Boune, the while he passed, fell that stern dint—the first—the last!—Such strength upon the blow was put, the helmet crashed like hazel-nut; the axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp, was shivered to the gauntlet grasp. Springs from the blow the startled horse—drops to the plain the lifeless corse! First of that fatal field, how soon, how sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

XVIII.—THE EXILE OF ERIN.—CAMPBELL.

There came to the beach a poor Exile of Erin,
  The dew on his thin robe was heavy and chill;
For his country he sighed, when at twilight repairing
  To wander alone by the wind-beaten hill:
But the day-star attracted his eye's sad devotion;
For it rose o'er his own native isle of the ocean,
Where once, in the fervour of youth's warm emotion,
  He sang the bold anthem of ERIN GO BRAGH!

"Sad is my fate!"—said the heart-broken stranger—
  "The wild deer and wolf to a covert can flee;
But I have no refuge from famine and danger:
  A home and a country remain not to me!
Never again, in the green sunny bowers
Where my forefathers lived, shall I spend the sweet hours
Or cover my harp with the wild-woven flowers,
  And strike to the numbers of ERIN GO BRAGH!

"Erin! my country! Though sad and forsaken,
  In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore!
But, alas! in a far, foreign land I awaken,
  And sigh for the friends that can meet me no more!
Oh, cruel Fate! wilt thou never replace me
In a mansion of peace, where no perils can chase me?
Never again shall my brothers embrace me!—
  They died to defend me—or live to deplore!

"Where is my cabin-door, fast by the wild wood?
  Sisters and sire, did ye weep for its fall?
Where is the mother that looked on my childhood?
  And where is the bosom-friend, dearer than all?
Ah! my sad soul, long abandoned by pleasure!
Why didst thou dote on a fast-fading treasure?
Tears, like the rain-drops, may fall without measure;
  But rapture and beauty they cannot recall

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

"Not for thy ivory nor thy gold will I unbind thy chain;
That fettered hand shall never hold the battle-spear again
A price thy nation never gave, shall yet be paid for thee;
For thou shalt be the Christian's slave, in lands beyond the sea.

Then wept the warrior-chief, and bade to shred his locks away,
And, one by one, each heavy braid before the victor lay.
Thick were the plaited locks, and long; and deftly hidden there,
Shone many a wedge of gold, among the dark and crisped hair.

"Look! feast thy greedy eyes with gold, long kept for sorest need;
Take it—thou askest sums untold,—and say that I am freed.
Take it!—my wife, the long, long day weeps by the cocoa-tree,
And my young children leave their play, and ask in vain for me."

"I take thy gold—but I have made thy fetters fast and strong,
And ween that by the cocoa-shade thy wife will wait thee long."
Strong was the agony that shook the captive's frame to hear,
And the proud meaning of his look was changed to mortal fear.

His heart was broken—crazed his brain; at once his eye grew wild;
He struggled fiercely with his chain, whispered, and wept, and smiled:
Yet wore not long those fatal bands; for soon, at close of day,
They drew him forth upon the sands, the foul hyena's prey.

XXI.—THE PAUPER'S DEATH-BED.—Mrs Southey.

Tread softly—bow the head—in reverent silence bow;—no passing bell doth toll, yet an immortal soul is passing now. Stranger! however great, with lowly reverence bow: there's one in that poor shed--one by that paltry bed—greater than thou. Beneath that beggar's roof, lo! Death doth keep his state! Enter—no crowds attend; enter—no guards defend this palace gate. That pavement, damp and cold, no smiling courtiers tread; one silent woman stands, lifting, with meagre hands, a dying head. No mingling voices sound—an infant wail alone; a sob suppressed—again that short deep gasp, and then the parting groan! Oh! change—oh, wondrous change! burst are the prison bars! This moment there, so low, so agonized;—and now, beyond the stars! Oh! change—stupendous change! There lies the soulless clod:—the sun eternal breaks—the new immortal wakes—wakes with his God!

XXII.—THE SLAVE'S PETITION.—Mrs Norton.

It was an aged man, who stood beside the blue Atlantic sea;
They cast his fetters by the flood, and hailed the time-worn captive free;
From his indignant eye there flashed a gleam his better nature gave;
And while his tyrants shrank abashed, thus spoke the spirit-stricken Slave:

"Bring back the chain, whose weight so long these tortured limbs have
vainly borne;
The word of freedom from your tongue, my weary ear rejects with scorn!
'Tis true, there was—there was a time, I sighed, I panted to be free,
And, pining for my sunny clime, bowed down my stubborn knee.

"Then I have stretched my yearning arms, and shook in wrath my galling
chain;—
Then, when the magic word had charms, I groaned for Liberty, in vain!
That freedom ye at length bestow, and bid me bless my envied fate:
Ye tell me I am free to go—where?—I am desolate!

"The boundless hope—the spring of joy, felt when the spirit's strength
is young,
Which slavery only can alloy,—the mockeries to which I clung:
The eyes, whose fond and sunny ray made life's dull lamp less dimly burn,
The tones I pined for day by day,—can ye bid them return?

"Bring back the chain!—its clanking sound hath now a power beyond
your own;
It brings young visions smiling round, too fondly loved—too early flown!
It brings me days when these dim eyes gazed o'er the wild and swelling sea,
Counting how many suns must rise, ere one might hail me free!

"Bring back the chain! that I may think 'tis that which weighs my spirit so;
And, gazing on each galling link, dream—as I dreamt—of bitter woe!
My days are gone;—of hope, of youth, these traces now alone remain—
(Hoarded with sorrow's sacred truth)—tears, and my iron chain!

Freedom!—Though doomed in pain to live, the freedom of the soul is mine;
But all of slavery you could give, around my steps must ever twine.
Raise up the head which age hath bent, renew the hopes that childhood gave,
Bid all return kind Heaven once lent;—till then—I am a slave!"

XXIII.—THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE.—Sir Walter Scott.

"Oh! tell me, harper, wherefore flow thy wayward notes of wail and woe, far down the desert of Glencoe, where none may list their melody? Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly, or to the dun deer glancing by, or to the eagle that from high screams chorus to thy minstrelsy?"

"No, not to these, for these have rest; the mist-wreath hath the mountain crest, the stag his lair, the erne her nest, abode of lone security; but those for whom I pour the lay, not wild-wood deep, nor mountain gray, not this deep dell that shrouds from day, could screen from treacherous cruelty. Their flag was furled, and mute their drum; the very household dogs were dumb, unwont to bay at guests that come in guise of hospitality. His blithest notes the piper plied, her gayest snood the maiden tied, the dame her distaff flung aside to tend her kindly housewifery. The hand that mingled in the meal, at midnight drew the felon steel, and gave the host's kind breast to feel meed for his hospitality! The friendly heart which warmed that hand, at midnight armed it with the brand; and bade destruction's flames expand their red and fearful blazonry. Then woman's shriek was heard in vain; nor infancy's unpitied plain, more than the warrior's groan, could gain respite from ruthless butchery. The winter-wind that whistled shrill, the snows that night that choked the rill, though wild and pitiless, had still far more than Saxon clemency!—Long have my harp's best notes been gone, few are its strings and faint their tone; they can but sound, in desert lone, their gray-haired master's misery. Were each gray hair a minstrel-string, each chord should imprecations fling, till startled Scotland loud should ring—'Revenge for blood and treachery!'"

XXIV.—THE FELON.—M. G. Lewis.

This branded hand would gladly toil; but when for work I pray,
Who views this mark, 'A felon!' cries, and loathing turns away.

"My heart has greatly erred—but now would fain return to good!
My hand has deeply sinned—but yet has ne'er been stained with blood!
For alms, or work, in vain I sue—the scorners both deny:
I starve! I starve!—Then what remains? this choice—to sin, or die!

"Here, Virtue spurns me with disdain,—there, Pleasure spreads her snare
Strong habit drives me back to Vice; and, urged by fierce despair,
I strive, while hunger gnaws my heart, to fly from shame—in vain!
World! 'tis thy cruel will!—I yield, and plunge in guilt again!

"There's mercy, in each ray of light that mortal eyes e'er saw;
There's mercy, in each breath of air that mortal lips e'er draw;
There's mercy, both for bird and beast, in Heaven's indulgent plan;
There's mercy, in each creeping thing—but man has none for man!

"Ye proudly honest! when you heard my wounded conscience groan,
Had generous hand, or feeling heart, one glimpse of mercy shown,
That act had made, from burning eyes, sweet tears of virtue roll,
Had fixed my heart, assured my faith—and heaven had gained a soul!"

XXV.—THE PALM-TREE.—Mrs Hemans.

It waved not through an Eastern sky, beside a fount of Araby; it was not fanned by southern breeze in some green isle of Indian seas; nor did its graceful shadow sleep o'er stream of Afric, lone and deep. But fair the exiled Palm-tree grew 'midst foliage of no kindred hue; through the laburnum's dropping gold rose the light shaft of Orient mould; and Europe's violets, faintly sweet, purpled the moss-beds at its feet. Strange looked it there!—the willow streamed where silvery waters near it gleamed; the lime-bough lured the honey-bee to murmur by the Desert's tree; and showers of snowy roses made a lustre in its fan-like shade.——There came an eve of festal hours—rich music filled that garden's bowers: lamps, that from flowery branches hung, on sparks of dew soft colours flung; and bright forms glanced—a fairy show—under the blossoms to and fro.

But One, a lone one 'midst the throng, seemed reckless all of dance or song: he was a youth of dusky mien, whereon the Indian sun had been; of crested brow, and long black hair:—a stranger, like the Palm-tree, there. And slowly, sadly, moved his plumes, glittering athwart the leafy glooms: he passed the pale-green olives by, nor won the chestnut flowers his eye; but when to that sole Palm he came, there shot a rapture through his frame. To him, to him, its rustling spoke; the silence of his soul it broke! it whispered of his own bright isle, that lit the ocean with a smile; ay, to his ear that native tone had something of the sea-wave's moan! His mother's cabin-home that lay where feathery cocoas fringe the bay—the dashing of his brethren's oar—the conch-note heard along the shore,—all through his wakening bosom swept: he clasped his country's tree, and wept!

Oh! scorn him not!—The strength, whereby the patriot girds himself to die,—the unconquerable power, which fills the freeman battling on his hills,—these have one fountain deep and clear—the same whence gushed that child-like tear.

XXVI.—BETH GELERT.—W. L. Spencer.

The spearman heard the bugle sound, and cheerly smiled the morn,
And many a brach, and many a hound, attend Llewellyn's horn;

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

at times, re-echoed there, the curses of the foe—When hark! another cry pealed out—a cry of idiot glee; answered, and heightened, by the shout of the fierce soldiery! 'Twas childhood's voice! but, ah!—how wild, how demon-like its swell!—the mother shrieked, to hear her child give forth that soul-fraught yell!—And fathers wrung their fettered hands beneath their maddening woe, while shouted out their infant bands shrill chorus to the foe! And curses deep and low were said, whose murmurs reached to Heaven; thick sighs were heaved—hot tears were shed, and woman-hearts were riven; as, heedless of their present woes, the children onward trod, and sang—and their young voices rose a vengeance-cry to God!

XXVIII.—THE DRUM.—Douglas Jerrold's Magazine.

Yonder is a little drum, hanging on the wall;
Dusty wreaths, and tattered flags, round about it fall.
A shepherd youth on Cheviot's hills, watched the sheep whose skin
A cunning workman wrought, and gave the little drum its din.

O, pleasant are fair Cheviot's hills, with velvet verdure spread,
And pleasant 'tis, among its heath, to make your summer bed;
And sweet and clear are Cheviot's rills that trickle to its vales,
And balmily its tiny flowers breathe on the passing gales.
And thus hath felt the Shepherd-boy whilst tending of his fold
Nor thought there was, in all the world, a spot like Cheviot's wold.

And so it was for many a day!—but change with time will come!
And he—(alas for him the day!) he heard...the little drum!
"Follow," said the drummer-boy, "would you live in story!
For he who strikes a foeman down, wins a wreath of glory."
"Rub-a-dub!" and "rub-a-dub!" the drummer beats away—
The shepherd lets his bleating flock o'er Cheviot wildly stray.

On Egypt's arid wastes of sand the shepherd now is lying;
Around him many a parching tongue for "Water!" faintly crying:
O, that he were on Cheviot's hills, with velvet verdure spread,
Or lying 'mid the blooming heath where oft he made his bed:
Or could he drink of those sweet rills that trickle to its vales,
Or breathe once more the balminess of Cheviot's mountain gales!

At length, upon his wearied eyes, the mists of slumber come,
And he is in his home again—till wakened by the drum!
"Take arms! take arms!" his leader cries, "the hated foeman's nigh!"
Guns loudly roar—steel clanks on steel, and thousands fall to die.
The shepherd's blood makes red the sand: "Oh! water—give me some!
"My voice might reach a friendly ear—but for that little drum!"

'Mid moaning men, and dying men, the drummer kept his way,
And many a one by "glory" lured, did curse the drum that day.
"Rub-a-dub!" and "rub-a-dub!" the drummer beat aloud—
The shepherd...died! and, ere the morn, the hot sand was his shroud.
—And this is "Glory?"—Yes; and still will man the tempter follow,
Nor learn that Glory, like its Drum, is but a sound—and hollow!

XXIX.—THE VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.—Byron.

The king was on his throne, the Satraps thronged the hall; a thousand bright lamps shone o'er that high festival. A thousand cups of gold, in Judah deemed divine—Jehovah's vessels, hold the godless Heathen's wine! In that same hour and hall, the fingers of a hand came forth against the wall, and wrote as if on sand: the fingers of a man;—a

solitary hand along the letters ran, and traced them like a wand. The monarch saw, and shook, and bade no more rejoice; all bloodless waxed his look, and tremulous his voice. "Let the men of lore appear, the wisest of the earth; and expound the words of fear, which mar our royal mirth." Chaldæa's seers are good, but here they have no skill; and the unknown letters stood untold and awful still. And Babel's men of age are wise and deep in lore; but now they were not sage, they saw—but knew no more. A Captive in the land, a stranger and a youth, he heard the king's command, he saw that writing's truth. The lamps around were bright, the prophecy in view; he read it on that night,—the morrow proved it true. "Belshazzar's grave is made—his kingdom passed away—he, in the balance weighed, is light and worthless clay. The shroud, his robe of state—his canopy, the stone; the Mede is at his gate—the Persian on his throne!"

XXX.—THE MARINER'S DREAM.—DIMOND.

In slumbers of midnight the Sailor-Boy lay;
  His hammock swung loose at the sport of the wind;
But, watch-worn and weary, his cares flew away,
  And visions of happiness danced o'er his mind.

He dreamed of his home, of his dear native bowers,
  And pleasures that waited on life's merry morn;
While Memory stood sideways, half covered with flowers,
  And restored every rose, but concealed every thorn.

Then Fancy her magical pinions spread wide,
  And bade the young dreamer in ecstacy rise;—
Now far, far behind him the green waters glide,
  And the cot of his forefathers blesses his eyes.

The jessamine clambers in flower o'er the thatch,
  And the swallow chirps sweet from her nest in the wall;
All trembling with transport, he raises the latch—
  And the voices of loved ones reply to his call:

A father bends o'er him with looks of delight;
  His cheek is bedewed with a mother's warm tear;
And the lips of the boy in a love-kiss unite
  With the lips of the friends, whom his bosom holds dear.

The heart of the sleeper beats high in his breast,
  Joy quickens his pulse, all his hardships seem o'er;
And a murmur of happiness steals through his rest—
  "O Fate! thou hast blessed me—I ask for no more."

Ah! whence is that flame which now glares in his eye?
  Ah! what is that sound which now bursts on his ear?
'Tis the lightning's red gleam, painting wrath on the sky!
  'Tis the crashing of thunders, the groan of the sphere!

He springs from his hammock—he flies to the deck—
  Amazement confronts him with images dire!
Wild winds and mad waves drive the vessel a wreck—
  The masts fly in splinters—the shrouds are on fire!

Like mountains the billows tremendously swell—
  In vain the lost wretch calls on Mercy to save:

Unseen hands of spirits are ringing his knell,
And the death-angel flaps his broad wings o'er the wave!

Oh, Sailor Boy! woe to thy dream of delight!
In darkness dissolves the gay frost-work of bliss—
Where now is the picture that fancy touched bright,
Thy parents' fond pressure, and love's honied kiss?

Oh, Sailor Boy! Sailor Boy! never again
Shall home, love, or kindred, thy wishes repay;
Unblessed and unhonoured, down deep in the main
Full many a fathom, thy frame shall decay.

No tomb shall e'er plead to Remembrance for thee;
But still the vast waters above thee shall roll,
And the white foam of waves shall thy winding-sheet be—
Oh, Sailor Boy! Sailor Boy! peace to thy soul!

XXXI.—THE ROAD TO THE TRENCHES.—Lushington.

Deadly road to deadly toil—thickly strewn with dead!
Noonday sun and midnight oil light the soldiers' tread.
"In the Trenches deep and cold, if I cannot save
England's glory, be it told—there I dug my grave!"
Faint the hero's voice and low—marching through the snow!

"Leave me, comrades! here I drop: on, my captain, on!
All are wanted—none should stop; duty must be done:
Those whose guard you take will find me, as they pass, below."
So the soldier spoke, and, staggering, fell amid the snow:
While ever, on the dreary Heights, down came the snow!

"Men, it must be as he asks: duty must be done:
Far too few for half our tasks, we can spare not one!
Wrap him in this—I need it less: soon the guard shall know:
Mark the place—yon stunted larch. Forward!"....On they go!
And silent, on their silent march, down sank the snow!

O'er his features, as he lies, calms the wrench of pain:
Close, faint eyes: pass, cruel skies—freezing mountain-plain:—
With far soft sounds the stillness teems—church-bells—voices low,—
Passing into home-born dreams—there, amid the snow:
And darkening, thickening, o'er the Heights, down fell the snow

Looking—looking for the mark, now his comrades came;
Struggling through the snow-drifts stark, calling out his name:
"Here? or there? The drifts are deep. Have we pass'd him?"...No!
Look, a little growing heap,—snow above the snow—
Where heavy, on his heavy sleep, down fell the snow!

Strong hands raised him—voices strong spoke within his ears;
But his dreams had softer tongue:—neither now he hears!
One more gone, for England's sake, where so many go—
Lying down without complaint—dying in the snow!
Starving, striving for her sake—dying in the snow!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XXXIV.—THE HIGH-BORN LADYE.—Thomas Moore.

In vain all the Knights of the Underwald woo'd her,
Though brightest of maidens, the proudest was she;
Brave chieftains they sought, and young minstrels they sued her
But worthy were none of the high-born Ladye.

"Whomsoever I wed," said this maid so excelling,
"That Knight must the conqueror of conquerors be!
He must place me in hall fit for monarchs to dwell in;—
None else shall be Lord of the high-born Ladye!"

Thus spoke the proud damsel, with scorn looking round her
On Knights and on Nobles of highest degree,
Who humbly and hopelessly left as they found her,
And worshipped at distance the high-born Ladye.

At length came a Knight from a far land to woo her,
With plumes on his helm like the foam of the sea;
His vizor was down—but, with voice that thrilled through her
He whispered his vows to the high-born Ladye.

"Proud maiden! I come with high spousals to grace thee,
In me the great conqueror of conquerors see;
Enthroned in a hall fit for monarchs I'll place thee,
And mine thou'rt for ever, thou high-born Ladye!"

The maiden she smiled, and in jewels arrayed her,
Of thrones and tiaras already dreamt she;
And proud was the step, as her bridegroom conveyed her
In pomp to his home, of that high-born Ladye.

"But whither," she, starting, exclaims, "have you led me?
Here's nought but a tomb and a dark cypress tree;
Is this the bright palace in which thou wouldst wed me?"
With scorn in her glance, said the high-born Ladye.

"'Tis the home," he replied, "of earth's loftiest creatures,"—
Then lifted his helm for the fair one to see;
But she sunk on the ground—'twas a skeleton's features!
—And Death was the Lord of the high-born Ladye!

XXXV.—THE CAPTIVE KNIGHT.—Mrs Hemans

'Twas a trumpet's pealing sound!
And the Knight look'd down from the Paynim's tower;
And a Christian host, in its pride and power,
Through the pass beneath him wound.
Cease awhile, clarion! clarion, wild and shrill,
Cease!—let them hear the Captive's voice:—be still!

"I knew 'twas a trumpet's note!
And I see my brethren's lances gleam,
And their pennons wave by the mountain-stream,
And their plumes to the glad wind float!'—'
Cease awhile, clarion! clarion, wild and shrill,
Cease!—let them hear the Captive's voice:—be still!

"I am here with my heavy chain!
And I look on a torrent sweeping by,
And an eagle rushing to the sky,
And a host to its battle-plain!"—

Cease awhile, clarion! clarion, wild and shrill,
Cease!—let them hear the Captive's voice:—be still!

"Must I pine in my fetters here?
With the wild wave's foam, and the free bird's flight,
And the tall spears, glancing on my sight,
And the trumpet in mine ear?"—
Cease awhile, clarion! clarion, wild and shrill,
Cease!—let them hear the Captive's voice:—be still!

"They are gone! they have all passed by!
They in whose wars I had borne my part,
They that I loved with a brother's heart,
They have left me here to die!"...
Sound again, clarion! clarion, pour thy blast!
Sound! for the Captive's dream of hope is past.

XXXVI.—THE DEATH OF DUKE D'ENGHIEN.—Bain

Alone, but yet undauntedly, the victim marked the band
Of musketeers, in dark array before him waiting stand.
The moon was shining bright and high, the torches gleamed below;
A new-dug grave was yawning nigh—a dim and deadly show.

Musket and sabre, glancing bright, flashed through the murky gloom;
And full in front of that pale light stood he, a thing of doom.
No word was said; they strove to veil the prince's burning eyes;
But high he reared his forehead pale, and spurned the weak disguise.

No! he will fall in heaven's face, with witness stars in view;
The towers of France, in dying, trace—and fondly look adieu!
He gazed—his lips moved slow in prayer—he thought on one loved form,
Cleared his broad forehead, and made bare his bosom for the storm.

He raised his hand—that hand which led Gaul's armies many a day;
It fell—the fatal volley sped—the noble youth is clay.
They laid him in that low rude grave; no tear of kindred nigh—
No pomp of death—no flag to wave—no heart to breathe a sigh.

Think ye he sleeps forgotten now among the silent dead?
Though worms are feasting on his brow, and bloody is his bed,
I tell you, No!...His memory spoke on many a battle-plain,
Till Europe from her slumber woke, and burst the despot's chain.

Where'er Napoleon's banner flew, a bloody shade it bore,
Till, on the plains of Waterloo, it sunk, to rise no more.
That shade yet rests upon his fame, though now his grave is green,
And all men curse his hated name, who think on young D'Enghien!

XXXVII.—THE GRAVE OF KORNER.—Mrs Hemans.

Rest, bard! rest, soldier! By the father's hand here shall the child of after-years be led, with his wreath-offering silently to stand in the hushed presence of the glorious dead, soldier and hard! for thou thy path hast trod, with Freedom and with God. The oak waved proudly o'er thy burial-rite, on thy crown'd bier to slumber warriors bore thee; and, with true hearts, thy brethren of the fight wept as they vail'd their drooping banners o'er thee:—and the deep guns, with rolling peel, gave token that lyre and sword were broken....Thou hast a hero's tomb; a lowlier

bed is hers, the gentle girl beside thee lying—the gentle girl that bow'd her fair young head when thou wert gone, in silent sorrow dying. Brother! true friend! the tender and the brave! she pined to share thy grave. Fame was thy gift from others; but for her to whom the wide earth held that only spot, she loved thee! Lovely in your lives ye were, and in your early deaths divided not! Thou hast thine oak, thy trophy; what hath she? Her own blest place by thee.—It was thy spirit, brother, which had made the bright world glorious to her thoughtful eye, since first in childhood 'midst the vines ye play'd, and sent glad singing through the free blue sky! Ye were but two; and, when that spirit pass'd, woe to the one—the last!...Woe, yet not long! she linger'd but to trace thine image from the image in her breast; once, once again to see that buried face but smile upon her ere she went to rest. Too sad a smile! its living light was o'er, it answered hers no more....The earth grew silent when thy voice departed; the home too, lonely, when thy step had fled: what then was left for her, the faithful-hearted? Death! death, to still the yearning for the dead. Softly she perish'd—be the Flower deplored, here with the Lyre and Sword....Have ye not met her now? So let those trust that meet for moments but to part for years; that weep, watch, pray, to hold back dust from dust, that love where love is but a fount of tears! Brother! sweet sister! peace around ye dwell! Lyre, Sword, and Flower, farewell!

XXXVIII.—THE DEATH OF MURAT.—ATKINSON.

"My hour is come!—Forget me not!—My blessing is with you;
With you my last, my fondest thought; with you my heart's adieu.
Farewell—farewell, my Caroline! my children's doting mother!
I made thee wife, fate made thee queen:—one hour,—thou art far other.
Farewell, my sweet Letitia, my love is with thee still:
Louise and Lucien, adieu; and thou, my own Achille!"
With quivering lip, but with no tear, or tear that gazers saw,
These words, to all his heart held dear, thus wrote the brave Murat.

Then of the locks which, dark and large, o'er his broad shoulders hung;
That streamed war-pennons in the charge, yet like caressings clung
In peace around his forehead high, which, more than diadem,
Beseemed the curls that lovingly replaced the cold hard gem;
He cut one for his wife—for child—'twas all he had to will;
But, with the regal wealth and state, he lost its heartless chill!
The iciness of alien power, what gushing love may thaw!
—The agony of such an hour as this—thy LAST—Murat!

"Comrade—though foe!—a soldier asks from thee a soldier's aid,—
They're not a warrior's only tasks that need his blood and blade:—
That upon which I latest gaze—that which I fondest clasp,
When death upon my eye-balls sinks, and stiffens on my grasp!
This, and these locks around it twined, say, wilt thou see them sent—
Need I say where?—Enough!—'tis kind!—To death, then!—I'm content
O! to have found death in the field, not as a chained outlaw!
No more!—to destiny I yield—with mightier than Murat!"

They led him forth—'twas but a stride between his prison room
And where, with yet a monarch's pride, he met a felon's doom.
"Soldiers!—your muzzles to my breast will leave brief space for pain
Strike to the heart!"—His last behest was uttered not in vain.
He turned full to the leveled tubes that held the wished-for boon,
He gazed upon the love-clasped pledge—then vollied the platoon!
And when their hold the hands gave up, the pitying gazers saw,
In the dear image of a wife, thy heart's best trait, Murat!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

We have talked of peace, and watched, in vain, till our homes are dull
and cold,
We have waited till our fields are bare, and tenantless the fold;
We have hoped till strength forsakes the arm, and the soul forgets its faith,
And our swords have pierced our brethren's hearts, or rusted in the
sheath;
But away with feuds and servile fears at that mighty war-cry's peal!
Rise, while ye yet have strength, and strike for freedom with O'Neill!

Better to die with blade in hand, and the pibroch in our ears,
Than rot without one gallant blow, to 'venge the wrongs of years;
Better a short and gallant life, than years of servile woe;
Better a stroke for the old dear land, than slavery's durance slow;
Better to hear your tyrant's shriek, than the groans of the brave and leal—
Up! there is right yet for the wronged with the Red-hand of O'Neill.

No blenching now, no quailing now,—our banner floats above;
And our hands are strong, and our hearts are true, in our bleeding
country's love:
'Tis the holy soil of our sires we guard, and, by Heaven, we'll guard it well,
Each hill shall be a rallying post, and a pass of blood each dell;—
Ha! honest and bright, and true to the hand, is the freedom-carving steel,
And there's knightly death or manly life in battle with O'Neill.

XLI.—THE OLD ARM-CHAIR.—Eliza Cook.

I love it, I love it! and who shall dare to chide me for loving that old arm-chair? I've treasured it long as a sainted prize, I've bedew'd it with tears, I've embalm'd it with sighs: 'tis bound by a thousand bands to my heart; not a tie will break, not a link will start. Would you know the spell?—A mother sat there! and a sacred thing is that old arm-chair. In childhood's hour I linger'd near the hallow'd seat with listening ear; and gentle words that mother would give, to fit me to die and teach me to live. She told me that shame would never betide, with truth for my creed and God for my guide; she taught me to lisp my earliest prayer, as I knelt beside that old arm-chair. I sat and watch'd her many a day, when her eye grew dim, and her locks were grey; and I almost worshipp'd her when she smiled, and turn'd from her Bible to bless her child. Years roll'd on, but the last one sped—my idol was shatter'd, my earth-star fled! I learnt how much the heart can bear, when I saw her die in her old arm-chair. 'Tis past, 'tis past! but I gaze on it now with quivering breath and throbbing brow: 'twas there she nursed me, 'twas there she died, and memory flows with lava tide. Say it is folly, and deem me weak, whilst scalding drops start down my cheek; but I love it, I love it! and cannot tear my soul from a Mother's Old Arm-Chair.

XLII.—THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.—Bryant.

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the withered leaves lie dead:
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's tread.
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrub the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow, through all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprung and stood
In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves: the gentle race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie; but the cold November rain
Calls not, from out the gloomy earth, the lovely ones again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the wild-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook, in autumn-beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear, cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone from upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm, mild day, as still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home,
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty died—
The fair, meek blossom that grew up and faded by my side;
In the cold moist earth we laid her when the forest cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief;
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

XLIII.—THE DESTROYING ANGEL.—Anon.

"To your homes," said the leader of Israel's host, "and slaughter a sacrifice; let the life-blood be sprinkled on each door-post, nor stir till the morn arise; and the Angel of Vengeance shall pass you by: he shall see the red stain, and shall not come nigh where the hope of your household lies." The people hear, and they bow them low—each to his house hath flown; the lamb is slain, and with blood they go and sprinkle the lintel-stone; and the doors they close when the sun hath set:—but few in oblivious sleep forget the judgement to be done. 'Tis midnight—yet they hear no sound along the lone still street: no blast of a pestilence sweeps the ground, no tramp of unearthly feet, nor rush as of harpy-wing goes by; but the calm moon floats in the cloudless sky, 'mid her wan light clear and sweet Once only, shot like an arrowy ray, a pale blue flash was seen; it pass'd so swift, the eye scarce could say that such a thing had been: yet the beat of every heart was still, and the flesh crawl'd fearfully and chill, and back flow'd every vein. The courage of Israel's bravest quail'd at the view of that awful light, though knowing the blood of their offering avail'd to shield them from its might: they felt 'twas the Spirit of Death had passed, that the brightness they saw his cold glance had cast on Egypt's land that night. Wail, King of the Pyramids! Death hath cast his shafts through thine empire wide, but o'er Israel in bondage his rage hath pass'd, no first-born of hers hath died.—Go, Satrap! command that the captives be free, lest their God in fierce anger should smite even thee on the crown of thy purple pride.

XLIV.—THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS.—Leigh Hunt.

King Francis was a hearty king, and loved a royal sport;
And one day, as his lions fought, sat looking-on the Court;
The nobles filled the benches round, the ladies by their side,
And 'mongst them sat the Count de Lorge, with one for whom he sighed
And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show—
Valour and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams—a wind went with their paws;

With wallowing might and stifled roar, they rolled on one another,
Till all the pit, with sand and mane, was in a thunderous smother:
The bloody foam above the bars came whizzing through the air;
Said Francis then, "Faith! gentlemen, we're better here than there!"

De Lorge's love o'er-heard the king,—a beauteous lively dame,
With smiling lips and sharp bright eyes, which always seemed the same
She thought, "The Count my lover is brave as brave can be—
He surely would do wondrous things to show his love of me:
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is divine!
I'll drop my glove, to prove his love; great glory will be mine!"

She dropped her glove to prove his love, then looked at him and smil
He bowed, and in a moment leaped among the lions wild.
The leap was quick, return was quick—he has regained the place,—
Then threw the glove—but not with love—right in the lady's face.
"In truth," cried Francis, "rightly done!" and he rose from where he
"No love," quoth he, "but vanity, sets love a task like that!"

XLV.—THE INDIAN HUNTER.—Longfellow.

When the summer harvest was gathered in, and the sheaf of the gleaner grew white and thin, and the plough-share was in its furrow left, where the stubble land had been lately cleft, an Indian hunter, with unstrung bow, looked down where the valley lay stretched below. He was a stranger there, and all that day had been out on the hills, a perilous way; but the foot of the deer was far and fleet, and the wolf kept aloof from the hunter's feet; and bitter feelings pass'd o'er him then, as he stood by the populous haunts of men. The winds of autumn came over the woods, as the sun stole out from their solitudes; the moss was white on the maple's trunk, and dead from its arms the pale vine shrunk; and ripened the mellow fruit hung, and red, where the trees withered leaves around it shed. The foot of the reaper moved slow on the lawn, and the sickle cut down the yellow corn,—the mower sung loud by the meadow side, where the mists of evening were spreading wide,—and the voice of the herdsman came up the lea, and the dance went round by the greenwood tree. Then the hunter turned away from that scene, where the home of his fathers once had been; and heard, by the distant and measured stroke, that the woodman hewed down the giant oak; and burning thoughts flash'd over his mind, of the white man's faith and love unkind. The moon of the harvest grew high and bright, as her golden horn pierced the cloud of white;—a footstep was heard in the rustling brake, where the beech overshadowed the misty lake, and a mourning voice, and a plunge from shore—and the hunter was seen on the hills no more. When years had passed on, by that still lake side, the fisher looked down through the silver tide, and there, on the smooth yellow sand displayed, a skeleton wasted and white was laid; and 'twas seen, as the waters moved deep and slow, that the hand was still grasping a hunter's bow.

XLVI.—WE ARE SEVEN.—Wordsworth.

I met a little cottage girl, she was eight years old she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl that clustered round her head.
She had a rustic woodland air, and she was wildly clad.
Her eyes were fair, and very fair; her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid, how many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said, and wondrous looked at me.
"And where are they? I pray you tell." She answered, "Seven are we
And two of us at Conway dwell, and two are gone to sea.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Banners of battle o'er him hung, and warriors slept beneath;
And light, as the noon's broad light, was flung on the settled face of Death.

On the settled face of Death a strong and ruddy glare,
Though dimmed at times by the censers' breath, yet it fell still brightest there,—
As if each deeply-furrowed trace of earthly years to show:
Alas! that sceptred mortal's race had surely closed in woe!

The marble floor was swept by many a long dark stole,
As the kneeling priests, round him that slept, sang mass for the parted soul:
And solemn were the strains they poured in the stillness of the night,
With the cross above, and the crown, and sword,—and the silent King in sight.——

There was heard a heavy clang, as of steel-girt men the tread;
And the tombs and the hollow pavement rang, with a sounding thrill of dread.
And the holy chant was hushed awhile, as, by the torches' flame,
A gleam of arms, up the sweeping aisle, with a mail-clad Leader came.

He came with haughty look, a dark glance high and clear;
But his proud heart 'neath his breast-plate shook, when he stood beside the bier.
He stood there still, with drooping brow, and clasped hands o'er it raised;
For his Fáther lay before him low—it was Cœur de Lion gazed.

And silently he strove with the workings of his breast;
But there's more in late repentant love, than steel may keep suppressed.
And his tears brake forth at last like rain—men held their breath in awe,
For his face was seen by his warrior-train, and he recked not that they saw.

He looked upon the dead! and sorrow seemed to lie,
A weight of sorrow, even as lead, pale on the fast-shut eye.
He stooped and kissed the frozen cheek, and the hand of lifeless clay,
Till bursting words—yet all too weak—gave his soul's passion way.

"Oh, Father! is it vain, this late remorse and deep?
Speak to me, Father! once again!—I weep——behold, I weep!
Alas! my guilty pride and ire! Were but this work undone!—
I would give England's crown, my sire! to hear thee bless thy son!

"Speak to me!—Mighty grief ere now the dust hath stirred!
Hear me! but hear me!—Father, Chief, my King! I MUST be heard!—
Hushed, hushed?—how is it that I call, and that thou answerest not?
When was it thus?—Woe, woe, for all the love my soul forgot!

"Thy silver hairs I see, so still, so sadly bright!
And, Father! Father! but for me, they had not been so white!
I bore thee down, high heart! at last; no longer couldst thou strive—
Oh! for one moment of the past, to kneel, and say, 'Forgive!'

'Thou that my boyhood's guide didst take fond joy to be!——
The times I've sported at thy side, and climbed thy parent knee!
And now, before the blessed shrine, my Sire, I see thee lie.——
How will that sad still face of thine, look on me till I die!"

XLIX.—THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.—Longfellow.

It was the schooner Hesperus, that sailed the wintry sea; and the skipper had taken his little daughter to bear him company. Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax, her cheeks like the dawn of day, and her bosom white as the hawthorn buds that ope in the month of May. The skipper he stood beside the helm, his pipe was in his mouth, and he watched how the veering flaw did blow the smoke, now west, now south. Then up and spake an old sailor had sailed the Spanish Main: "I pray thee, put into yonder port, for I fear a hurricane: last night, the moon had a golden ring, and to-night no moon we see!" The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe, and a scornful laugh laughed he. Colder and louder blew the wind, a gale from the north-east: the snow fell hissing in the brine, and the billows frothed like yeast. Down came the storm, and smote amain the vessel in its strength; she shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed, then leaped her cable's length. "Come hither! come hither! my little daughter, and do not tremble so; for I can weather the roughest gale, that ever wind did blow." He wrapped her in his seaman's coat against the stinging blast; he cut a rope from a broken spar, and bound her to the mast. "O father! I hear the church-bells ring; oh, say, what may it be?" "'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"—and he steered for the open sea. "O father! I hear the sound of guns; oh, say, what may it be?" "Some ship in distress, that cannot live in such an angry sea!" "O father! I see a gleaming light; oh, say, what may it be?" but the father answered never a word, a frozen corpse was he. Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark, with his face turned to the skies: the lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow on his fixed and glassy eyes. Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed that saved she might be; and she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave on the Lake of Galilee. And fast through the midnight dark and drear, through the whistling sleet and snow, like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept towards the reef of Norman's Woe. And ever the fitful gusts between, a sound came from the land; it was the sound of the trampling surf on the rocks and the hard sea-sand. The breakers were right beneath her bows, she drifted a dreary wreck, and a whooping billow swept the crew like icicles from her deck. She struck where the white and fleecy waves looked soft as carded wool; but the cruel rocks, they gored her side like the horns of an angry bull. Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice, with the masts, went by the board; like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank: Ho! ho! the breakers roared! At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach a fisherman stood aghast, to see the form of a maiden fair lashed close to a drifting mast. The salt sea was frozen on her breast, the salt tears in her eyes; and he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed, on the billows fall and rise.——Such was the wreck of the Hesperus, in the midnight and the snow! Christ save us all from a death like this, on the reef of Norman's Woe!

L.—IVAN THE CZAR.—Mrs Hemans.

He sat in silence on the ground, the old and haughty Czar,
Lonely, though princes girt him round, and leaders of the war;
He had cast his jewelled sabre, that many a field had won,
To the earth beside his youthful dead—his fair and first-born son.

With a robe of ermine for its bed was laid that form of clay,
Where the light a stormy sunset shed through the rich tent made way;
And a sad and solemn beauty on the pallid face came down,
Which the lord of nations mutely watched—in the dust, with his renown.

Low tones at last, of woe and fear, from his full bosom broke—
A mournful thing it was to hear how then the proud man spoke!

The voice that through the combat had shouted far and nigh.
Came forth in strange, dull, hollow tones, burdened with agony.

"There is no crimson on thy cheek, and on thy lip no breath;
I call thee, and thou dost not speak—they tell me this is death!
And fearful things are whispering that I the deed have done;
For the honour of thy father's name, look up, look up, my son!

Well might I know death's hue and mien! but on thine aspect, boy,
What, till this moment, have I seen, save pride and tameless joy?
Swiftest thou wert to battle, and bravest there of all—
How could I think a warrior's frame thus like a flower should fall?

I will not bear that still, cold look—rise up, thou fierce and free!
Wake as the storm wakes! I will brook all, save this calm, from thee!
Lift brightly up, and proudly, once more thy kindling eyes!
Hath my word lost its power on earth? I say to thee, Arise!

Didst thou not know I loved thee well? Thou didst not! and art gone,
In bitterness of soul, to dwell where man must dwell alone.
Come back, young fiery spirit! if but one hour, to learn
The secrets of the folded heart that seemed to thee so stern.

Thou wert the first, the first fair child that in mine arms I pressed
Thou wert the bright one that hast smiled like summer on my breast!
I reared thee as an eagle, to the chase thy steps I led,
I bore thee on my battle-horse, I look upon thee——dead!

Lay down my warlike banners here, never again to wave,
And bury my red sword and spear, Chiefs! in my first-born's grave!
And leave me!—I have conquered, I have slain—my work is done!
Whom have I slain? Ye answer not—thou too art mute, my son!"

And thus his wild lament was poured through the dark, resounding night,
And the battle knew no more his sword, nor the foaming steed his might.
He heard strange voices moaning in every wind that sighed;
From the searching stars of heaven he shrank—humbly the conqueror died.

LI.—CHILDE HAROLD'S SONG.—Byron.

Adieu, adieu!—my native shore fades o'er the waters blue; the night-winds sigh, the breakers roar, and shrieks the wild sea-mew. Yon sun that sets upon the sea we follow in his flight: farewell awhile to him and thee: my native land—Good night! A few short hours, and he will rise to give the morrow birth; and I shall hail the main and skies—but not my mother, earth! Deserted is my own good hall, its hearth is desolate; wild weeds are gathering on the wall—my dog howls at the gate.

Come hither, hither, my little page: why dost thou weep and wail? Or dost thou dread the billow's rage, or tremble at the gale? But dash the tear-drop from thine eye; our ship is swift and strong: our fleetest falcon scarce can fly more merrily along.

"Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high, I fear not wave nor wind; yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I am sorrowful in mind: for I have from my father gone, a mother whom I love; and have no friend save these alone, but thee—and One above. My father blessed me fervently, yet did not much complain; but sorely will my mother sigh, till I come back again."

Enough, enough, my little lad! such tears become thine eye: if I thy guileless bosom had, mine own would not be dry!—Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman, why dost thou look so pale? Or dost thou dread a French foeman, or shiver at the gale?

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

grown rich with plundered store, he steers his course for Scotland's shore. Soothick a haze o'erspreads the sky they cannot see the sun on high; the wind hath blown a gale all day, at evening it hath died away. "Canst hear," said one, "the breakers roar? for yonder methinks should be the shore!" "Now where we are I cannot tell, but I wish I could hear the Inchcape Bell." They hear no sound, the swell is strong; though the wind hath fallen they drift along, till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock—"Oh, Fate! it is the Inchcape Rock!" Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair, he cursed himself in his despair; the waves rush in on every side, the ship is sinking beneath the tide. But ever in his dying fear one dreadful sound could the Rover hear: a sound as if with the Inchcape Bell the Fiends below were ringing his knell.

LIV.—ARNOLD WINKELRIED.—MONTGOMERY.

In arms the Austrian phalanx stood, a living wall, a human wood;
Impregnable their front appears, all horrent with projecting spears.
—Opposed to these, a scanty band contended for their Fatherland;
Peasants, whose new-found strength had broke from manly necks the ignoble yoke;
Marshalled once more at Freedom's call, they come to conquer or to fall.
And now the work of life and death hung on the passing of a breath;
The fire of conflict burned within; the battle trembled to begin:
Yet, while the Austrians held their ground, point for assault was nowhere found;
Where'er the impatient Switzers gazed, the unbroken line of lances blazed;
That line 'twere suicide to meet, and perish at their tyrant's feet.
Few were the numbers they could boast; but every freeman was a host,
And felt, as 'twere a secret known, that one should turn the scale alone.
It did depend on one indeed; behold him—Arnold Winkelried!
There stands not on the roll of Fame a hero of a nobler name.
Unmarked, he stood among the throng, in rumination deep and long,
Till you might see, with sudden grace, the very thought come o'er his face;
And, by the uplifting of his brow, tell where the bolt would strike, and how.
But 'twas no sooner thought than done—the field was in a moment won!
"Make way for Liberty!" he cried; then ran with arms extended wide,
As if his dearest friend to clasp; ten spears he swept within his grasp.
"Make way for Liberty!" he cried; their keen points crossed from side to side,
Then with them falling down, did he bravely make way for Liberty.
On to the breach his comrades fly—"Make way for Liberty!" they cry,
And through the Austrian phalanx dart, as rushed the spears through Arnold's heart;
While instantaneous as his fall before the foes—fear seized them all:
An earthquake could not overthrow a city with a surer blow.
Thus, Switzerland again was free; thus Death made way for Liberty.

LV.—THE SLAVE'S DREAM.—LONGFELLOW.

Beside the ungathered rice he lay, his sickle in his hand; his breast was bare, his matted hair was buried in the sand: again, in the mist and shadow of sleep, he saw his native land. Wide through the landscape of his dreams the lordly Niger flowed; beneath the palm-trees on the plain once more a king he strode; and heard the tinkling caravans descend the mountain-road. He saw once more his dark-eyed queen among her children stand; they clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks, they held him by the hand!—A tear burst from the sleeper's lids, and fell into the sand. And then at furious speed he rode along the Niger's bank; his bridle-reins were golden chains, and, with a martial clank, at each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel smiting his stallion's flank. Before him, like a blood-red flag, the bright flamingoes flew; from morn till

night he followed their flight, o'er plains where the tamarind grew, till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts, and the ocean rose to view. At night he heard the lion roar, and the hyæna scream, and the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds beside some hidden stream; and it passed, like a glorious roll of drums, through the triumph of his dream. The forests, with their myriad tongues, shouted of liberty; and the Blast of the Desert cried aloud, with a voice so wild and free, that he started in his sleep, and smiled at their tempestuous glee. He did not feel the driver's whip, nor the burning heat of day; for Death had illumined the Land of Sleep, and his lifeless body lay a worn-out fetter, that the soul had broken and thrown away!

LVI.—THE GOOD TIME COMING.—CHARLES MACKAY.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
We may not live to see the day, but earth shall glisten in its ray;
Cannon-balls may aid the truth, but Thought's a weapon stronger;
We'll win our battle by its aid:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
The pen shall supersede the sword, and Right, not Might, shall be the lord;
Worth, not birth, shall rule mankind, and be acknowledged stronger:
The proper impulse has been given:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
War, in all men's eyes, shall be a monster of iniquity;
Nations shall not quarrel then, to prove which is the stronger,
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
Hateful rivalries of creed shall not make their martyrs bleed;
Religion shall be shorn of pride, and flourish all the stronger;
And Charity shall trim her lamp:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
And a poor man's family shall not be his misery;
Every child shall be a help to make his right arm stronger:
The happier he the more he has:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming:
Little children shall not toil under or above the soil;
But shall play in healthful fields till limbs and mind grow stronger;
And every one shall read and write:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
The people shall be temperate, and shall love instead of hate;
They shall use, and not abuse, and make all virtue stronger:—
The Reformation has begun:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

There's a good time coming, boys, a good time coming;
Let us aid it all we can, every woman, every man;
Smallest helps, if rightly given, make the impulse stronger:
'Twill be strong enough one day:—WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.

LVII.—JOHN LITTLEJOHN.—CHARLES MACKAY.

John Littlejohn was stanch and strong, upright and downright, scorning wrong; he gave good weight, and paid his way; he thought for himself and he said his say. Whenever a rascal strove to pass, instead of silver, money of brass, he took his hammer, and said, with a frown, "THE COIN IS SPURIOUS, NAIL IT DOWN!" John Littlejohn was firm and true,—you could not cheat him in "two and two:" when foolish arguers, might and main, darken'd and twisted the clear and plain, he saw, through the mazes

of their speech, the simple Truth beyond their reach; and, crushing their logic, said, with a frown, "YOUR COIN IS SPURIOUS, NAIL IT DOWN!" John Littlejohn maintain'd the Right, through storm and shine, in the world's despite; when fools or quacks desired his vote, dosed him with arguments learn'd by rote, or by coaxing threats, or promise, tried to gain his support to the wrongful side, "Nay, nay," said John, with an angry frown, "YOUR COIN IS SPURIOUS, NAIL IT DOWN!" When told that kings had a right divine, and that the people were herds of swine;—that the rich alone were fit to rule, that the poor were unimproved by school;—that ceaseless toil was the proper fate of all but the wealthy and the great;—John shook his head, and swore, with a frown, "THE COIN IS SPURIOUS, NAIL IT DOWN!" When told that events might justify a false and crooked policy,—that a decent hope of future good might excuse departure from rectitude,—that a lie, if white, was a small offence, to be forgiven by men of sense;—"Nay, nay," said John, with a sigh and frown, "THE COIN IS SPURIOUS, NAIL IT DOWN!" When told, from the pulpit or the press, that Heaven was a place of exclusiveness,—that none but those could enter there who knelt with the "orthodox" at prayer; and held all virtues out of their pale as idle works of no avail,—John's face grew dark, as he swore, with a frown, "THE COIN IS SPURIOUS, NAIL IT DOWN!" Whenever the world our eyes would blind with false pretences of any kind,—with humbug, cant, and bigotry, or a specious, sham philosophy,—with wrong dress'd up in the guise of right, and darkness passing itself for light;—let us imitate John, and exclaim, with a frown, "THE COINS ARE SPURIOUS, NAIL THEM DOWN!"

LVIII.—THE ADOPTED CHILD.—MRS. HEMANS.

LADY.—Why wouldst thou leave me, oh, gentle child? Thy home on the mountains is bleak and wild,—a straw-roofed cabin with lowly wall; mine is a fair and pillared hall, where many an image of marble gleams, and the sunshine of pleasure for ever streams.

BOY.—Oh, green is the turf where my brothers play, through the long bright hours of the summer day; and they find the red cup-moss where they climb; they chase the bee o'er the scented thyme; and the rocks where the heath flower blooms they know:—Lady, kind lady, oh, let me go!

LADY.—Content thee, boy, in my bower to dwell! here are sweet sounds which thou lovest well; flutes on the air in the stilly noon, harps which the wandering breezes tune; and the silvery wood-note of many a bird, whose voice was ne'er in thy mountains heard.

BOY.—My mother sings, at the twilight's fall, a song of the hills, far more sweet than all: she sings it under her own green tree, to the babe half-slumbering on her knee. I dreamt last night of that music low:—Lady, kind lady, oh, let me go!

LADY.—Thy mother hath gone from her cares to rest; she hath taken the babe on her quiet breast. Thou wouldst meet her footstep, boy, no more, nor hear her song at the cabin-door: come with me to the vineyards nigh, and we'll pluck the grapes of the richest dye.

BOY.—Is my mother gone from her home away?—But I know that my brothers are there at play; I know they are gathering the fox-glove's bell, or the long fern leaves by the sparkling well; or they launch their boats where the blue streams flow:—Lady, sweet lady, oh, let me go!

LADY.—Fair child! thy brothers are wanderers now; they sport no more on the mountain's brow; they have left the fern by the spring's green side, and the stream where the fairy barks were tried. Be thou at peace in thy brighter lot, for thy cabin-home is a lonely spot.

BOY.—Are they gone—all gone—from the sunny hill? But the bird and the blue-fly rove o'er it still, and the red-deer bound in their gladness free, and the heath is bent by the singing bee; the waters leap, and the fresh winds blow:—Lady, sweet lady, oh, let me go!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

He started from the ground once more, and seized the monarch's rein,
Amid the pale and wildered looks of all the courtier train;
And with a fierce o'ermastering grasp, the rearing war-horse led,
And sternly set them face to face—the king, before the dead!

"Came I not forth, upon thy pledge, my father's hand to kiss?
Be still! and gaze thou on, false king! and tell me, what is this?
The look, the voice, the heart I sought—give answer, where are they?
If thou wouldst clear thy perjured soul, send life through this cold clay!

"Into these glassy eyes put light: be still, keep down thine ire;
Bid those white lips a blessing speak—this earth is not my sire!
Give me back him for whom I strove, for whom my blood was shed!
Thou canst not,—and a king? his dust be mountains on thy head!"

He loosed the steed—his slack hand fell;—upon the silent face
He cast one long, deep, troubled glance, then turned from that sad place.
Despair, and grief, and baffled love, o'erwhelmed his soul at last—
The time for Vengeance will arrive, when Sorrow's hour is past.

II.—BERNARDO AND ALPHONSO.—Lockhart. (Part Second.)

With some good ten of his chosen men, Bernardo hath appeared,
Before them all, in the palace hall, the lying king to beard;
With cap in hand and eye on ground, he came in reverent guise,
But ever and anon he frown'd, and flame broke from his eyes.

"A curse upon thee," cries the King, "who com'st unbid to me;
But what from traitor's blood should spring save traitor like to thee?
His sire, lords, had a traitor's heart; perchance our champion brave
May think it were a pious part to share Don Sancho's grave."

"Whoever told this tale, the king hath rashness to repeat,"
Cries Bernard, "here my gage I fling before the LIAR'S feet!
No treason was in Sancho's blood, no stain in mine doth lie—
Below the throne, what knight will own the coward calumny?

"The blood that I like water shed, when Roland did advance,
By secret traitors hired and led, to make us slaves of France;—
The life of King Alphonso I saved at Roncesval,—
Your words, Lord King, are recompense abundant for it all!

"Your horse was down,—your hope was flown—I saw the falchion shine
That soon had drunk your royal blood, had I not ventured mine;
But memory soon of service done deserteth the ingrate,
And you've thank'd the son for life and crown by the father's bloody fate.

"You swore upon your kingly faith, to set Don Sancho free,
But, curse upon your paltering breath! the light he ne'er did see;
He died in dungeon cold and dim, by Alphonso's base decree,
And visage blind and stiffen'd limb were all they gave to me.

"The king that swerveth from his word hath stain'd his purple black—
No Spanish Lord will draw the sword behind a liar's back;
But noble vengeance shall be mine; an open hate I'll show—
The King hath injured Carpio's line, and Bernard is his foe."

"Seize—seize him!"—loud the King doth scream; "there are a thousand here—
Let his foul blood this instant stream—what! caitiffs, do you fear?

Seize—seize the traitor!" But not one to move a finger dareth.—
Bernardo standeth by the throne, and calm his sword he bareth:

He drew the falchion from the sheath and held it up on high,
And all the hall was still as death; cries Bernard, "Here am I;
And here's the sword that owns no lord, excepting Heaven and me:
Fain would I know who dares its point—King, Condé, or Grandee?"

Then to his mouth the horn he drew—(it hung below his cloak)—
His ten true men the signal knew, and through the ring they broke;
With helm on head and blade in hand, the knights the circle brake;
And back the lordlings 'gan to stand, and the false King to quake.

"Ha! Bernard," quoth Alphonso, "what means this warlike guise?
You know full well I jested—you know your worth I prize."
But Bernard turned upon his heel, and smiling passed away;
Long rued Alphonso and Castile the jesting of that day.

III.—BERNARDO'S REVENGE.—ANON. (PART THIRD.)

What tents gleam on the green hill-side, like snow in the sunny beam
What gloomy warriors gather there, like a surly mountain stream?
These, for Bernardo's vengeance, have come like a stormy blast,
The rage of their long cherished hate on a cruel king to cast.

"Smiters of tyranny!" cries their chief, "see yonder slavish host,
We shall drench the field with their craven blood, or freedom's hopes.
lost;
You know, I come for a father's death, my filial vow to pay,
Then let the 'Murdered Sancho!' be your battle-cry to day.

'On, on! tor the death of the tyrant king!" "Hurrah!" was the answering
cry;
"We follow thee to victory, or follow thee to die!"
The battle field,--the charge,—the shock,—the quivering struggle now,—
The rout,—the shout!—while lightnings flash from Bernardo's angry brow.

The chieftain's arm has need of rest, his brand drips red with gore,
But one last sacrifice remains, ere his work of toil is o'er.
The King, who looked for victory, from his large and well-trained host,
Now flies for safety from the field, where all his hopes are lost;

But full in front, with blood-red sword, a warrior appears,
And the war-cry, "Murdered Sancho!" rings in the tyrant's ears.
"Ha! noble King, have we met at last?" with scornful lip he cries:
"Don Sancho's son would speak with you once more before he dies."

"Your kindness to my sainted sire is graven on my heart,
And I would show my gratitude once more before we part.
Draw! for the last of Sancho's race is ready for your sword;—
Bernardo's blood should flow by him, by whom his sire's was poured

"What wait you for, vile, craven wretch? it was not thus you stood
When laying out your fiendish plans to spill my father's blood.
Draw! for I will not learn from thee the assassin's coward trade,
I scorn the lesson you have taught—unsheath your murderous blade!"

Roused by Bernardo's fiery taunts, the king at length engaged:
He fought for life, but all in vain; unequal strife he waged:
Bernardo's sword has pierced his side,—the tyrant's reign is o'er,—
"Father, I have fulfilled my vow, I thirst for blood no more."

IV.—THE LEGEND OF HORATIUS.—MACAULAY.

The Fathers of the City, they sat all night and day, for every hour some horseman came with tidings of dismay. They held a council, standing before the river-gate; short time was there, ye well may guess, for musing or debate. Out spoke the Consul roundly: "The bridge must straight go down; for, since Janiculum is lost, nought else can save the town." Just then a scout came flying, all wild with haste and fear: "To arms! to arms! Sir Consul; Lars Porsena is here." On the low hills to westward the Consul fixed his eye, and saw the swarthy storm of dust rise fast along the sky. "Their van will be upon us before the bridge goes down: and if they once may win the bridge, what hope to save the town?" Then out spake brave Horatius, the Captain of the gate: "To every man upon this earth death cometh soon or late. And how can man die better than facing fearful odds, for the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his Gods! Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul, with all the speed ye may; I, with two more to help me, will hold the foe in play: in yon strait path, a thousand may well be stopped by three. Now, who will stand on either hand, and keep the bridge with me?" Then out spake Spurius Lartius; a Ramnian proud was he: "Lo, I will stand at thy right hand, and keep the bridge with thee." And out spake strong Herminius; of Titian blood was he: "I will abide on thy left side, and keep the bridge with thee." "Horatius," quoth the Consul, "as thou sayest, so let it be." And straight, against that great array, forth went the dauntless Three. The Three stood calm and silent, and looked upon the foes, and a great shout of laughter from all the vanguard rose: and forth three chiefs came spurring before that mighty mass; to earth they sprang, their swords they drew, and lifted high their shields, and flew to win the narrow pass. But all Etruria's noblest felt their hearts sink to see on the earth the bloody corpses, in the path the dauntless Three. Was none who would be foremost to lead such dire attack; but those behind cried "Forward!" and those before cried "Back!" But meanwhile axe and lever have manfully been plied; and now the bridge hangs tottering above the boiling tide. "Come back, come back, Horatius!" loud cried the Fathers all. "Back, Lartius! back, Herminius! back, ere the ruin fall!" Back darted Spurius Lartius; Herminius darted back: and, as they passed, beneath their feet they felt the timbers crack. But when they turned their faces, and on the farther shore saw brave Horatius stand alone, they would have crossed once more. But with a crash like thunder fell every loosened beam, and, like a dam, the mighty wreck lay right athwart the stream: and a long shout of triumph rose from the walls of Rome, as to the highest turret-tops was splashed the yellow foam. Alone stood brave Horatius, but constant still in mind; thrice thirty thousand foes before, and the broad flood behind. "Down with him!" cried false Sextus, with a smile on his pale face. "Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena, "now yield thee to our grace." Round turned he, as not deigning those craven ranks to see; nought spake he to Lars Porsena, to Sextus nought spake he; but he saw on Palatinus the white porch of his home; and he spake to the noble river that rolls by the towers of Rome; "Oh, Tiber! father Tiber! to whom the Romans pray, a Roman's life, a Roman's arms, take thou in charge this day!" So he spake, and speaking sheathed the good sword by his side, and, with his harness on his back, plunged headlong in the tide. No sound of joy or sorrow was heard from either bank; but friends and foes, in dumb surprise, with parted lips and straining eyes, stood gazing where he sank. But fiercely ran the current, swollen high by months of rain; and fast his blood was flowing; and he was sore in pain. Never, I ween, did swimmer, in such an evil case, struggle through such a raging flood safe to the landing place: but his limbs were borne up bravely by the brave heart within, and our good father Tiber bare bravely up his chin. And now he feels the bottom; now on dry earth he stands; now round him

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Give me back my trusty comrades—give me back my Highland maid—
No where beats the heart so kindly as beneath the tartan plaid!
Flora! when thou wert beside me, in the wilds of far Kintail—
When the cavern gave us shelter from the blinding sleet and hail—
When we lurk'd beneath the thicket, and, beneath the waning moon,
Saw the sentry's bayonet glimmer, heard him chant his listless tune—
When the howling storm o'ertook us, drifting down the island's lee,
And our crazy bark was whirling like a nut-shell on the sea—
When the nights were dark and dreary, and amidst the fern we lay,
Faint and foodless, sore with travel, waiting for the streaks of day;
When thou wert an angel to me, watching my exhausted sleep—
Never didst thou hear me murmur—couldst thou see how now I weep!
—Bitter tears and sobs of anguish, unavailing though they be.
Oh! the brave—the brave and noble—that have died in vain for me!

VI.—SCENE BEFORE THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.—Byron

The night is past, and shines the sun as if that morn were a jocund one. Lightly and brightly breaks away the Morning from her mantle gray, and the Noon will look on a sultry day.—Hark to the trump and the drum, and the mournful sound of the barbarous horn, and the flap of the banners that flit as they're borne, and the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum, and the clash, and the shout "They come! they come!" The horse-tails are plucked from the ground, and the sword from its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the word. The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein; curved is each neck, and flowing each mane; white is the foam of their champ on the bit:—the spears are uplifted; the matches are lit; the cannon are pointed, and ready to roar, and crush the wall they have crumbled before.—Forms in his phalanx each Janizar, Alp at their head; his right arm is bare, so is the blade of his scimitar; the Khan and the Pachas are all at their post; the Vizier himself at the head of the host. "When the culverin's signal is fired, then on! leave not in Corinth a living one—a priest at her altars—a chief in her halls—a hearth in her mansions—a stone on her walls. Heaven and the Prophet—Alla Hu! Up to the skies with that wild halloo!" As the wolves that headlong go on the stately buffalo, though, with fiery eyes, and angry roar, and hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore, he tramples on earth, or tosses on high the foremost who rush on his strength but to die; thus against the wall they went, thus the first were backward bent: even as they fell, in files they lay, like the mower's grass at the close of day, when his work is done on the levelled plain: such was the fall of the foremost slain. As the spring-tides, with heavy plash, from the cliffs, invading dash huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow, till white and thundering down they go—like the avalanche's snow on the Alpine vales below—thus at length, out-breath'd and worn, Corinth's sons were downward borne by the long and oft-renewed charge of the Moslem multitude. In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell, heaped by the host of the Infidel, hand to hand, and foot to foot: nothing there, save death, was mute; stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry for quarter, or for victory. From the point of encountering blade to the hilt, sabres and swords with blood were gilt:—but the rampart is won—and the spoil begun—and all, but the after-carnage, done. Shriller shrieks now mingling come from within the plundered dome. Hark, to the haste of flying feet, that splash in the blood of the slippery street!

VII.—SCENE AFTER THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.—Byron.

Alp wandered on, along the beach, till within the range of a carbine's reach of the leaguered wall; but they saw him not, or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot? Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold? Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts waxed cold? I know not, in

sooth; but from yonder wall there flashed no fire, and there hissed no ball, though he stood beneath the bastion's frown, that flanked the sea-ward gate of the town; though he heard the sound, and could almost tell the sullen words of the sentinel, as his measured step on the stone below clanked, as he paced it to and fro: and he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall hold o'er the dead their carnival, gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb; they were too busy to bark at him! From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh, as ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh; and their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull, as it slipped through their jaws when their edge grew dull, as they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead, when they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed; so well had they broken a lingering fast with those who had fallen for that night's repast. And Alp knew, by the turbans that rolled on the sand, the foremost of these were the best of his band. The scalps were in the wild dog's maw, the hair was tangled round his jaw. But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf, there sat a vulture flapping a wolf that had stolen from the hills, but kept away, scared by the dogs, from the human prey; but he seized on his share of a steed that lay, picked by the birds, on the sands of the bay!

Alp turned him from the sickening sight: never had shaken his nerves in fight; but he better could brook to behold the dying, deep in the tide of their warm blood lying, scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain, than the perishing dead who are past all pain.—There is something of pride in the perilous hour, whate'er be the shape in which Death may lour; for Fame is there to say who bleeds, and Honour's eye on daring deeds! But when all is past, it is humbling to tread o'er the weltering field of the tombless dead, and see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air, beasts of the forest, all gathering there; all regarding man as their prey, all rejoicing in his decay!

VIII.—VIRGINIA.—A LAY OF ANCIENT ROME.—Macaulay

Over the Alban mountains, the light of morning broke;
From all the roofs of the Seven Hills curled the thin wreaths of smoke:
The city gates were open; the Forum, all alive
With buyers and with sellers, was humming like a hive:
Blithely on brass and timber the craftsman's stroke was ringing,
And blithely o'er her panniers the market-girl was singing;
And blithely young Virginia came smiling from her home—
Ah! woe for young Virginia, the sweetest maid in Rome.
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
Forth she went bounding to the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm.
She crossed the Forum shining with the stalls in alleys gay,
And just had reached the very spot whereon I stand this day,
When up the varlet Marcus came; not such as when, erewhile,
He crouched behind his patron's heels, with the true client smile:
He came with lowering forehead, swollen features, and clenched fist,
And strode across Virginia's path, and caught her by the wrist:
Hard strove the frighted maiden, and screamed with look aghast—
And at her scream from right and left the folk came running fast;
And the strong smith Muræna gave Marcus such a blow,
The caitiff reeled three paces back, and let the maiden go:
Yet glared he fiercely round him, and growled, in harsh fell tone
"She's mine, and I will have her: I seek but for mine own.
She is my slave, born in my house, and stolen away and sold,
The year of the sore sickness, ere she was twelve hours old.
I wait on Appius Claudius; I waited on his sire:
Let him who works the client wrong, beware the patron's ire!"
—But ere the varlet Marcus again might seize the maid,
Who clung tight to Muræna's skirt, and sobbed and shrieked for aid,

Forth through the throng of gazers the young Icilius pressed,
And stamped his foot, and rent his gown, and smote upon his breast,
And beckoned to the people, and, in bold voice and clear,
Poured thick and fast the burning words which tyrants quake to hear

"Now, by your children's cradles, now, by your fathers' graves,
Be men to-day, Quirites, or be for ever slaves!
Shall the vile fox-earth awe the race that stormed the lion's den?
Shall we, who could not brook one lord, crouch to the wicked Ten?
Oh, for that ancient spirit which curbed the Senate's will!
Oh, for the tents which in old time whitened the Sacred Hill!
In those brave days, our fathers stood firmly side by side;
They faced the Marcian fury, they tamed the Fabian pride:
They drove the fiercest Quintius an outcast forth from Rome;
They sent the haughtiest Claudius with shivered fasces home
But what their care bequeathed us, our madness flung away:
All the ripe fruit of three-score years is blighted in a day.
Exult, ye proud Patricians! the hard-fought fight is o'er:
We strove for honour—'twas in vain: for freedom—'tis no more.
Our very hearts, that were so high, sink down beneath your will:
Riches, and lands, and power, and state, ye have them—keep them still
Heap heavier still the fetters; bar closer still the grate;
Patient as sheep we yield us up unto your cruel hate:—
But, by the Shades beneath us, and by the Gods above,
Add not unto your cruel hate your yet more cruel love!
Have ye not graceful ladies, whose spotless lineage springs
From Consuls, and high Pontiffs, and ancient Alban Kings?
Ladies, who deign not on our paths to set their tender feet—
Who from their cars look down with scorn upon the wondering street—
Who, in Corinthian mirrors, their own proud smiles behold,
And breathe of Capuan odours, and shine with Spanish gold?
Then leave the poor Plebeian his single tie to life—
The sweet, sweet love of daughter, of sister, and of wife—
Spare us the inexpiable wrong, the unutterable shame,
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame;
Lest, when our latest hope is fled, ye taste of our despair,
And learn, by proof, in some wild hour, how much the wretched dare!"

* * * *

Straightway Virginius led the maid a little space aside,
To where the reeking shambles stood, piled up with horn and hide;
Hard by, a flesher on a block had laid his whittle down—
Virginius caught the whittle up, and hid it in his gown;
And then his eyes grew very dim, and his throat began to swell,
And in a hoarse, changed voice he spake, "Farewell, sweet child, farewell
Oh! how I loved my darling! Though stern I sometimes be,
To thee, thou know'st, I was not so. Who could be so to thee?
And how my darling lovéd me! How glad she was to hear
My footstep on the threshold, when I came back last year!
And how she danced with pleasure to see my civic crown,
And took my sword, and hung it up, and brought me forth my gown:
Now, all those things are over—yes, all thy pretty ways—
Thy needlework, thy prattle, thy snatches of old lays;
And none will grieve when I go forth, or smile when I return,
Or watch beside the old man's bed, or weep upon his urn.
—The time is come! See, how he points his eager hand this way!
See, how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon the prey.
With all his wit he little deems, that, spurned, betrayed, bereft,
Thy father hath, in his despair, one fearful refuge left.
He little deems, that in this hand I clutch what still can save
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion of the slave;

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

fountain red; oh, swiftest there had the current free from noble veins been shed! Thickest there the spear-heads gleamed, and the scattered plumage streamed, and the broken shields were tossed, and the shivered lances crossed—HE WAS THERE! the leader amidst his band, where the faithful had made their last vain stand; with the falchion yet in his cold hand grasped, and his country's flag to his bosom clasped!—She quelled in her soul the deep floods of woe,—the time was not yet for their waves to flow; and a proud smile shone o'er her pale despair, as she turned to her followers:—"Your lord is there! look on him! know him by scarf and crest! bear him away with his sires to rest!"

There is no plumed head o'er the bier to bend—no brother of battle—no princely friend:—by the red fountain the valiant lie—the flower of Provençal chivalry. But ONE free step, and one lofty heart, bear through that scene, to the last, their part. "I have won thy fame from the breath of wrong! my soul hath risen for thy glory strong! now call me hence by thy side to be: the world thou leav'st has no place for me. Give me my home on thy noble heart! well have we loved—let us both depart!" And pale on the breast of the dead she lay, the living cheek to the cheek of clay. The living cheek! oh, it was not in vain that strife of the spirit, to rend its chain!—She is there, at rest, in her place of pride! in death, how queen-like!—a glorious bride! From the long heart-withering early gone; she hath lived—she hath loved—her task is done!

X.—THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.—LONGFELLOW.

Somewhat back from the village street stands the old-fashioned country-seat: across its antique portico tall poplar-trees their shadows throw, and from its station in the hall, an ancient timepiece says to all,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" Halfway up the stairs it stands, and points and beckons with its hands from its case of massive oak; like a monk, who, under his cloak, crosses himself, and sighs, alas! with sorrowful voice to all who pass,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" By day its voice is low and light; but in the silent dead of night, distinct as a passing footstep's fall, it echoes along the vacant hall, along the ceiling, along the floor, and seems to say, at each chamber door,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" Through days of sorrow and of mirth, through days of death and days of birth, through every swift vicissitude of changeful time, unchanged it has stood; and as if, like God, it all things saw, it calmly repeats those words of awe,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" In that mansion used to be free-hearted Hospitality; his great fires up the chimney roared; the stranger feasted at his board; but, like the skeleton at the feast, that warning timepiece never ceased,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" There groups of merry children played, there youths and maidens dreaming strayed: O precious hours! O golden prime, and affluence of love and time! Even as a miser counts his gold, those hours the ancient timepiece told,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" From that chamber, clothed in white, the bride came forth on her wedding night; there, in that silent room below, the dead lay in his shroud of snow; and in the hush that followed the prayer, was heard the old clock on the stair,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" All are scattered now and fled, some are married, some are dead; and when I ask, with throbs of pain, "Ah! when shall they all meet again?" as in the days long since gone by, the ancient timepiece makes reply,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!" Never here, for ever there, where all parting, pain, and care, and death, and time, shall disappear,—for ever there, but never here! The horologe of Eternity sayeth this incessantly,—"For ever—never! never—for ever!"

XI.—MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.—H. G. Bell

I looked far back into other years, and lo! in bright array,
I saw, as in a dream, the forms of ages passed away.
It was a stately convent, with its old and lofty walls,
And gardens with their broad green walks, where soft the footstep falls;
And o'er the antique dial-stone the creeping shadow passed,
And all around the noon-day sun a drowsy radiance cast.
No sound of busy life was heard, save, from the cloister dim,
The tinkling of the silver bell, or the sisters' holy hymn.
And there five noble maidens sat beneath the orchard trees,
In that first budding spring of youth, when all its prospects please;
And little recked they, when they sang, or knelt at vesper prayers,
That Scotland knew no prouder names—held none more dear than theirs:
And little even the loveliest thought, before the holy shrine,
Of royal blood and high descent from the ancient Stuart line:
Calmly her happy days flew on, uncounted in their flight,
And, as they flew, they left behind a long-continuing light.
The scene was changed. It was the court, the gay court of Bourbon,
And 'neath a thousand silver lamps, a thousand courtiers throng;
And proudly kindles Henry's eye—well pleased, I ween, to see
The land assemble all its wealth of grace and chivalry;—
But fairer far than all the rest who bask on fortune's tide,
Effulgent in the light of youth, is she, the new-made bride!
The homage of a thousand hearts—the fond, deep love of one—
The hopes that dance around a life whose charms are but begun,—
They lighten up her chestnut eye, they mantle o'er her cheek,
They sparkle on her open brow, and high-souled joy bespeak:
Ah! who shall blame, if scarce that day, through all its brilliant hours,
She thought of that quiet convent's calm, its sunshine and its flowers?
The scene was changed. It was a bark that slowly held its way,
And o'er its lee the coast of France in the light of evening lay;
And on its deck a Lady sat, who gazed with tearful eyes
Upon the fast receding hills, that dim and distant rise.
No marvel that the Lady wept,—there was no land on earth
She loved like that dear land, although she owed it not her birth;
It was her mother's land, the land of childhood and of friends,—
It was the land where she had found for all her griefs amends,—
The land where her dead husband slept—the land where she had known
The tranquil convent's hushed repose, and the splendours of a throne:
No marvel that the Lady wept,—it was the land of France—
The chosen home of chivalry—the garden of romance!
The past was bright, like those dear hills so far behind her bark;
The future, like the gathering night, was ominous and dark!
One gaze again—one long, last gaze—"Adieu, fair France, to thee!"
The breeze comes forth—she is alone on the unconscious sea!
The scene was changed. It was an eve of raw and surly mood,
And in a turret-chamber high of ancient Holyrood
Sat Mary, listening to the rain, and sighing with the winds,
That seemed to suit the stormy state of men's uncertain minds.
The touch of care had blanched her cheek—her smile was sadder now,
The weight of royalty had pressed too heavy on her brow;
And traitors to her councils came, and rebels to the field;
The Stuart SCEPTRE well she swayed, but the SWORD she could not wield.
She thought of all her blighted hopes—the dreams of youth's brief day.
And summoned Rizzio with his lute, and bade the minstrel play
The songs she loved in early years—the songs of gay Navarre,
The songs perchance that erst were sung by gallant Chatelar;
They half beguiled her of her cares, they soothed her into smiles,
They won her thoughts from bigot zeal, and fierce domestic broils.

But hark! the tramp of armèd men! the Douglas' battle-cry!
They come—they come!—and lo! the scowl of Ruthven's hollow eye!
And swords are drawn, and daggers gleam, and tears and words are vain—
The ruffian steel is in his heart—the faithful Rizzio's slain!
Then Mary Stuart dashed aside the tears that trickling fell:
"Now for my father's arm!" she said; "my woman's heart farewell!"
The scene was changed. It was a lake, with one small lonely isle,
And there, within the prison-walls of its baronial pile,
Stern men stood menacing their queen, till she should stoop to sign
The traitorous scroll that snatched the crown from her ancestral line:—
"My lords, my lords!" the captive said, "were I but once more free,
With ten good knights on yonder shore, to aid my cause and me,
That parchment would I scatter wide to every breeze that blows,
And once more reign a Stuart-queen o'er my remorseless foes!"
A red spot burned upon her cheek—streamed her rich tresses down,
She wrote the words—she stood erect—a queen, without a crown!
The scene was changed. A royal host a royal banner bore,
And the faithful of the land stood round their smiling queen once more;—
She stayed her steed upon a hill—she saw them marching by—
She heard their shouts—she read success in every flashing eye.—
The tumult of the strife begins—it roars—it dies away;
And Mary's troops and banners now, and courtiers—where are they?
Scattered and strown, and flying far, defenceless and undone,—
Alas! to think what she has lost, and all that guilt has won!
—Away! away! thy gallant steed must act no laggard's part;
Yet vain his speed—for thou dost bear the arrow in thy heart!
The scene was changed. Beside the block a sullen headsman stood,
And gleamed the broad axe in his hand, that soon must drip with blood.
With slow and steady step there came a Lady through the hall,
And breathless silence chained the lips, and touched the hearts of all.
I knew that queenly form again, though blighted was its bloom,—
I saw that grief had decked it out—an offering for the tomb!
I knew the eye, though faint its light, that once so brightly shone;
I knew the voice, though feeble now, that thrilled with every tone
I knew the ringlets, almost gray, once threads of living gold;
I knew that bounding grace of step—that symmetry of mould!
Even now I see her far away, in that calm convent aisle,
I hear her chant her vesper-hymn, I mark her holy smile,—
Even now I see her bursting forth, upon the bridal morn,
A new star in the firmament, to light and glory born!
Alas! the change!—she placed her foot upon a triple throne,
And on the scaffold now she stands—beside the block—ALONE!
The little dog that licks her hand—the last of all the crowd
Who sunned themselves beneath her glance, and rourd her footsteps bowed!
—Her neck is bared—the blow is struck—the soul is passed away!
The bright—the beautiful—is now a bleeding piece of clay!
The dog is moaning piteously; and, as it gurgles o'er,
Laps the warm blood that trickling runs unheeded to the floor!
The blood of beauty, wealth, and power—the heart-blood of a queen—
The noblest of the Stuart race—the fairest earth has seen,—
Lapped by a dog!——Go, think of it, in silence and alone;
Then weigh, against a grain of sand, the glories of a throne!

XII.—ON MODERN GREECE.—BYRON.

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece! where burning Sappho loved and sung; where grew the arts of war and peace; where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung;—eternal summer gilds them yet—but all, except their sun, is set! The Scian and the Teian muse, the hero's harp, the lover's

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

he woke—to hear his sentries shriek, "To arms!—they come!—the Greek! the Greek!" He woke to die,—'midst flame, and smoke, and shout, and groan, and sabre-stroke, and death-shots falling thick and fast, like forest-pines before the blast, or lightnings from the mountain-cloud; and heard, with voice as trumpet loud, Bozzaris cheer his band; "Strike—till the last arm'd foe expires! strike—for your altars and your fires! strike—for the green graves of your sires!—Heaven—and your native land!"

They fought like brave men, long and well, they piled that ground with Moslem slain, they conquered—but Bozzaris fell, bleeding at every vein. His few surviving comrades saw his smile, when rang their proud hurrah, and the red field was won; then saw in death his eyelids close, calmly as to a night's repose, like flowers at set of sun.——Come to the bridal chamber, Death! come to the mother's, when she feels for the first time her first-born's breath; come when the blessed seals which close the pestilence are broke, and crowded cities wail its stroke; come, in Consumption's ghastly form, the Earthquake-shock, the Ocean-storm; come, when the heart beats high and warm with banquet-song, and dance, and wine,—and thou art terrible!—the tear, the groan, the knell, the pall, the bier, and all we know, or dream, or fear of agony, are thine! But to the hero, when his sword has won the battle for the free, thy voice sounds like a prophet's word; and in its hollow tones are heard the thanks of millions, yet to be!—Bozzaris! she who gave thee birth, will, by the pilgrim-circled hearth, talk of thy doom, without a sigh; for thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's; one of the few, the immortal names, that were not born to die

---

XIV.—LORD WILLIAM.—Southey.

No eye beheld when William plunged young Edmund in the stream;
No human ear but William's heard young Edmund's drowning scream.
Submissive, all the vassals owned the murderer for their lord;
And he—as rightful heir—possessed the house of Erlingford.

The ancient house of Erlingford stood in a fair domain;
And Severn's ample waters near, rolled through the fertile plain;
And often the way-faring man would love to linger there,
Forgetful of his onward road, to gaze on scenes so fair.
But never could Lord William dare to gaze on Severn's stream;
In every wind that swept its waves, he heard young Edmund scream!
In vain, at midnight's silent hour, sleep closed the murderer's eyes;
In every dream the murderer saw young Edmund's form arise!
—To other climes the pilgrim fled—but could not fly despair;
He sought his home again—but peace was still a stranger there.

Slow went the passing hours, yet swift the months appeared to roll;
And now the day returned, that shook with terror William's soul—
A day that William never felt return without dismay;
For, well had conscience calendar'd young Edmund's dying day.
A fearful day was that! the rains fell fast with tempest roar,
And the swoln tide of Severn spread far on the level shore.
—In vain Lord William sought the feast, in vain he quaffed the bowl,
And strove, with noisy mirth, to drown the anguish of his soul;—
The tempest, as its sudden swell in gusty howlings came,
With cold and death-like feelings seemed to thrill his shuddering frame.

Reluctant, now, as night came on, his lonely couch he pressed;
And, wearied out, he sank to sleep,—to sleep—but not to rest!
—Beside that couch, his brother's form, Lord Edmund, seemed to stand!
Such, and so pale, as when in death he grasped his brother's hand;
Such, and so pale his face, as when with faint and faltering tongue,
To William's care—a dying charge!—he left his orphan son.

"I bade thee with a father's love my orphan Edmund guard—
Well, William, hast thou kept thy charge! now take thy due reward!"
—He started up—each limb convulsed with agonizing fear:
He only heard the storm of night,—'twas music to his ear!
When, lo! the voice of loud alarm his inmost soul appals:
"What ho! Lord William, rise in haste! the water saps thy walls!"
He rose in haste:—beneath the walls he saw the flood appear!
It hemmed him round—'twas midnight now—no human aid was near!
—He heard the shout of joy!—for now a boat approached the wall;
And eager to the welcome aid they crowd for safety all.—
"My boat is small," the boatman cried, "'twill bear but one away;
Come in, Lord William! and do ye in Heaven's protection stay."

Strange feelings filled them as he spoke, even in that hour of woe.
That, save their lord, there was not one who wished with him to go.
Lord William leaped into the boat, his terror was so sore;
"Thou shalt have half my gold," he cried. "Haste!—haste to yonder shore!"
The boatman plied the oar; the boat went light along the stream;—
Sudden Lord William heard a cry, like Edmund's drowning scream:
The boatman paused: "Methought I heard a child's distressful cry!"
"'Twas but the howling wind of night," Lord William made reply.
"Haste!—haste!—ply swift and strong the oar! haste!—haste across the stream!"
Again Lord William heard a cry, like Edmund's drowning scream!
"I heard a child's distressful voice," the boatman said again.
"Nay, hasten on!—the night is dark—and we should search in vain!"

"And oh! Lord William, dost thou know how dreadful 'tis to die?
And canst thou without pitying hear a child's expiring cry?
How horrible it is to sink beneath the chilly stream,
To stretch the powerless arms in vain, in vain for help to scream!

The shriek again was heard: it came more deep, more piercing loud:
That instant o'er the flood the moon shone through a broken cloud;
And near them they beheld a child—upon a crag he stood—
A little crag, and all around was spread the rising flood.
The boatman plied the oar—the boat approached his resting place—
The moon-beam shone upon the child—and showed how pale his face!
"Now reach thine hand!" the boatman cried, "Lord William, reach and save!"—
The child stretched forth his little hands—to grasp the hand he gave!
Then William shrieked; the hand he touched was cold, and damp, and dead!
He felt young Edmund in his arms! a heavier weight than lead!
"Oh, mercy! help!" Lord William cried, "the waters o'er me flow!"
"No—to a child's expiring cries no mercy didst thou show!"
The boat sunk down, the murderer sunk, beneath the avenging stream;
He rose, he shrieked—no human ear heard William's drowning scream!

XV.—COMBAT BETWEEN FITZ-JAMES AND RODERICK DHU.—Scott.

The Chief in silence strode before, and reached that torrent's sounding shore; and here his course the Chieftain stayed, threw down his target and his plaid, and to the Lowland warrior said:—"Bold Saxon! to his promise just, Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust. This murderous chief, this ruthless man, this head of a rebellious clan, hath led thee safe through watch and ward, far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard. Now man to man, and steel to steel, a Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.

See here, all 'vantageless I stand, armed, like thyself, with single brand; for this is Coilantogle ford, and thou must keep thee with thy sword!"

The Saxon paused:—"I ne'er delayed, when foeman bade me draw my blade; nay, more, brave Chief, I vowed thy death: yet, sure, thy fair and generous faith, and my deep debt for life preserved, a better meed have well deserved:—can nought but blood our feud atone? Are there no means?"—"No, Stranger, none! And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—the Saxon cause rests on thy steel; for thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred between the living and the dead, 'Who spills the foremost foeman's life, his party conquers in the strife.'"

"Then, by my word," the Saxon said, "the riddle is already read. Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff—there lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff. Thus Fate hath solved her prophecy; then yield to Fate, and not to me."

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—"Soars thy presumption then so high, because a wretched kern ye slew, homage to name to Roderick Dhu? he yields not, he, to man—nor Fate! Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—my clansman's blood demands revenge!—Not yet prepared?—Saxon! I change my thought, and hold thy valour light as that of some vain carpet-knight, who ill deserved my courteous care, and whose best boast is but to wear a braid of his fair lady's hair."

"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word! it nerves my heart, it steels my sword; for I have sworn this braid to stain in the best blood that warms thy vein. Now, truce, farewell! and ruth, begone!—yet think not that by thee alone, proud Chief! can courtesy be shown. Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn, start at my whistle clansmen stern, of this small horn one feeble blast would fearful odds against thee cast. But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt;—we try this quarrel hilt to hilt!"—

Then each at once his falchion drew; each on the ground his scabbard threw; each looked to sun, and stream, and plain, as what he ne'er might see again; then foot, and point, and eye opposed, in dubious strife they darkly closed!

Three times in closing strife they stood, and thrice the Saxon blade drank blood; no stinted draught, no scanty tide—the gushing flood the tartans dyed. Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain, and showered his blows like wintry rain; and, as firm rock, or castle roof, against the winter-shower is proof, the foe, invulnerable still, foiled his wild rage by steady skill; till, at advantage ta'en, his brand forced Roderick's weapon from his hand, and, backwards borne upon the lea, brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

"Now, yield thee, or, by Him who made the world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"

"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy! let recreant yield, who fears to die."—

Like adder darting from his coil, like wolf that dashes through the toil, like mountain-cat that guards her young, full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung; received, but recked not of a wound, and locked his arms his foeman round.—Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own! no maiden's arm is round thee thrown! that desperate grasp thy frame might feel, through bars of brass and triple steel!—They tug, they strain!—down, down, they go, the Gael above, Fitz-James below. The Chieftain's grip his throat compressed, his knee was planted on his breast; his clotted locks he backward threw; across his brow his hand he drew, from blood and mist to clear his sight; then gleamed aloft his dagger bright!—But hate and fury ill supplied the stream of life's exhausted tide, and all too late the advantage came to turn the odds of deadly game; for, while the dagger gleamed on high, reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye! Down came the blow! but in the heath the erring blade found bloodless sheath. The struggling foe may now unclasp the fainting Chief's relaxing grasp. Unwounded from the dreadful close, but breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Help! help!—He's gone!——O fearful woe, such screams to hear, such sights to see! My brain, my brain! I know, I know I am not mad—but soon shall be! Yes, soon! for, lo now, while I speak, mark how you demon's eye-balls glare! He sees me!—now with dreadful shriek, he whirls a serpent high in air! Horror! the reptile strikes his tooth deep in my heart, so crushed and sad! Ay, laugh, ye fiends! I feel the truth! your task is done—I'm mad! I'm mad!

XVIII.—NATURE'S GENTLEMAN.—Eliza Cook.

Whom do we dub as gentleman?—the knave, the fool, the brute,
If they but own full purse of gold, and wear a courtly suit!
The parchment scroll of titled line, the ribbon at the knee,
Can still suffice to ratify and grant such high degree:
But Nature, with a matchless hand, sends forth HER nobly born,
And laughs the paltry attributes of wealth and rank to seern;
She moulds with care a spirit rare, half human, half divine,
And cries, exulting, "Who can make a gentleman like mine?"

She may not spend her common skill about the outward part,
But showers her beauty, grace, and light, upon the brain and heart;
She may not choose ancestral fame his pathway to illume—
The sun that sheds the brightest day may rise from mist and gloom:
Should fortune pour her welcome store and useful gold abound,
He shares it with a bounteous hand, and scatters blessings round;
The treasure sent is rightly spent, and serves the end designed,
When held by Nature's gentleman—the good, the just, the kind.

He turns not from the cheerless home where sorrow's offspring dwell;
He'll greet the peasant in his hut—the culprit in his cell;
He stays to hear the widow's plaint of deep and mourning love:
He seeks to aid her lot below, and prompt her faith above:
The orphan child—the friendless one—the luckless, or the poor,
Will never meet his spurning frown, or helpless leave his door;
His kindred circles all mankind—his country all the globe—
An honest name his jewelled star, and truth his ermine robe.

He wisely yields his passions up to reason's firm control;
His pleasures are of crimeless kind, and never taint the soul;
He may be thrown among the gay and reckless sons of life,
But will not love the revel scene, or heed the brawling strife:
He wounds no breast with jeer or jest, yet bears no honeyed tongue;
He's social with the grey-haired one, and merry with the young;
He gravely shares the council-speech, or joins the rustic game,
And shines as Nature's gentleman—in every place the same.

No haughty gesture marks his gait, no pompous tone his word,
No studied attitude is seen, no palling nonsense heard;
He'll suit his bearing to the hour—laugh, listen, learn, or teach;
With joyous freedom in his mirth, and candour in his speech:
He worships God with inward zeal, and serves Him in each deed;
He would not blame another's faith, nor have one martyr bleed:
Justice and Mercy form his code—he puts his trust in Heaven;
His prayer is, "If the heart mean well, may all else be forgiven!"

Though few of such may gem the earth, yet such rare gems there are
Each shining in his hallowed sphere, as Virtue's polar star;
Though human hearts too oft are found all gross, corrupt, and dark,
Yet—yet, some bosoms breathe and burn, lit by Promethean spark:
There are some spirits nobly just, unwarped by pelf or pride,
Great in the calm, but greater still when dashed by adverse tide:
They hold the rank no king can give—no station can disgrace;
Nature puts forth HER gentlemen, and monarchs must give place.

XIX.—THE CONVICT SHIP.—Bryant.

Morn on the waters!—and purple and bright bursts on the billows the flashing of light; o'er the glad waves, like a child of the sun, see the tall vessel goes gallantly on; full to the breeze she unbosoms her sail, and her pennen streams onward, like hope, in the gale. The winds come around her, with murmur and song, and the surges rejoice as they bear her along. See! she looks up to the golden-edged clouds, and the sailor sings gaily aloft in her shrouds; onward she glides, amid ripple and spray, over the waters, away and away! bright, as the visions of youth ere they part, passing away, like a dream of the heart!—Who, as the beautiful pageant sweeps by, music around her and sunshine on high, pauses to think, amid glitter and glow, "Oh! there be hearts that are breaking below!"

Night on the waves!—and the moon is on high, hung like a gem on the brow of the sky; treading its depths in the power of her might, and turning the clouds, as they pass her, to light. Look to the waters! asleep on their breast, seems not the ship like an island of rest,—bright and alone on the shadowy main, like a heart-cherished home on some desolate plain? Who,—as she smiles in the silvery light, spreading her wings on the bosom of night, alone on the deep, as the moon in the sky, a phantom of beauty,—could deem, with a sigh, that so lovely a thing is the mansion of sin, and souls that are smitten lie bursting within! Who, as he watches her silently gliding, remembers, that wave after wave is dividing bosoms that sorrow and guilt could not sever—hearts that are parted, and broken for ever? or dreams that he watches, afloat on the wave, the death-bed of hope, or the young spirit's grave?

'Tis thus with our life: while it passes along, like a vessel at sea, amid sunshine and song, gaily we glide in the gaze of the world, with streamers afloat, and with canvas unfurled; all gladness and glory to wandering eyes—but chartered by sorrow, and freighted with sighs! Fading and false is the aspect it wears, as the smiles we put on just to cover our tears; and the withering thoughts that the world cannot know, like heart-broken exiles, lie burning below; whilst the vessel drives on to that desolate shore, where the dreams of our childhood are vanished and o'er.

XX.—ORANGE AND GREEN.—Gerald Griffin.

The night was falling dreary in merry Bandon town,
When in his cottage weary an Orangeman lay down.
Beside the waters, laving the feet of aged trees,
The Orange banners waving, flew boldly in the breeze—
In mighty chorus meeting, a hundred voices join,
And fife and drum were beating the "Battle of the Boyne."

Ha! toward his cottage hieing, what form is speeding now,
From yonder thicket flying, with blood upon his brow?
"Hide—hide me, worthy stranger, though Green my colour be,
And in the day of danger may Heaven remember thee!
In yonder vale contending alone against that crew,
My life and limbs defending, an Orangeman I slew.
—Hark! hear that fearful warning! there's death in every tone—
Oh, save my life till morning, and Heaven prolong your own."

The Orange heart was melted in pity to the Green;
He heard the tale, and felt it his very soul within.
"Dread not that angry warning, though death be in its tone—
I'll save your life till morning, or I will lose my own."

Now, round his lowly dwelling, the angry torrent pressed
A hundred voices swelling, the Orangeman addressed—
"Arise, arise, and follow the chace along the plain!
In yonder stony hollow your only son is slain!"
With rising shouts they gather upon the track amain,
And leave the childless father aghast with sudden pain.

He seeks the righted stranger in covert where he lay—
"Arise!" he said, "all danger is gone and passed away!
I had a son—one only, one lovèd as my life,
Thy hand has left me lonely, in that accursed strife.
I pledged my word to save thee until the storm should cease,
I keep the pledge I gave thee—arise, and go in peace!"

The stranger soon departed from that unhappy vale;
The father, broken-hearted, lay brooding o'er the tale.
Full twenty summers after, to silver turned his beard;
And yet the sound of laughter from him was never heard.

* * * *

The night was falling dreary in merry Wexford town,
When in his cabin weary, a peasant laid him down.
Beside the waters, laving the feet of aged trees,
The Green flag, gaily waving, was spread against the breeze—
In mighty chorus meeting loud voices filled the town,
And fife and drum were beating, "Down, Orangeman, lie down."

Hark! 'mid the stirring clangour that woke the echoes there,
Loud voices, high in anger, rise on the evening air.
Like billows of the ocean, he sees them hurry on—
And, 'mid the wild commotion, an Orangeman alone.
"My hair,' he said, "is hoary, and feeble is my hand,
And I could tell a story would shame your cruel band.
Full twenty years and over have changed my heart and brow,
And I am grown a lover of peace and concord now.
It was not thus I greeted your brother of the Green,
When fainting and defeated I freely took him in.
I pledged my word to save him from vengeance rushing on,
I kept the pledge I gave him, though he had killed my son."

That aged peasant heard him, and knew him as he stood,
Remembrance kindly stirred him, and tender gratitude.
With gushing tears of pleasure, he pierced the listening train,
"I'm here to pay the measure of kindness back again!"
Upon his bosom falling, the old man's tears came down;
Deep memory recalling that cot and fatal town.
"The hand that would offend thee, my being first shall end;
I'm living to defend thee, my saviour and my friend!"
He said, and slowly turning, addressed the wondering crowd;
With fervent spirit burning, he told the tale aloud.
Now pressed the warm beholders their aged foe to greet:
They raised him on their shoulders and chaired him through the street.

As he had saved that stranger, from peril scowling dim,
So in his day of danger did Heaven remember him.
By joyous crowds attended, the worthy pair were seen,
And their flags that day were blended, of Orange and of Green.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Fret not with that impatient hoof—snuff not the breezy wind;
The farther that thou fliest now, so far am I behind;
The stranger hath thy bridle-rein, thy master hath his gold;—
Fleet-limbed and beautiful, farewell!—thou'rt sold, my steed, thou'rt sold!

Farewell!—Those free untired limbs full many a mile must roam,
To reach the chill and wintry clime that clouds the stranger's home;
Some other hand, less kind, must now thy corn and bed prepare:
That silky mane I braided once, must be another's care.

The morning sun shall dawn again—but never more with thee
Shall I gallop o'er the desert paths where we were wont to be—
Evening shall darken on the earth; and, o'er the sandy plain,
Some other steed, with slower pace, shall bear me home again.

Only in sleep shall I behold that dark eye glancing bright—
Only in sleep shall hear again that step so firm and light;
And when I raise my dreaming arms to check or cheer thy speed,
Then must I startling wake, to feel thou'rt sold! my Arab steed.

Ah! rudely then, unseen by me, some cruel hand may chide,
Till foam-wreaths lie, like crested waves, along thy panting side,
And the rich blood that's in thee swells, in thy indignant pain,
Till careless eyes that on thee gaze may count each starting vein!

Will they ill use thee?—if I thought—but no,—it cannot be;
Thou art so swift, yet easy curbed, so gentle, yet so free;—
And yet if haply when thou'rt gone, this lonely heart should yearn,
Can the hand that casts thee from it now, command thee to return?

"Return!"—alas! my Arab steed! what will thy master do,
When thou, that wast his all of joy, hast vanished from his view?
When the dim distance greets mine eyes, and through the gathering tears
Thy bright form for a moment, like the false mirage, appears?

Slow and unmounted will I roam, with wearied foot, alone,
Where, with fleet step, and joyous bound, thou oft hast borne me on;
And sitting down by the green well, I'll pause, and sadly think,—
"'Twas here he bowed his glossy neck when last I saw him drink."

When last I saw thee drink!—Away! the fevered dream is o'er!
I could not live a day, and know that we should meet no more;
They tempted me, my beautiful! for hunger's power is strong—
They tempted me, my beautiful! but I have loved too long.

Who said that I had given thee up? Who said that thou wert sold?
'Tis false! 'tis false! my Arab steed! I fling them back their gold!
Thus—thus, I leap upon thy back, and scour the distant plains!
Away! who overtakes us now shall claim thee for his pains.

XXIII.—THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.—Lord Byron.

Alas!—it is a fearful thing to see the human soul take wing in any shape, in any mood!—I've seen it rushing forth in blood; I've seen it on the breaking ocean, strive with a swoln convulsive motion; I've seen the sick and ghastly bed of Sin, delirious with its dread; but these were horrors; this was woe unmixed with such—but sure and slow. He faded, and so calm and meek, so softly worn, so sweetly weak, so tearless, yet so tender—kind, and grieved for those he left behind; with all the while a cheek whose bloom was as a mockery of the tomb,—whose tints as

gently sunk away as a departing rainbow's ray;—an eye of most transparent light, that almost made the dungeon bright; and not a word of murmur—not a groan o'er his untimely lot;—a little talk of better days, a little hope my own to raise, for I was sunk in silence—lost in this last loss, of all the most; and then the sighs he would suppress of fainting nature's feebleness, more slowly drawn grew less and less: I listened, but I could not hear;—I called, for I was wild with fear; I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread would not be thus admonishéd; I called, and thought I heard a sound. I burst my chain with one strong bound, and rushed to him:—I found him not! I only stirred in this black spot—I only lived—I only drew the accursed breath of dungeon-dew! The last—the sole—the dearest link between me and the eternal brink, which bound me to my failing race, was broken in this fatal place. One on the earth, and one beneath!—my brothers—both had ceased to breathe! I took that hand which lay so still—alas! my own was full as chill! I had not strength to stir, or strive, but felt that I was still alive—a frantic feeling, when we know that what we love shall ne'er be so. I know not why I could not die! I had no earthly hope—but faith, and that forbade a selfish death.——What next hefel me then and there, I know not well—I never knew:—first, came the loss of light and air, and then of darkness too; I had no thought, no feeling—none:—among the stones I stood a stone.

A light broke in upon my brain—it was the carol of a bird; it ceased—and then it came again—the sweetest song ear ever heard! and mine was thankful, till my eyes ran over with the glad surprise; and they that moment could not see I was the mate of misery: but then, by dull degrees, came back my senses to their wonted track; I saw the dungeon walls and floor close slowly round me as before—I saw the glimmer of the sun creeping as it before had done:—but through the crevice where it came, that bird was perched!—as fond and tame, and tamer than upon the tree; a lovely bird with azure wings, and song that said a thousand things, and seemed to say them all for me! I never saw its like before, I ne'er shall see its likeness more: it seemed like me to want a mate, but was not half so desolate; and it was come to love me, when none lived to love me so again; and cheering from my dungeon's brink, had brought me back to feel and think. I know not if it late were free, or broke its cage to perch on mine; but knowing well captivity, sweet bird! I could not wish for thine! Or if it were, in wingèd guise, a visitant from Paradise; for—Heaven forgive that thought! the while which made me both to weep and smile—I sometimes deemed that it might be my brother's soul come down to me: But then at last away it flew, and then 'twas mortal—well I knew! for he would never thus have flown, and left me twice so doubly lone:—lone, as the corse within its shroud; lone, as a solitary cloud; a single cloud on a sunny day, while all the rest of heaven is clear;—a frown upon the atmosphere, that has no business to appear when skies are blue and earth is gay.

XXIV.—THE LAMENT OF THE IRISH EMIGRANT.

Lady Dufferin.

I'm sitting on the stile, Mary, where we sat side by side,
On a bright May morning, long ago, when first you were my bride.
The corn was springing fresh and green, and the lark sang loud and high,
And the red was on your lip, Mary, and the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary, the day is bright as then,
The lark's loud song is in my ear, and the corn is green again!
But I miss the soft clasp of your hand, and your breath warm on my cheek;
And I still keep listening for the words. you never more may speak!

'Tis but a step down yonder lane, and the little church stands near,
The church where we were wed, Mary—I see the spire from here:
But the grave-yard lies between, Mary, and my step might break your rest;
For I've laid you, darling, down to sleep, with your baby on your breast.

I'm very lonely now, Mary, for the poor make no new friends:
But, oh, they love the better far, the few our Father sends!
And you were all I had, Mary, my blessing and my pride;—
There's nothing left to care for now, since my poor Mary died!

Yours was the brave good heart, Mary, that still kept hoping on,
When the trust in God had left my soul, and my arm's young strength was gone:
There was comfort ever on your lip, and the kind look on your brow;
I bless you for the same, Mary, though you cannot hear me now!

I thank you for the patient smile, when your heart was like to break,
When the hunger-pain was gnawing there, and you hid it for my sake!
I bless you for the pleasant word, when your heart was sad and sore;
Oh! I'm thankful you are gone, Mary, where grief can sting no more.

I'm bidding you a long farewell, my Mary, kind and true,
But I'll not forget you, darling, in the land I'm going to:
They say there's bread and work for all, and the sun shines always there;
But I'll not forget Old Ireland, were it fifty times as fair!

And often, in those grand old woods, I'll sit and shut my eyes,
And my heart will travel back again to the place where Mary lies;
And I'll think I see that little stile where we sat side by side,
And the springing corn, and the bright May morn, when first you were my bride!

XXV.—BATTLE OF FLODDEN FIELD, AND DEATH OF MARMION.—Scott.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still with Lady Clare upon the hill; on which (for far the day was spent,) the western sunbeams now were bent. The cry they heard—its meaning knew, could plain their distant comrades view. Sadly to Blount did Eustace say, "No hope of gilded spurs to-day!"

But lo! straight up the hill there rode two horsemen, drenched with gore; and in their arms, a helpless load, a wounded Knight they bore. His hand still strained the broken brand; his arms were smeared with blood and sand; dragged from among the horses' feet, with dinted shield, and helmet beat—the falcon-crest and plumage gone——can that be haughty Marmion!

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air, around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:—"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where? Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare? Redeem my pennon,—charge again! Cry—'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!—last of my race, on battle-plain that shout shall ne'er be heard again!—Yet my last thought is England's:—fly—to Dacre bear my signet-ring, tell him his squadrons up to bring. Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie! Let Stanley charge with spur of fire, with Chester charge, and Lancashire, full upon Scotland's central host, or victory and England's lost. Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets, fly! leave Marmion here alone—to die."

They parted—and alone he lay: Clare drew her from the sight away,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land!
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand:
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living Power who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre!

The king is come to marshal us, all in his armour drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled, from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, "Long live our lord the King."—
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may—
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray—
Press where you see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of war
And be your oriflamme, to-day, the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving! Hark to the mingled din
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin!
The fiery Duke is speeding fast across Saint André's plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
"Now, by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge—for the golden lilies now—upon them with the lance!"
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;
And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre.

Now, Heaven be praised, the day is ours! Mayenne hath turned his rein
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish Count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail
And then we thought on vengeance; and all along our van
"Remember St Bartholomew!" was passed from man to man;
But out spake gentle Henry, "No Frenchman is my foe:
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go."
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre!

Ho! maidens of Vienna! Ho! matrons of Lucerne!
Weep, weep, and rend your hair, for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls!
Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright!
Ho! burghers of St Genevieve, keep watch and ward to night!
For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God hath raised the slave,
And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the valour of the brave.—
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of Navarre!

XXVII.—MARY, THE MAID OF THE INN.—Southey.

Who is she—the poor Maniac, whose wildly-fixed eyes seem a heart overcharged to express? She weeps not, yet often and deeply she sighs; she never complains, but her silence implies the composure of settled

distress. No aid, no compassion, the Maniac will seek, cold and hunger awake not her care; through her rags do the winds of the winter blow bleak on her poor withered bosom, half bare; and her cheek has the deadly, pale hue of despair. Yet cheerful and happy (nor distant the day,) poor Mary the Maniac hath been; the traveller remembers, who journeyed this way, no damsel so lovely, no damsel so gay, as Mary, the Maid of the Inn. Her cheerful address filled the guests with delight, as she welcomed them in with a smile; her heart was a stranger to childish affright; and Mary would walk by the Abbey at night, when the wind whistled down the dark aisle.—She loved, and young Richard had settled the day, and she hoped to be happy for life; but Richard was idle and worthless, and they who knew him would pity poor Mary, and say, that she was too good for his wife.

'Twas in autumn; and stormy and dark was the night, and fast were the windows and door; two guests sat enjoying the fire that burned bright; and smoking in silence, with tranquil delight they listened to hear the wind roar. "'Tis pleasant," cried one, "seated by the fire-side, to hear the wind whistle without." "What a night for the Abbey!" his comrade replied; "methinks a man's courage would now be well tried, who should wander the ruins about. I myself, like a school-boy, should tremble to hear the hoarse ivy shake over my head; and could fancy I saw, half-persuaded by fear, some ugly old abbot's grim spirit appear—for this wind might awaken the dead!" "I'll wager a dinner," the other one cried, "that Mary will venture there now." "Then wager, and lose," with a sneer he replied, "I'll warrant she'd fancy a ghost by her side, and faint if she saw a white cow." "Will Mary this charge on her courage allow?" his companion exclaimed with a smile; "I shall win, for I know she will venture there now, and earn a new bonnet by bringing a bough from the elder that grows in the aisle."

With fearless good-humour did Mary comply, and her way to the Abbey she bent; the night it was gloomy, the wind it was high, and, as hollowly howling it swept through the sky, she shivered with cold as she went. O'er the path, so well known, still proceeded the Maid, where the Abbey rose dim on the sight; through the gateway she entered—she felt not afraid; yet the ruins were lonely and wild, and their shade seemed to deepen the gloom of the night. All around her was silent, save when the rude blast howled dismally round the old pile; over weed-covered fragments, still fearless she passed, and arrived at the innermost ruin at last, where the elder-tree grew in the aisle. Well pleased did she reach it, and quickly drew near, and hastily gathered the bough—when the sound of a voice seemed to rise on her ear!—she paused—and she listened, all eager to hear—and her heart panted fearfully now!—The wind blew, the hoarse ivy shook over her head; she listened;—nought else could she hear. The wind ceased:—her heart sank in her bosom with dread, for she heard in the ruins, distinctly, the tread of footsteps approaching her near! Behind a wide column, half breathless with fear, she crept, to conceal herself there; that instant the moon o'er a dark cloud shone clear, and she saw in the moonlight two ruffians appear, and between them a corpse did they bear. Then Mary could feel her heart's blood curdle cold! Again the rough wind hurried by—it blew off the hat of the one, and behold! even close to the feet of poor Mary it rolled; she fell—and expected to die! "Stay!—the hat!" he exclaims,—"Nay, come on, and fast hide the dead body," his comrade replies. She beholds them in safety pass on by her side—she seizes the hat—fear her courage supplied, and fast through the Abbey she flies. She ran with wild speed, she rushed in at the door, she cast her eyes horribly round; her limbs could support their faint burden no more, but exhausted and breathless she sank on the floor, unable to utter a sound. Ere yet her pale lips could the story impart, for a moment the hat met her view; her eyes from that object convul-

sively start, for, alas! what cold horror thrilled through her heart, when the name of her Richard she knew!

Where the old Abbey stands, on the common hard by, his gibbet is now to be seen; not far from the road it engages the eye: the traveller beholds it, and thinks, with a sigh, of poor Mary, the Maid of the Inn.

XXVIII.—THE SACK OF BALTIMORE.—Thomas Davis.

The summer's sun is falling soft on Carb'ry's hundred isles—
The summer's sun is gleaming still through Gabriel's rough defiles—
Old Inisherkin's crumbled fane looks like a moulting bird;
And in a calm and sleepy swell the ocean tide is heard:
The hookers lie upon the beach; the children cease their play;
The gossips leave the little inn; the households kneel to pray:—
And full of love, and peace, and rest—its daily labour o'er—
Upon that cosy creek there lay the town of Baltimore.

A deeper rest, a starry trance, has come with midnight there;
No sound, except that throbbing wave, in earth, or sea, or air.
The massive capes and ruined towers seem conscious of the calm;
The fibrous sod and stunted trees are breathing heavy balm.
So still the night, these two long barques, round Dunashad that glide,
Must trust their oars—methinks not few—against the ebbing tide.
Oh! some sweet mission of true love must urge them to the shore—
They bring some lover to his bride, who sighs in Baltimore!

All, all asleep within each roof along that rocky street,
And these must be the lover's friends, with gently gliding feet—
—A stifled gasp! a dreamy noise! "The roof is in a flame!"
From out their beds, and to their doors, rush maid, and sire, and dame—
And meet, upon the threshold-stone, the gleaming sabres' fall,
And o'er each black and bearded face the white or crimson shawl—
The yell of "Allah" breaks above the prayer, and shriek, and roar—
Oh, fearful fate! the Algerine is lord of Baltimore!

Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword;
Then sprung the mother on the brand with which her son was gored;
Then sunk the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching wild;
Then fled the maiden moaning faint, and nestled with the child;—
But see, yon pirate strangled lies, and crushed with splashing heel,
While o'er him in an Irish hand there sweeps his Syrian steel!—
Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their store,
There's ONE hearth well avenged in the sack of Baltimore!

"Oh! some must tug the galley's oar, and some must tend the steed—
This boy will bear a Schiek's chibouk, and that a Bey's jerreed;
Oh! some are for the arsenals, by beauteous Dardanelles;
And some are for the caravan to Mecca's sandy dells.
The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Dey"—
—She's safe—she's dead—she stabbed him in the midst of his Serai;
And waen to die a death of fire that noble maid they bore,
She only smiled—O'Driscol's child—she thought of Baltimore!

'Tis two long years since sunk the town beneath that bloody band,
And now around its trampled hearths a larger concourse stand,
Where high upon the gallows tree, a yelling wretch is seen—
'Tis Hackett of Dungarvan—he who steered the Algerine!
He fell amid a sullen shout, with scarce a passing prayer,
For he had slain the kith and kin of many a hundred there:
Some muttered of MacMorrogh, who had brought the Norman o'er—
Some cursed him with Iscariot, that day in Baltimore!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

"Hark! how the sign-board creaks! The blast howls by!
Moan!—Moan!—A dirge swells through the cloudy sky!
Ha! 'tis his knock! he comes!—he comes once more—
—'Tis but the lattice flaps! Thy hope is o'er!

"Can he desert me thus? He knows I stay
Night after night in loneliness to pray
For his return—and yet he sees no tear!
No! no! it cannot be. He will be here.

"Nestle more closely, dear one, to my heart!
Thou'rt cold! thou'rt freezing! But we will not part.
Husband!—I die!—Father!—It is not he!
Oh Heaven! protect my child!"—The clock strikes three.

They're gone! they're gone! The glimmering spark hath fled,
The wife and child are numbered with the dead!
On the cold hearth, out-stretched in solemn rest
The child lies frozen on its mother's breast!
—The gambler came at last—but all was o'er—
Dead silence reigned around—he groaned—he spoke no more!

XXXI.—LOVE (A TALE.)—COLERIDGE.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights, whatever stirs this mortal frame, are all but ministers of Love, and feed his sacred flame. Oft in my waking dreams do I live o'er again that happy hour, when midway on the mount I lay, beside the ruined tower. The moonshine stealing o'er the scene, had blended with the light of eve; and she was there, my hope, my joy, my own dear Genevieve! She leaned against the armèd man, the statue of the armèd knight: she stood and listened to my lay, amid the lingering light. Few sorrows hath she of her own, my hope! my joy! my Genevieve! She loves me best whene'er I sing the songs that make her grieve.——I played a soft and doleful air; I sang an old and moving story—an old rude song, that suited well that ruin, wild and hoary. She listened with a flitting blush, with downcast eyes and modest grace; for well she knew, I could not choose but gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore upon his shield a burning brand; and that for ten long years he wooed the Lady of the land. I told her how he pined: and ah! the deep, the low, the pleading tone, with which I sang another's love, interpreted my own. She listened with a flitting blush, with downcast eyes and modest grace; and she forgave me that I gazed too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn, that crazed the bold and lovely Knight; and that he crossed the mountain-woods, nor rested day nor night; that sometimes from the savage den, and sometimes from the darksome shade, and sometimes starting up at once in green and sunny glade, there came and looked him in the face an Angel beautiful and bright, and that he knew it was a Fiend, this miserable knight!—and that, unknowing what he did, he leaped amid a murderous band, and saved from outrage worse than death, the Lady of the land!—and how she wept and clasped his knees, and how she tended him in vain, and ever strove to expiate the scorn that crazed his brain; and that she nursed him in a cave; and how his madness went away, when on the yellow forest-leaves, a dying man he lay; his dying words——But when I reached that tenderest strain of all the ditty, my faltering voice and pausing harp disturbed her soul with pity.

All impulses of soul and sense, had thrilled my guileless Genevieve; the music, and the doleful tale, the rich and balmy eve: and hopes, and tears that kindle hope, an undistinguishable throng; and gentle wishes

long subdued—subdued and cherished long. She wept with pity and delight, she blushed with love and virgin shame; and, like the murmur of a dream, I heard her breathe my name. Her bosom heaved—she stept aside,—as conscious of my look she stept;—then suddenly, with timorous eye, she fled to me and wept. She half enclosed me with her arms; she pressed me with a meek embrace; and, bending back her head, looked up, and gazed upon my face. 'Twas partly love—'twas partly fear—and partly 'twas a bashful art, that I might rather feel than see the swelling of her heart. I calmed her fears; and she was calm, and told her love with virgin pride;—and so I won my Genevieve, my bright and beauteous bride!

XXXII.—THE BATTLE OF ALBUERA.—Byron.

Hark! heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note? sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath? saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote,—nor saved your brethren, ere they sank beneath tyrants, and tyrants' slaves?—The fires of death, the balefires, flash on high;—from rock to rock each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe; Death rides upon the sulphury siroc; red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock!——Lo! where the Giant on the mountain stands! his blood-red tresses deepening in the sun; with death-shot glowing in his fiery hands, and eye that scorcheth all it glares upon: restless it rolls; now fixed, and now anon, flashing afar,—and, at his iron feet, Destruction cowers to mark what deeds are done; for, on this morn, three potent nations meet, to shed, before his shrine, the blood he deems most sweet.

And is it not a splendid sight to see—for one who hath no friend or brother there—their rival scarfs of mixed embroidery, their various arms that glitter in the air! What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair, and gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey! All join the chace, but few the triumph share; the Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away—and Havoc scarce for joy can number their array!—Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice; three tongues prefer strange orisons on high; three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies; the shouts are—"France"—"Spain"—"Albion"—"Victory!" The foe, the victim, and the fond ally that fights for all, but ever fights in vain, are met—as if at home they could not die!—to feed the crow on Talavera's plain, and fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

There shall they rot—Ambition's honoured tools! Yes—Honour decks the turf that wraps their clay! Vain sophistry! in these behold the tools,—the broken tools,—that tyrants cast away by myriads, when they dare to pave their way with human hearts—to what?—a dream alone. Can despots compass aught that hails their sway? or call, with truth, one span of earth their own—save that, wherein, at last, they crumble bone by bone?

XXXIII.—THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.—Byron.

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust! An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!—Is the spot marked with no colossal bust, or column trophied, for triumphal show? None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so. As the ground was before, thus let it be.—How that red rain—hath made the harvest grow!...And is this all the world has gained by thee, thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

There was a sound of revelry by night: and Belgium's capital had gathered then her Beauty and her Chivalry; and bright the lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men; a thousand hearts beat happily; and when music arose with its voluptuous swell, soft eyes looked love to eyes that spake again, and all went merry as a marriage-bell—But hush!—hark! A deep sound strikes like a rising knell!—Did ye not hear it?—"No: 'tis but the wind, or the car rattling o'er the stony street. On with the dance!—let joy be unconfined! No sleep till morn, when Youth and

Pleasure meet to chase the glowing hours with flying feet."—But hark! —that heavy sound breaks in once more, as if the clouds its echo would repeat; and nearer, clearer, deadlier than before! Arm! arm! it is—it is —the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall sat Brunswick's fated chieftain: he did hear that sound the first amidst the festival, and caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear; and when they smiled because he deemed it near, his heart more truly knew that peal too well which stretched his father on a bloody bier, and roused the vengeance blood alone could quell: he rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell! Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro, and gathering tears, and tremblings of distress, and cheeks all pale, which, but an hour ago, blushed at the praise of their own loveliness; and there were sudden partings, such as press the life from out young hearts, and choking sighs which ne'er might be repeated: who could guess if ever more should meet those mutual eyes, since, upon night so sweet, such awful morn could rise! And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed, the mustering squadron, and the clattering car, went pouring forward with impetuous speed, and swiftly forming in the ranks of war: and the deep thunder, peal on peal, afar; and near, the beat of the alarming drum roused up the soldier ere the morning star: while thronged the citizens, with terror dumb, or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! they come! they come!" And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose! (the war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's bills have heard—and heard, too, have her Saxon foes!)—How, in the noon of night, that pibroch thrills, savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills their mountain pipe, so fill the mountaineers with the fierce native daring, which instils the stirring memory of a thousand years: and Evan's, Donald's fame, rings in each clansman's ears! And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves, dewy with Nature's tear-drops; as they pass, grieving—if aught inanimate e'er grieves—over the unreturning brave;—alas! ere evening, to be trodden, like the grass—which now beneath them, but above shall grow in its next verdure; when this fiery mass of living valour, rolling on the foe, and burnin with high hope, shall moulder cold and low!

Last noon, beheld them full of lusty life; last eve, in Beauty's circle proudly gay; the midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,—the morn, the marshalling in arms,—the day, battle's magnificently stern array! The thunder-clouds close o'er it: which when rent, the earth is covered thick with other clay which her own clay shall cover—heaped and pent; rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

XXXIV.—THE SONG OF THE SHIRT.—Hood.

With fingers weary and worn, with eye-lids heavy and red,
A Woman sat, in unwomanly rags, plying her needle and thread:
Stitch! stitch! stitch! in poverty, hunger, and dirt;
And still, with a voice of dolorous pitch, she sang the "Song of the Shirt."

"Work! work! work! while the cock is crowing aloof!
And work—work—work, till the stars shine through the roof!
It's O! to be a slave along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save, if this is Christian work!

"Wrk—work—work—till the brain begins to swim;
Work—work—work—till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band—band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep, and sew them on in a dream!

"O! Men, with Sisters dear! O! Men with Mothers and Wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out, but human creatures' lives!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

innocently brave, I will wrestle with the wave. Lo! Commerce spreads the daring sail, and yokes her naval chariots to the gale. Blow, ye breezes!——gently blowing, waft me to that happy shore, where, from fountains ever flowing, Indian realms their treasures pour: thence returning, poor in health, rich in honesty and wealth, o'er thee, my dear paternal soil, I'll strew the golden harvest of my toil. Then shall Misery's sons and daughters in their lonely dwellings sing: bounteous as the Nile's dark waters, undiscover'd as their spring, I will scatter o'er the and blessings with a sacred hand: for such angelic tasks design'd, I give the Lyre and sorrow to the wind."

On an oak, whose branches hoary sigh'd to every passing breeze, sigh'd and told the simple story of the patriarch of trees, high in air his harp he hung, now no more to rapture strung; then warm in hope, no longer pale, he blush'd adieu, and rambled down the dale. Lightly touch'd by fairy fingers, hark!—the Lyre enchants the wind; fond Alcæus listens, lingers; lingering, listening, looks behind. Now the music mounts on high, sweetly swelling through the sky; to every tune, with tender heat, his heart-strings vibrate and his pulses beat. Now the strains to silence stealing, soft in ecstacies expire; oh! with what romantic feeling fond Alcæus grasps the Lyre! Lo! his furious hand he flings, in a tempest o'er the strings; he strikes the chords so quick, so loud, 'tis Jove that scatters lightning from a cloud.

"Lyre! O Lyre! my chosen treasure, solace of my bleeding heart: Lyre! O Lyre! my only pleasure, we will never, never part. Glory, Commerce, now in vain tempt me to the field, the main; the Muse's sons are blest, though born to cold neglect, and penury, and scorn. What though all the world neglect me, shall my haughty soul repine? and shall poverty deject me, while this hallow'd Lyre is mine? Heaven ——that o'er my helpless head many a wrathful vial shed——Heaven gave this Lyre!——and thus decreed 'Be thou a BRUISED, but not a BROKEN reed.'"

XXXVI.—WITHIN AND WITHOUT.—PROCTOR.

The winds are bitter—the skies are wild; from the roof comes plunging the drowning rain; WITHOUT, in tatters, the world's poor child sobbeth aloud her grief, her pain. No one heareth her, no one heedeth her; but Hunger her friend, with his bony hand, grasps her throat, whispering huskily, "What dost thou in a Christian land?"

The skies are wild, and the blast is cold, yet riot and luxury brawl WITHIN; slaves are waiting in crimson and gold, waiting the nod of a child of sin. The fire is crackling—wine is bubbling up in each glass to its beaded brim; the jesters are laughing, the parasites quaffing "Happiness!" "Honour!"——and all for him!

He who yon lordly feast enjoyeth, he who doth rest on his couch of down, he it was who threw the forsaken under the feet of the trampling town. Liar! betrayer! false as cruel! what is the doom for his dastard sin? His peers, they scorn? high dames, they shun him?——Unbar yon palace, and gaze within. There, yet, his deeds are all trumpet-sounded—there, upon silken seats, recline maidens as fair as the summer morning, watching him rise from the sparkling wine: mothers all proffer their stainless daughters; men of high honour salute him "Friend!"——Skies! oh, where are your cleansing waters! World! oh, where do thy wonders end!

XXXVII.—CHILDHOOD AND MANHOOD.—CRABBE.

'Twas eight o'clock, and near the fire my ruddy little boy was seated,
And with the title of a sire, my ears expected to be greeted:—
But vain the thought: by sleep oppress'd, his father was not then descried;
His head reclin'd upon his breast, or, nodding, roll'd from side to side.

"Let this young rogue be sent to bed!"—nought further had I time to say,
When the poor urchin raised his head, to beg that he might longer stay.
Refused, towards rest his steps he bent, with tearful eye and aching heart;
But claim'd his playthings as he went, and took up stairs his horse and cart.

For new delay, though oft denied, he pleaded; wildly craved the boon:
Though 'twas his usual hour, he cried at being sent away so soon.
If stern to him, his grief I shared; (unmoved, who hears his offspring weep?)
Of soothing him I half despaired; but soon his cares were lost in sleep.

"Alas! poor infant!" I exclaimed; "thy father blushes now to scan,
In all that he so lately blamed, the follies and the fears of man.
The vain regret, the anguish brief, which thou hast known, sent up to bed,
Portrays of man the idle grief, when doomed to slumber with the dead."

And more I thought; when, up the stairs, with "longing, lingering looks" he crept,
To mark of man the childish cares, his playthings carefully he kept.
Thus mortals, on life's later stage, when Nature claims their forfeit breath,
Still grasp at wealth in pain and age, and cling to golden toys in death.

'Tis morn: and see, my smiling boy awakes to hail returning light,
To fearless laughter, boundless joy:—forgot the tears of yesternight!
Thus shall not man forget his woe? survive of age and death the gloom?
Smile at the cares he knew below? and, renovated, burst the tomb?

O, my Creator! when Thy will shall stretch this frame on earth's cold bed,
Let that blest hope sustain me still, till thought, sense, memory, all—are fled:
And, grateful for what Thou may'st give, no tear shall dim my fading eye;
For, 'twas Thy pleasure I should live, and 'tis Thy mandate bids me die.

XXXVIII.—ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.—GRAY.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day, the lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea, the ploughman homeward plods his weary way, and leaves the world to darkness and to me. Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight, and all the air a solemn stillness holds, save where the beetle wheels his droning flight, and drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds: save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower, the moping owl does to the moon complain of such as, wandering near her secret bower, molest her ancient solitary reign. Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade, where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap, —each in his narrow cell for ever laid,—the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep. The breezy call of incense-breathing morn, the swallow twittering from the straw-built shed, the cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn, no more shall rouse them from their lowly bed. For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn, or busy housewife ply her evening care; no children run to lisp their sire's return, or climb his knees the envied kiss to share. Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield, their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke: how jocund did they drive their team a-field! how how'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke! Let not Ambition mock their useful toil, their homely joys and destiny obscure; nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile, the short and simple annals of the poor. The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, and all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave, await alike the inevitable hour: the paths of glory lead but to the grave. Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the

fault, if Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise, where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault, the pealing anthem swells the note of praise. Can storied urn, or animated bust, back to its mansion call the fleeting breath? Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust, or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death? Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid some heart once pregnant with celestial fire; hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd, or waked to ecstasy the living lyre: but Knowledge to their eyes her ample page, rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll; chill Penury repress'd their noble rage, and froze the genial current of the soul. Full many a gem of purest ray serene the dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear: full many a flower is born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air. Some village Hampden, that, with dauntless breast, the little tyrant of his fields withstood; some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest, some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood. The applause of listening senates to command, the threats of pain and ruin to despise, to scatter plenty o'er a smiling land, and read their history in a nation's eyes, their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone their growing virtues, but their crimes confined; forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne, and shut the gates of mercy on mankind; the struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide; to quench the blushes of ingenuous shame; or heap the shrine of luxury and pride, with incense kindled at the Muses' flame. Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife, (their sober wishes never learn'd to stray,) along the cool sequester'd vale of life they kept the noiseless tenor of their way. Yet even these bones from insult to protect, some frail memorial still erected nigh, with uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd, implores the passing tribute of a sigh. Their names, their years, spelt by the unletter'd Muse, the place of fame and elegy supply; and many a holy text around she strews, that teach the rustic moralist to die. For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey, this pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd; left the warm precincts of the cheerful day, nor cast one longing, lingering look behind? On some fond breast the parting soul relies, some pious drops the closing eye requires; even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries; even in our ashes live their wonted fires.——For thee, who, mindful of the unhonour'd dead, dost in these lines their artless tale relate; if chance, by lonely contemplation led, some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate, haply some hoary-headed swain may say, "Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn, brushing, with hasty steps, the dews away, to meet the sun upon the upland lawn. There, at the foot of yonder nodding beech, that wreathes its old fantastic roots so high, his listless length at noontide would he stretch, and pore upon the brook that babbles by. Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn, muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove; now drooping, woful, wan, like one forlorn, or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love. One morn I miss'd him on the accustom'd hill, along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree; another came; nor yet beside the rill, nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he. The next, with dirges due, in sad array, slow through the church-way path we saw him borne: approach, and read (for thou canst read) the lay grav'd on the stone, beneath yon aged thorn:"——

The Epitaph.

Here rests his head, upon the lap of earth, a youth, to fortune and to fame unknown: fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth, and Melancholy mark'd him for her own. Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere; Heaven did a recompense as largely send: he gave to Misery all he had—a tear; he gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend. No farther seek his merits to disclose, or draw his frailties from their dread abode, (there they alike in trembling hope repose,) the bosom of his Father and his God.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XL.—THE COLLIER'S DYING CHILD.—Farmer.

The cottage was a thatched one, its outside old and mean;
Yet everything within that cot was wondrous neat and clean:
The night was dark and stormy,—the wind was blowing wild;—
A patient mother sat beside the death-bed of her child,—
A little, worn-out creature—his once bright eyes grown dim:
It was a Collier's only child—they called him "Little Jim."

And oh! to see the briny tears fast flowing down her cheek,
As she offered up a prayer in thought!—she was afraid to speak,
Lest she might waken one she loved far dearer than her life;
For she had all a mother's heart, that wretched Collier's wife.
With hands uplifted, see, she kneels beside the sufferer's bed,
And prays that God will spare her boy, and take herself instead:
She gets her answer from the child—soft fall these words from him—
"Mother! the angels do so smile, and beckon Little Jim!

"I have no pain, dear mother, now; but, oh! I am so dry:
"Just moisten poor Jim's lips once more; and, mother, do not cry!"
With gentle, trembling haste, she held a tea-cup to his lips—
He smiled to thank her—then he took three little tiny sips.
"Tell father, when he comes from work, I said 'goodnight!' to him;
"And, mother, now I'll go to sleep."……Alas! poor Little Jim!
She saw that he was dying! The child she loved so dear,
Had utter'd the last words she'd ever wish to hear.

The cottage door is opened—the Collier's step is heard;
The father and the mother meet, but neither speak a word:
He felt that all was over—he knew the child was dead!
He took the candle in his hand, and stood beside the bed:
His quivering lip gave token of the grief he'd fain conceal;
And see, the mother joins him!—the stricken couple kneel;
With hearts bowed down by sorrow, they humbly ask, of Him
In heaven, once more that they may meet their own poor "Little Jim!"

XLI.—JUGURTHA IN PRISON.—C. Wolfe.

Well—is the rack prepared—the pincers heated? Where is the scourge? How!—not employed in Rome? We have them in Numidia. Not in Rome? I'm sorry for it; I could enjoy them now—I might have felt them yesterday; but now, now I have seen my funeral procession: the chariot-wheels of Marius have rolled o'er me—his horses' hoofs have trampled me in triumph—I have attained that terrible consummation my soul could stand aloof, and from on high look down upon the ruins of my body, smiling in apathy!—I feel no longer—I challenge Rome to give another pang!

Gods! how he smiled, when he beheld me pause before his car, and scowl upon the mob! The curse of Rome was burning on my lips; and I had gnawed my chain, and hurled it at him—but that I knew he would have smiled again!—A king, and led before the gaudy Marius! before those shouting masters of the world—as if I had been conquered! while each street, each peopled wall, and each insulting window, pealed forth their brawling triumphs o'er my head.—Oh! for a lion from thy woods, Numidia!—Or had I, in that moment of disgrace, enjoyed the freedom but of yonder slave, I would have made my monument in Rome! Yet am I not that fool,—that Roman fool,—to think disgrace entombs the hero's soul—for ever damps his fires, and dims his glories; that no bright

laurel can adorn the brow that once was bowed, no victory's trumpet-sound can drown in joy the rattling of his chains: no;—could one glimpse of victory and vengeance dart preciously across me, I could kiss thy footstep's dust again; then, all in flame, with Massinissa's energies unquenched, start from beneath thy chariot-wheels, and grasp the gory laurel reeking in my view, and force a passage, through disgrace, to glory!—victory, vengeance—glory!——Oh, these chains! My soul's in fetters, too; for, from this moment, through all eternity I see but death! Then come, and let me gloom upon the past.——

Sleep! I'll sleep no more, until I sleep for ever! When I last slept, I heard Adherbal scream. I'll SLEEP no more! I'll THINK—until I die: my eyes shall pore upon my miseries, until my miseries shall be no more. Yet wherefore was that scream? Why, I have heard his LIVING scream—it was not half so frightful. Whence comes the difference? When the man was living, why, I did gaze upon his couch of torments with placid vengeance; and each anguished cry gave me stern satisfaction! Now, he's dead, and his lips move not; yet his voice's image flashed such a dreadful darkness o'er my soul, I would not mount Numidia's throne again, did every night bring such a scream as that. O, yes! 'twas I who caused that LIVING one, and therefore did its echo seem so frightful!—If 'twere to do again, I would not kill thee: wilt thou not be contented?—But thou sayest, "My father was a father to thee also; he watched thy infant years, he gave thee all that youth could ask, and scarcely manhood came than came a kingdom also; yet didst thou"—Oh!—I am faint—they have not brought me food—how did I not perceive it until now? Gods!—I'm in tears!—I did not think of weeping. Oh, Marius, wilt thou ever feel like this?——Ha! I behold the ruins of a city; and, on a craggy fragment, sits a form that seems in ruins also: how unmoved—how stern he looks!—Amazement! it is Marius! Ha! Marius! think'st thou now upon Jugurtha? He turns—he's caught my eye!—I see no more!

XLII.—CAVALRY CHARGE AT BALAKLAVA.—TENNYSON.

Half a league, half a league, half a league onward! all in the valley of Death rode the six hundred! "Forward the Light Brigade! Charge the guns!" Nolan said:—into the valley of Death rode the six hundred. "Forward the Light Brigade!" Was there a man dismayed? Not though the soldiers knew some one had blundered: theirs not to make reply, theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die; into the valley of Death rode the six hundred. Cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them, cannon in front of them volleyed and thundered; stormed at with shot and shell, boldly they rode, and well: into the jaws of death—into the mouth of hell—rode the six hundred. Flashed all their sabres bare, flashed as they turned in air, sabering the gunners there; charging an army, while all the world wondered; plunged in the battery-smoke, right through the line they broke; Cossack and Russian reel'd from the sabre-stroke, shattered and sundered: then they rode back; but not—not the six hundred! Cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them, cannon behind them volleyed and thundered; stormed at with shot and shell, while horse and hero fell: they that had fought so well, came from the jaws of death, back from the mouth of hell, all that was left of them—left of six hundred!

When can their glory fade? O the wild charge they made! all the world wondered. Honour the charge they made! honour the Light Brigade! Noble six hundred!

XLIII.—THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER AT INKERMANN.

GERALD MASSEY.

'Twas nigh the noon of night before the roaring guns did cease,
And at the smouldering fires of war we lit the pipe of peace.

At four, a burst of bells arose thro' night's cathedral dark,
It seem'd so like our Sabbath-chimes, we could but lie and hark!
So like the bells that call to prayer in the dear land far away;
Their music floated on the air, and kiss'd us—to betray.
Our camp lay on the shadowy hill, all silent as a cloud,
Its very heart of life stood still—and the white mist brought its shroud;
For Death was waking in the dark, and grimly smiled to see
How all was ranged and ready for his sumptuous jubilee.
O wily are the Russians, and they came to their wild work—
Their feet all shod with silence in the heart's blood of the Turk!
While in its banks our fiery tide of War serenely slept,
Their subtle serpentry up-crept, and stealthily they stept!
In the ruins of the valley do the birds of carnage stir?
There's a rustle in the gloom like wheels! feet trample—bullets whirr—
Great Heaven! the foe is on us. Now the trumpets with a start
Thrill—like the cry of a wronged queen—to the red roots of the heart;
And long and loud the war-drums with throbbing clamour roll,—
A sound to set the blood on fire, and warm the shivering soul.
The worn and weary soldiers leapt up, ready, fresh, and true!
No weak blood curdled white i' the face, no valour turned to dew;
Majestic as a god defied, arose our English host—
All for the peak of peril rushed—each for the fieriest post!
We thought of England, and we swore to strike immortal blows;
Then all along the leagured line the crash of battle rose.
The banners waved like blessing hands, and we knew it was the hour
For a desperate grip till fingers met in the throat of Russian power.
And at a bound, and with a sound a coward's heart might kill,
The Lion of Old England leapt like lightning from the hill.
All hell seemed bursting on us, as the yelling demons came—
The red-mouth'd cannon's fiery tongues licked all the hills with flame!
And whistling shell, and sneering shot, with awful glee went past,
Like fiendish feet and laughter hurrying down the battle-blast.
No sun! but none is needed,—men can feel their way to fight,
With the glow of battle in their face—eyes filled with fiery light;
And long ere dawn was red in heaven, upon the dark earth lay
The prophesying morning-red of a nation's glorious day.
Like the old sea, white-lipped with rage, the foe dash, in despair,
On ranks of rock; and what a prize for the wrecker Death was there!
The Guards went to the fight in grey, but now they're gory red—
Heaven save them, they're surrounded! Leap your ramparts of the dead,
And back the desperate battle, for there is but one short stride
Between the Russ and victory! On, on! you true and tried!
The Red Caps crest the hill—with bloody spur the Chasseurs ride,
Down like a flood from Etna pours their valour's burning tide.
Hurrah for Merrie England, now! Hurrah for France the grand!
As we charge the foe together, all abreast, and hand to hand.
Hurrah! The mighty host doth melt before our fervent heat,
And against our side the ebbing flood does faint and fainter beat.
From morn till night we fought our fight, and at the set of sun
Stood conquerors on Inkermann—our SOLDIERS' BATTLE won.
That morn the legions stood like corn in its pomp of golden grain!
That night in ruddy sheaves they lay upon the misty plain!
Our heroes fell in boyhood's bloom, and bravery's lusty pride;
But they made their bed o' the Russian dead, ere they lay down and died.
We gathered round the tent-fire in the evening cold and gray,
And thought of those who ranked with us in the morning's quick array
Our comrades of the field who came no more from that fell fray!
We thought of the salt tears wrung out in green dells far away—
And the stern white faces of the dead that on the dark ground lay
Like statues of old heroes, cut in precious human clay—

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

I've told thee how the Southrons fell beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan by Inverlochy's shore.
I've told thee how we swept Dundee, and tamed the Lindsays' pride;
But never have I told thee yet how the great Marquis died.
A traitor sold him to his foes: O, deed of deathless shame!
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet with one of Assynt's name—
Be it upon the mountain's side, or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone, or backed by armèd men—
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man who wrong'd thy sire's renown;
Remember of what blood thou art, and strike the caitiff down!

They brought him to the Watergate, hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there, and not a fenceless man.
They set him high upon a cart—the hangman rode below—
They drew his hands behind his back, and bared his noble brow.
Then, as a hound is slipp'd from leash, they cheer'd the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout, and bade him pass along.
It would have made a brave man's heart grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes bent down on that array....
But when he came, though pale and wan, he looked so great and high,
So noble was his manly front, so calm his steadfast eye,
The rabble rout forbore to shout, and each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul was face to face with death.
But onwards—always onwards, in silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant laboured, till it reach'd the house of doom.
Then, as the Graeme looked upwards, he saw the ugly smile
Of him who sold his King for gold—the master-fiend, Argyle!
And a Saxon soldier cried aloud, "Back, coward, from thy place!
For seven long years thou hast not dared to look him in the face."
Had I been there, with sword in hand, and fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets had peal'd the slogan-cry;
Not all their troops of trampling horse, nor might of mailèd men,
Not all the rebels in the South had borne us backwards then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath had trod as free as air,
Or I, and all who bore my name, been laid around him there!
It might not be. They placed him next within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish kings were throned amidst their nobles all.
With savage glee came Warristoun to read the murderous doom;
And then uprose the great Montrose in the middle of the room.
"Now, by my faith as belted knight, and by the name I bear,
And by the bright Saint Andrew's cross that waves above us there—
I have not sought in battle-field a wreath of such renown,
Nor dared I hope on my dying day to win the martyr's crown!
There is a chamber far away, where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have named for me, than by my father's grave;
For truth and right, 'gainst treason's might, this hand hath always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still, in the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower—give every town a limb—
And God, who made, shall gather them: I go from you to Him!"
Ah, boy! that ghastly gibbet! how dismal 'tis to see
The great tall spectral skeleton, the ladder, and the tree!
Hark! hark! it is the clash of arms—the bells begin to toll—
"He is coming! he is coming! God's mercy on his soul!"
There was colour in his visage, though the cheeks of all were wan,
And they marvell'd as they saw him pass, that great and goodly man!
He mounted up the scaffold, and he turned him to the crowd;
But they dared not trust the people, so he might not speak aloud.
But he looked upon the heavens, and they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether the eye of God shone through!
Yet a black and murky battlement lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within—all else was calm and still.

The grim Geneva ministers with anxious scowl drew near,
As you have seen the ravens flock around the dying deer.
He would not deign them word nor sign, but alone he bent the knee;
And veil'd his face for Christ's dear grace, beneath the gallows-tree.
Then radiant and serene he rose, and cast his cloak away;
For he had ta'en his latest look of earth, and sun, and day.
A beam of light fell o'er him, like a glory round the shriven,
And he climb'd the lofty ladder, as it were the path to heaven.
Then came a flash from out the cloud, and a stunning thunder-roll;
And no man dared to look aloft, for fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound, a hush, and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—the work of death was done!

XLVI.—THE DOWNFALL OF POLAND.—CAMPBELL.

O sacred Truth! thy triumph ceased awhile, and Hope, thy sister, ceased with thee to smile, when leagued Oppression poured to Northern wars her whiskered pandoors and her fierce hussars; waved her dread standard to the breeze of morn, pealed her loud drum, and twanged her trumpet-horn: tumultuous horror brooded o'er her van, presaging wrath to Poland—and to man! Warsaw's last champion, from her heights, surveyed, wide o'er the fields, a waste of ruin laid—"O Heaven!" he cried, "my bleeding country save!—Is there no hand on high to shield the brave? Yet though destruction sweep these lovely plains, rise, fellow men! our COUNTRY yet remains! By that dread name, we wave the sword on high! and swear, for her to live!—with her to die!" He said: and, on the rampart-heights, arrayed his trusty warriors, few, but undismayed; firm-paced and slow, a horrid front they form, still as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm! Low, murmuring sounds along their banners fly—REVENGE, or DEATH! the watchword and reply:—then pealed the notes omnipotent to charm, and the loud tocsin tolled their last alarm!

In vain—alas! in vain, ye gallant few, from rank to rank your volley'd thunder flew:—Oh! bloodiest picture in the book of time, Sarmatia fell—unwept—without a crime! found not a generous friend—a pitying foe—strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe! Dropped from her nerveless grasp the shattered spear—closed her bright eye, and curbed her high career!—Hope, for a season, bade the world farewell, and Freedom shrieked—as KOSCIUSKO fell! The sun went down, nor ceased the carnage there; tumultuous murder shook the midnight air—on Fragne's proud arch the fires of ruin glow, his blood-dyed waters murmuring far below. The storm prevails! the rampart yields away—bursts the wild cry of horror and dismay! Hark! as the smouldering piles with thunder fall, a thousand shrieks for hopeless mercy call! Earth shook! red meteors flashed along the sky! and conscious Nature shuddered at the cry!

Departed spirits of the MIGHTY DEAD!—ye that at Marathon and Leuctra bled! Friends of the world! restore your swords to man, fight in his sacred cause, and lead the van! Yet for Sarmatia's tears of blood atone, and make her arm puissant as your own! Oh! once again to Freedom's cause, return the PATRIOT TELL—the BRUCE of BANNOCKBURN!

XLVII.—ODE TO ELOQUENCE.—CAREY.

Heard ye those loud-contending waves that shook Cecropia's pillared state? Saw ye the mighty from their graves look up, and tremble at her fate? Who shall calm the angry storm? who the mighty task perform, and bid the raging tumult cease?—See, the son of Hermes rise, with syren tongue and speaking eyes, hush the noise, and soothe to peace! See the olive-branches waving o'er Illissus' winding stream; their lovely limbs the Naiads laving—the Muses smiling by, supreme! See the

nymphs and swains advancing, to harmonious measures dancing: grateful Io Pæans rise to thee, O Power! who canst inspire soothing words—or words of fire, and shook'st thy plumes in Attic skies!

Lo! from the regions of the North, the reddening storm of battle pours—rolls along the trembling earth—fastens on the Olynthian towers. "Where rests the sword? where sleep the brave? Awake! Cecropia's ally save from the fury of the blast: bursts the storm on Phocis' walls! Rise! or Greece for ever falls; up, or Freedom breathes her last."—The jarring states, obsequious now, view the Patriot's hand on high; thunder gathering on his brow, lightning flashing from his eye! Borne by the tide of words along, one voice, one mind, inspire the throng!—"To arms! to arms! to arms!" they cry; "grasp the shield, and draw the sword; lead us to Philippi's lord, let us conquer him, or die!"

Ah, Eloquence! thou wast undone, wast from thy native country driven, when Tyranny eclipsed the sun, and blotted out the stars of heaven! When Liberty from Greece withdrew, and o'er the Adriatic flew to where the Tiber pours his urn—she struck the rude Tarpeian rock; sparks were kindled by the shock—again thy fires began to burn! Now, shining forth, thou mad'st compliant the Conscript Fathers to thy charms; roused the world-bestriding giant, sinking fast in Slavery's arms! I see thee stand by Freedom's fane, pouring the persuasive strain, giving vast conceptions birth: hark! I hear thy thunder's sound shake the Forum round and round—shake the pillars of the earth!

First-born of Liberty divine! put on Religion's bright array; speak! and the starless grave shall shine the portal of eternal day! Rise! kindling with the orient beam, let Calvary's hill inspire the theme; unfold the garments rolled in blood! Oh, touch the soul—touch all her chords with the omnipotence of words, and point the way to heaven—to God!

XLVIII.—THE LAST DAYS OF HERCULANEUM.

ATHERSTONE.

There was a man,
A Roman soldier, for some daring deed
That trespassed on the laws, in dungeon low
Chained down. His was a noble spirit, rough,
But generous, and brave, and kind.
He had a son,—it was a rosy boy,—
A little faithful copy of his sire
In face and gesture. In her pangs she died
That gave him birth; and ever since, the child
Had been his father's solace and his care.
Every sport
The father shared and heightened. But at length
The rigorous law had grasped him, and condemned
To fetters and to darkness.
The captive's lot
He felt in all its bitterness:—the walls
Of his deep dungeon answered many a sigh
And heart-heaved groan. His tale was known, and touched
His jailer with compassion:—and the boy,
Thenceforth a frequent visitor, beguiled
His father's lingering hours, and brought a balm
With his loved presence, that in every wound
Dropt healing. But, in this terrific hour,
He was a poisoned arrow in the breast,
Where he had been a cure.
With earliest morn
Of that first day of darkness and amaze,
He came. The iron door was oped—for them

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

And fingers widely spread, greedy to touch
Though but his idol's garment. Useless toil!
Yet still renewed: still round and round he goes,
And strains, and snatches—and with dreadful cries
Calls on his boy! Mad frenzy fires him now;
He plants against the wall his feet;—his chain
Grasps;—tugs with giant strength to force away
The deep-driven staple,—yells and shrieks with rage:
—But see! the ground is opening—a blue light
Mounts, gently waving—noiseless:—thin and cold
It seems, and like a rainbow tint, not flame:
But, by its lustre, on the earth outstretched,
Behold the child!—ah, lifeless! his dress singed—
And over his serene face, a dark line
Points out the lightning's track!
The father saw—
And all his fury fled:—a dead calm fell
That instant on him:—speechless, fixed he stood,
And, with a look that never wandered, gazed
Intensely on the corse. Those laughing eyes
Were not yet closed—and round those pouting lips
The wonted smile still hung!
Silent and pale
The father stands: no tear is in his eye:—
The thunders bellow—but he hears them not:
The ground lifts like a sea—he knows it not:—
The strong walls grind and gape—the vaulted roof
Takes shapes like bubble tossing in the wind—
See! he looks up and smiles;—for death to him
Is happiness. Yet, could one last embrace
Be given, 'twere still a sweeter thing to die!
It will be given. Look how the rolling ground,
At every swell, nearer and still more near
Moves towards the father's outstretched arms his boy:—
Once he has touched his garment;—how his eye
Lightens with love, and hope, and anxious fear!
Ha! see! he has him now!—he clasps him round—
Kisses his face—puts back the curling locks
That shaded his fine brow—looks in his eyes—
Grasps in his own, those little, dimpled hands—
Then folds him to his breast, as he was wont
To lie when sleeping—and, resigned, awaits
Undreaded death!
And death came soon, and swift,
And pangless. The huge pile sunk down at once
Into the opening earth. Walls—arches—roof—
And deep foundation stones,—all mingling fell!

XLIX.—THE BARD.—Gray.

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless King! Confusion on thy banners wait; though fanned by Conquest's crimson wing, they mock the air with idle state! Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail, nor even thy virtues—tyrant!—shall avail, to save thy secret soul from nightly fear, from Cambria's curse—from Cambria's tears." Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride of the first Edward, scattered wild dismay, as, down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side, he wound, with toilsome march, his long array. Stout Gloucester stood aghast in speechless trance! "To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering lance.

On a rock, whose haughty brow frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood

robed in the sable garb of woe, with haggard eyes the Poet stood; (loose, his beard and hoary hair streamed like a meteor to the troubled air;) and, with a master's hand, and prophet's fire, struck the deep sorrows of his lyre. "Hark! how each giant oak, and desert cave, sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath! O'er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave, revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe:—vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day, to high-born Hool's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue, that hushed the stormy main: brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed: Mountains, ye mourn in vain Modred, whose magic song made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head:—on dreary Arvon's shore they lie, smeared with gore, and ghastly pale: far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail: the famished eagle screams, and passes by. Dear, lost companions of my tuneful art! Dear—as the light that visits these sad eyes! dear—as the ruddy drops that warm my heart! ye died amidst your dying country's cries!—No more I weep. They do not sleep. On yonder cliffs,—a grisly band,—I see them sit! they linger yet, avengers of their native land: with me in dreadful harmony they join, and weave, with bloody hands, the tissue of thy line.

"Weave the warp, and weave the woof,—the winding-sheet of Edward's race; give ample room, and verge enough, the characters of hell to trace: mark the year, and mark the night, when Severn shall re-echo with affright the shrieks of death, through Berkeley's roofs that ring—shrieks of an agonizing king! She-wolf of France—with unrelenting fangs that tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,—from thee be born, who, o'er thy country, hangs, the scourge of Heaven. What terrors round him wait! Amazement in his van, with Flight combined; and Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude, behind.

"Mighty victor! mighty lord! low on his funeral couch he lies! No pitying heart, no eye, afford a tear to grace his obsequies. Is the Sable Warrior fled? Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead! The swarm that in thy noon-tide beam were born? Gone to salute the rising Morn. Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows, while, proudly riding o'er the azure realm, in gallant trim the gilded vessel goes—Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm; regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway, that, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl, the rich repast prepare! Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:—close by the regal chair, fell Thirst and Famine scowl a baleful smile upon their baffled guest. Heard ye the din of battle bray, lance to lance, and horse to horse? Long years of havoc urge their destined course, and through the kindred squadrons mow their way! Ye towers of Julius—London's lasting shame!—with many a foul and midnight murder fed; revere his consort's faith, his father's fame, and spare the meek usurper's holy head. Above, below, the rose of snow, twined with the blushing foe, we spread; the bristled boar, in infant gore, wallows beneath the thorny shade. Now, Brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom, stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate (Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.) —half of thy heart we consecrate. (The web is wove. The work is done!)——Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn, leave me, unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn: in yon bright track, that fires the western skies, they melt—they vanish from my eyes. But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height descending slow their glittering skirts unroll! Visions of glory, spare my aching sight! ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul! No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail: all hail, ye genuine Kings, Britannia's issue! hail!

"Girt with many a Baron bold, sublime their starry fronts they rear; and gorgeous dames, and statesmen old, in bearded majesty appear. In the midst a form divine! her eye proclaims her of the Briton line; her lion-port, her awe-commanding face, attempered sweet to virgin grace!

What strings symphonious tremble in the air! what strains of vocal transports round her play! Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear! they breathe a soul to animate thy clay. Bright Rapture calls, and soaring as she sings, waves in the eye of Heaven her many-coloured wings.

"The verse adorn again fierce War, and faithful Love, and Truth severe, by fairy Fiction dressed; in buskined measures, move pale Grief and pleasing Pain, with Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast. A voice, as of the cherub-choir, gales from blooming Eden bear; and distant warblings lessen on my ear, that lost in long futurity expire.——Fond, impious man! think'st thou yon sanguine cloud, raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day? To-morrow he repairs the golden flood, and warms the nations with redoubled ray. Enough for me: with joy I see the different doom our fates assign! Be thine Despair and sceptred Care; to triumph, and to die, are mine!"——He spoke; and, headlong, from the mountain's height, deep in the roaring tide he plunged—to endless night.

L.—ALEXANDER'S FEAST.—Dryden.

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won by Philip's warlike son;—aloft, in awful state, the god-like hero sat on his imperial throne. His valiant peers were placed around, their brows with roses and with myrtles bound: so should desert in arms be crowned. The lovely Thais, by his side sat, like a blooming Eastern bride, in flower of youth and beauty's pride. Happy, happy, happy pair! None but the brave, none but the brave, none but the brave—deserves the fair.

Timotheus—placed on high amid the tuneful choir—with flying fingers touched the lyre; the trembling notes ascend the sky, and heavenly joys inspire.

The song began from Jove, who left his blissful seat above—such is the power of mighty Love!—A dragon's fiery form belied the god: sublime on radiant spheres he rode, when he to fair Olympia pressed, and stamped an image of himself—a sovereign of the world!——The listening crowd admire the lofty sound: "A present deity!" they shout around; "A present deity!" the vaulted roofs rebound!—With ravished ears the monarch hears, assumes the god, affects to nod, and seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus, then, the sweet Musician sung; of Bacchus, ever fair and ever young!—"The jolly god in triumph comes! sound the trumpets! beat the drums! Flushed with a purple grace he shows his honest face! Now, give the hautboys breath!—he comes! he comes! Bacchus, ever fair and young, drinking joys did first ordain! Bacchus' blessings are a treasure; drinking is the soldier's pleasure; rich the treasure; sweet the pleasure; sweet is pleasure, after pain!"——Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain—fought all his battles o'er again—and thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew—the slain!

The Master saw the madness rise, his glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes; and, while he heaven and earth defied—changed his hand, and checked his pride. He chose a mournful muse, soft pity to infuse: he sang—"Darius, great, and good! by too severe a fate, fallen! fallen! fallen! fallen! fallen from his high estate—and weltering in his blood! Deserted, at his utmost need, by those his former bounty fed, on the bare earth, exposed, he lies, with not a friend to close his eyes!"——With downcast look the joyless Victor sat, revolving, in his altered soul, the various turns of fate below; and, now and then, a sigh he stole, and tears began to flow!

The mighty Master smiled, to see that Love was in the next degree; 'twas but a kindred sound to move! for Pity melts the mind to Love. Softly sweet, in Lydian measures, soon he soothed his soul to pleasures. "War," he sung, "is toil and trouble: honour, but an empty bubble; never ending, still beginning; fighting still, and still destroying. If the

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

"Ye're there, but yet I see you not!—Draw forth each trusty sword,
And let me hear your faithful steel clash once around my board!
I hear it faintly;—louder yet! What clogs my heavy breath?
Up, all!—and shout for Rudiger, 'Defiance unto Death!'"

Bowl rang to bowl, steel clanged to steel, and rose a deafening cry,
That made the torches flare around, and shook the flags on high:
"Ho! cravens! do ye fear him? Slaves! traitors! have ye flown?
Ho! cowards, have ye left me to meet him here alone?

"But I defy him!—let him come!" Down rang the massy cup,
While from its sheath the ready blade came flashing half-way up;
And, with the black and heavy plumes scarce trembling on his head,
There, in his dark, carved, oaken chair, old Rudiger sat—dead!

LII.—THE WORLD FOR SALE.—Rev. Ralph Hoyt.

The world for sale! Hang out the sign; call every traveller here to me: who'll buy this brave estate of mine, and set this weary spirit free? 'Tis going! yes, I mean to fling the bauble from my soul away; I'll sell it, whatsoe'er it bring: the world's at auction here, to-day! It is a glorious sight to see,—but, ah! it has deceived me sore; it is not what it seems to be. For sale! it shall be mine no more. Come, turn it o'er, and view it well; I would not have you purchase dear. 'Tis going! going! I must sell! Who bids? who'll buy the splendid Tear? Here's Wealth, in glittering heaps of gold; who bids? But let me tell you fair, a baser lot was never sold! Who'll buy the heavy heaps of Care? and, here, spread out in broad domain, a goodly landscape all may trace; hall, cottage, tree, field, hill, and plain:—who'll buy himself a burial place? Here's Love, the dreamy potent spell that Beauty flings around the heart; I know its power, alas! too well; 'tis going! Love and I must part! Must part? What can I more with Love? all o'er is the enchanter's reign. Who'll buy the plumeless, dying dove,—a breath of bliss, a storm of pain? And Friendship, rarest gem of earth; who e'er hath found the jewel his? Frail, fickle, false, and little worth! who bids for Friendship—as it is? 'Tis going! going! hear the call; once, twice, and thrice, 'tis very low! 'Twas once my hope, my stay, my all, but now the broken staff must go! Fame! hold the brilliant meteor high; how dazzling every gilded name! Ye millions! now's the time to buy. How much for Fame? how much for Fame? Hear how it thunders! Would you stand on high Olympus, far renowned, now purchase, and a world command!—and be with a world's curses crowned. Sweet star of Hope! with ray to shine in every sad foreboding breast, save this desponding one of mine,—who bids for man's last friend, and best? Ah, were not mine a bankrupt life, this treasure should my soul sustain! But Hope and Care are now at strife, nor ever may unite again. Ambition, Fashion, Show, and Pride, I part from all for ever now; Grief, in an overwhelming tide, has taught my haughty heart to bow. By Death, stern sheriff! all bereft, I weep, yet humbly kiss the rod; the best of all I still have left,—my Faith, my Bible, and my God!

LIII.—THE LAST MAN.—Campbell.

All worldly shapes shall melt in gloom, the sun himself must die, before this mortal shall assume its immortality! I saw a vision in my sleep, that gave my spirit strength to sweep adown the gulf of Time! I saw the last of human mould—that shall Creation's death behold, as Adam saw her prime! The Sun's eye had a sickly glare, the earth with age was wan; the skeletons of nations were around that lonely man! Some had expired in fight,—the brands still rusted in their bony hands;

in plague and famine some:—Earth's cities had no sound or tread; and ships were drifting with the dead to shores where all was dumb. Yet, prophet-like, that Lone One stood, with dauntless words and high, that shook the sere leaves from the wood as if a storm passed by;—saying,—"We are twins in death, proud Sun! thy face is cold, thy race is run, 'tis mercy bids thee go; for thou, ten thousand thousand years, hast seen the tide of human tears—that shall no longer flow. What though beneath thee, man put forth his pomp, his pride, his skill; and arts that made fire, flood, and earth, the vassals of his will?—yet mourn I not thy parted sway, thou dim discrownéd king of day: for, all those trophied arts and triumphs, that beneath thee sprang, healed not a passion or a pang entailed on human hearts. Go! let oblivion's curtain fall upon the stage of men! nor with thy rising beams recall life's tragedy again! Its piteous pageants bring not back, nor waken flesh upon the rack of pain anew to writhe; stretched in disease's shapes abhorred, or mown in battle by the sword, like grass beneath the scythe! Even I am weary in yon skies to watch thy fading fire: test of all sumless agonies, behold not me expire! My lips that speak thy dirge of death—their rounded gasp and gurgling breath to see, thou shalt not boast; the eclipse of Nature spreads my pall, the majesty of Darkness shall receive my parting ghost! This spirit shall return to Him who gave its heavenly spark; yet think not, Sun! it shall be dim, when thou thyself art dark! No! it shall live again, and shine in bliss unknown to beams of thine; by Him recalled to breath, who captive led Captivity, who robbed the Grave of victory, and took the sting from Death! Go, Sun! while Mercy holds me up, on Nature's awful waste, to drink this last and bitter cup of grief that man shall taste;—go! tell the night that hides thy face, thou saw'st the last of Adam's race, on earth's sepulchral clod the darkening universe defy to quench his Immortality, or shake his trust in God!

LIV.—THE RAVEN.—Poe.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this, and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fanta tic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;
This it is, and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly, your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;——
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there, wandering, fearing,
Doubting; dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;

But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken, was the whispered word "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"—
Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping, something louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind, and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stopped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then his ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly, grim, and ancient Raven, wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore:
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other friends have flown before—
On the morrow he will leave me, as my hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster, till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

thought their monody compels! In the silence of the night, how we shiver with affright at the melancholy menace of their tone! For, every sound that floats from the rust within their throats is a groan. And the people—ah, the people—they that dwell up in the steeple, all alone, and who, tolling, tolling, tolling, in that muffled monotone, feel a glory in so rolling on the human heart a stone;—they are neither man nor woman—they are neither brute nor human—they are Ghouls: and their king it is who tolls; and he rolls, rolls, rolls, a pæan from the bells! and his bosom proudly swells with the pæan of the bells! And he dances, and he yells; keeping time, time, time, in a sort of Runic rhyme, to the pæan of the bells—to the throbbing of the bells—to the sobbing of the bells—to the rolling of the bells—to the tolling of the bells—to the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

LV.—THE LEAGUER OF LUCKNOW.—James Reed.

With the few whom fate of battle left and pestilence had spared,
To Lucknow's shattered fortalice the Brigadier repaired.
No bugle sounded cheerily, no drum beat the chamade,
But like a funeral cortege were those wearied tiles arrayed.
A cloud rests on each sun-burnt brow, gloom lowers in every eye,—
But each heart is honour's goblet, and with valour brimming high.

"Soldiers! your courage must not droop, your manly spirits wane;
The stoutest bark afloat may drive before the hurricane;
Reverses are true manhood's test!"—thus spoke, in accents clear,
To his scant but brave associates, the undaunted Brigadier.

"I charge you, by the mercy that ye hope to win above,
And by the distant homes where dwell the mothers that ye love,
By the sisters ye would shelter from dishonour's blighting clutch,
On peril of your souls, guard sacred from pollution's touch
Yon true devoted heroines! As ye are men this day!
By the manes of the brave who died in this accursed fray,
And by the far-off green churchyards wherein your fathers rest,
And that home-love, which but with life forsakes the wanderer's breast,
And by the Queen, whose throne ye guard, whose fame ye hold so dear,—
Protect them whilst a man remains!" cried the stout old Brigadier.

"Enough for human feeling. Now for sterner work, my sons!
To your posts, and ply your rifles! lay the mortars! serve the guns!
Though our foes, for leagues extended, like unnumbered locusts lie,
And ye have barely space to fight—there's room enough to die!
But let no shot be wasted! every ball must find its mark!
When yon recreant caitiff rebels, traitor-hounds of Hindostan,
All remorseless as the tiger from his sweltering jungle-fen,
Rush from under their defences, let there be no wavering then!"
Now shook the earth, now shakes the sky, and blackness palls the sun,
And lightning-flames stream glaring out from many a well-laid gun:
And now the mine's volcano bursts its dark concealment sheer,
And rock'd and sway'd the ramparts round the stout Old Brigadier.

As upward on the tortured air the scathing meteors gush,
Ten thousand sable mutineers from tower and temple rush;
On, on they come! and the lava flame is their lifting mulberade;
But 'tis on to doom—and that fiery gloom is Fate's beseeming shade.
The red flames slack,—the smoke rolls back,—the swarthy hands appear,
And a hail-storm falls from the leaguered walls, and strikes them down like deer.
All day, as 'twere a brazen vault, the sky seems molten red,
And scarred and black the scorching soil reels underneath their tread;

Yet own those noble hearts so tried no thought of yielding fear.
"Bravo! well done, bold comrades!" cries the stout old Brigadier.

Ladies of England's castle halls, fair as the dew-gemmed flowers
That deck in fragile loveliness your safely-guarded bo ers;
Bright-eyed maids of Ireland's valleys, loving-hearted as you're fair,
Ask ye why those nameless heroes fought, and bled, an perished there?
Daughters of Scotland's cottage homes, sweet as the spring-day morn,
Ye sunbright joys to manly hearts that sorrow else had torn,
Needs there to you repeat the tale of blood and lurid shame?
Or needs there ask from you the meed of honour and of fame
For heroes whose keen weapons knew neither ruth nor re t,
Till every point was bent or broken in a murderer's breast
A sacred zeal inspires each heart, for vengeance, sharp and dire,
As Retribution's angel ever flung from hand of fire,
For CAWNPORE's day of nameless shames, and agony, and fear,
Ay! till the earthworks crumbled round the stout old Brigadier.

Three months of ceaseless battle in that burning cordon's fold;
Three months upon the verge of fate within that leagured hold;
Hope of rescue lost and faded, hope of life itself departed,
Still allegiance paid to duty, not a threatened post deserted,
Peril shunned, or danger shrunk from, by the worn but golden hearted!
Heaven! and is there, then, no succour? not a ray-light of assurance
For such unmatched resolution, such unquenchable endurance?
Has all on duty's gory shrine been sacrificed in vain?
Famine, and burning thirst endured, and fever's racking pain?
And must they die unaided, and, such dreadful ordeal passed,
Must the ruins they defended be their sepulchre at last,
And none be left to tell the tale of bravery and woe?
Farewell, then, gallant countrymen!——No!—by the round world,—no!

Hark! booming in the distance, sweet as Hope's angelic lyre,
A sound comes sailing like a note from Mercy's smiling choir!
To the God in heaven be praise! for yon gun's reverb'ing voice
Bids the weary sleep in safety, and the mourning souls rejoice.
Now the thunder's diapason grows more resonant and strong,
And the rifle's intonation bears a burden to its song!
Noble HAVELOCK advances! See his conquering banners wave!
Oh, smile again, ye gentle ones! bear up a while, ye brave!
Lo! breasting the war-surges, like a stout ship on the main,
With the CAMPBELL he is coming! There's redemption in their train
Heaven help the strong deliverers! see their nimble rifles flash,
As with slogan-shout triumphantly from post to post they dash—
Hurrah! the last stockade is shivered! and, with high exulting cheer,
They clasp their rescued comrades, and the stout old Brigadier!

LVII.—ODE FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY.—POPE.

Descend, ye Nine! descend and sing; the breathing instruments inspire; wake into voice each silent string, and sweep the sounding lyre! In a sadly pleasing strain let the warbling lute complain: let the loud trumpet sound, till the roofs all around the shrill echoes rebound: while in more lengthen'd notes and slow, the deep, majestic, solemn organs blow. Hark! the numbers soft and clear, gently steal upon the ear; now louder, and yet louder rise, and fill with spreading sounds the skies! Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes; in broken air, trembling, the wild music floats; till, by degrees, remote and small, the strains decay and melt away, in a dying, dying fall!

By Music, minds an equal temper know, nor swell too high, nor sink too low. If in the breast tumultuous joys arise, Music her soft, assuasive

voice applies; or, when the soul is press'd with cares, exalts her in enlivening airs. Warriors she fires with animated sounds; pours balm into the bleeding lover's wounds: Melancholy lifts her head, Morpheus rouses from his bed, Sloth unfolds her arms and wakes, listening Envy drops her snakes; intestine War no more our passions wage, and giddy Factions hear away their rage. But when our country's cause provokes to arms, how martial music every bosom warms! So when the first bold vessel dared the seas, high on the stern the Thracian raised his strain, while Argo saw her kindred trees descend from Pelion to the main: transported demigods stood round, and men grew heroes at the sound, inflamed with glory's charms: each chief his sevenfold shield displayed, and half unsheath'd the shining blade: and seas, and rocks, and skies, rebound, "To arms! to arms! to arms!"

But when through all the infernal bounds, which flaming Phlegethon surrounds, Love, strong as Death, the poet led to the pale nations of the dead, what sounds were heard! what scenes appear'd, o'er all the dreary coasts! Dreadful gleams, dismal screams, fires that glow, shrieks of woe, sullen moans, hollow groans, and cries of tortured ghosts! But hark! he strikes the golden lyre; and see! the tortured ghosts respire! see, shady forms advance! Thy stone, O Sisyphus, stands still; Ixion rests upon his wheel, and the pale Spectres dance! The Furies sink upon their iron beds, and snakes uncurl'd hang list'ning round their heads. By the streams that ever flow, by the fragrant winds that blow o'er the Elysian flowers; by those happy souls who dwell in yellow meads of asphodel, or amaranthine bowers; by the heroes' armèd shades, glittering through the gloomy glades; by the youths that died for love, wandering in the myrtle grove, restore, restore Eurydice to life! oh, take the husband, or return the wife!

He sung, and hell consented to hear the Poet's prayer: stern Proserpine relented, and gave him back the fair. Thus Song could prevail o'er Death and o'er Hell; a conquest how hard and how glorious! Though Fate had fast bound her with Styx nine times round her, yet Music and Love were victorious.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes: again she falls, again she dies! she dies How wilt thou now the fatal Sisters move? no crime was thine, if 'tis no crime to love. Now under hanging mountains, beside the falls of fountains, or where Hebrus wanders, rolling in meanders,—all alone, unheard, unknown, he makes his moan; and calls her ghost, for ever, ever, ever lost! Now with Furies surrounded, despairing, confounded, he trembles, he glows, amidst Rhodopé's snows! See, wild as the winds, o'er the desert he flies! hark! Hæmus resounds with the Bacchanals' cries—Ah see, he dies! Yet even in death Eurydice he sung—Eurydice still trembled on his tongue—Eurydice the woods, Eurydice the floods, Eurydice the rocks and hollow mountains rung.

Music the fiercest grief can charm, and fate's severest rage disarm: music can soften pain to ease, and make despair and madness please: our joys below it can improve, and antedate the bliss above. This the divine Cecilia found, and to her Maker's praise confined the sound. When the full organ joins the tuneful quire, the immortal Powers incline their ear; borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire, while solemn airs improve the sacred fire; and angels lean from heaven to hear. Of Orpheus now no more let poets tell;—to bright Cecilia greater power is given: his numbers rais'd a shade from Hell, hers lift the soul to Heaven.

LVIII.—THE DEATH OF MINNEHAHA.—Longfellow.

O the long and dreary Winter! O the cold and cruel Winter! Ever thicker, thicker, thicker, froze the ice on lake and river, ever deeper, deeper, deeper fell the snow o'er all the landscape. Hardly from his buried wigwam could the hunter force a passage; vainly walked he

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

LIX.—THE LEPER.—Willis.

"Room for the leper! room!"—And, as he came the cry passed on—"Room for the leper! room!"—Sunrise was slanting on the city's gates, rosy and beautiful; and from the hills the early-risen poor were coming in, duly and cheerfully to their toil; and up rose the sharp hammer's clink, and the far hum of moving wheels, and multitudes a-stir, and all that in a city-murmur swells,—unheard but by the watcher's weary ear, aching with night's dull silence; or the sick, hailing the welcome light and sounds, that chase the death-like images of the dark away.——"Room for the leper!"—And aside they stood—matron, and child, and pitiless manhood,—all who met him on his way,—and let him pass. And onward through the open gate he came, a Leper with the ashes on his brow, sackcloth about his loins, and on his lip a covering,—stepping painfully and slow; and, with a difficult utterance, like one whose heart is with an iron nerve put down, crying, "Unclean! Unclean!"

'Twas now the first of the Judean autumn; and the leaves, whose shadows lay so still upon his path, had put their beauty forth beneath the eye of Judah's loftiest noble. He was young, and eminently beautiful; and life mantled in elegant fulness on his lip, and sparkled in his glance; and in his mien there was a gracious pride that every eye followed with benisons;—AND THIS WAS HE!——With the soft airs of summer there had come a torpor on his frame; a drowsy sloth: day after day he lay as if in sleep; his skin grew dry and bloodless, and white scales, circled with livid purple, covered him.—And Helon was a leper! He put off his costly raiment for the leper's garb, and, with the sackcloth round him, and his lip hid in a loathsome covering, stood still...waiting to hear his doom:—"Depart! depart, O child of Israel, from the temple of thy God; for He has smote thee with his chastening rod, and, to the desert wild, from all thou lov'st, away thy feet must flee, that from thy plague His people may be free. Depart! and come not near the busy mart, the crowded city, more; nor set thy foot a human threshold o'er; and stay thou not to hear voices that call thee in the way; and fly from all who in the wilderness pass by. Wet not thy burning lip in streams that to a human dwelling glide; nor rest thee where the covert fountains bide; nor kneel thee down to dip the water where the pilgrim bends to drink, by desert well, or river's grassy brink. And pass not thou between the weary traveller and the cooling breeze, and lie not down to sleep beneath the trees where human tracks are seen; nor milk the goat that browseth on the plain, nor pluck the standing corn, or yellow grain. And now depart! and, when thy heart is heavy, and thine eyes are dim, lift up thy prayer beseechingly to Him, who, from the tribes of men, selected thee to feel his chastening rod. Depart, oh leper! and forget not God!"

And he went forth—alone! Not one of all the many whom he loved, nor she whose name was woven in the fibres of his heart breaking within him now, to come and speak comfort unto him. Yea, he went his way, sick, and heart-broken, and alone,—to die! for, God had cursed the leper!

It was noon, and Helon knelt beside a stagnant pool in the lone wilderness, and bathed his brow, hot with the burning leprosy, and touched the loathsome water to his fevered lips; praying that he might be so blest—to die!——Footsteps approached; and, with no strength to flee, he drew the covering closer on his lip, crying, "Unclean! Unclean!" and, in the folds of the coarse sackcloth shrouding up his face, he fell upon the earth till they should pass. Nearer the Stranger came, and, bending o'er the leper's prostrate form, pronounced his name, "Helon!"—The voice was like the master-tone of a rich instrument,—most strangely sweet; and the dull pulses of disease awoke, and, for a moment, beat beneath the hot and leprous scales with a restoring thrill!——"Helon! arise!"—and he forgot his curse and rose and stood before Him.

Love and awe mingled in the regard of Helon's eye, as he beheld the Stranger.—He was not in costly raiment clad, nor on his brow the symbol

of a princely lineage wore; no followers at his back,—nor in his hand buckler, or sword, or spear;—yet, if he smiled, a kingly condescension graced his lips. His garb was simple, and his sandals worn; his stature modeled with a perfect grace; his countenance the impress of a God, touched with the opening innocence of a child; his eye was blue and calm, as is the sky in the serenest noon; his hair unshorn fell to his shoulders; and his curling beard the fulness of perfected manhood bore. —He looked on Helon earnestly awhile, as if his heart were moved; and, stooping down, He took a little water in his hand, and laid it on his brow, and said, "Be clean!" And lo! the scales fell from him; and his blood coursed with delicious coolness through his veins; and his dry palms grew moist, and on his brow the dewy softness of an infant's stole: his leprosy was cleansed; and he fell down prostrate at Jesus' feet, and worshiped Him.

LX.—TUBAL CAIN.—Charles Mackay.

Old Tubal Cain was a man of might in the days when earth was young; by the fierce red light of his furnace bright the strokes of his hammer rung; and he lifted high his brawny hand on the iron glowing clear, till the sparks rush'd out in scarlet showers, as he fashion'd the sword and the spear.

To Tubal Cain came many a one, as he wrought by his roaring fire, and each one pray'd for a strong steel blade as the crown of his desire; and he made them weapons sharp and strong, till they shouted loud for glee, and gave him gifts of pearls and gold, and spoils of the forest free.

But a sudden change came o'er his heart ere the setting of the sun, and Tubal Cain was fill'd with pain for the evil he had done; he saw that men, with rage and hate, made war upon their kind, that the land was red with the blood they shed in their lust for carnage, blind. And he said—"Alas! that ever I made, or that skill of mine should plan, the spear and the sword, for men whose joy is to slay their fellow-man!"

And for many a day old Tubal Cain sat brooding o'er his woe; and his hand forbore to smite the ore, and his furnace smoulder'd low. But he rose at last with a cheerful face, and a bright courageous eye, and bared his strong right arm for work, while the quick flames mounted high. And he sang—"Hurra for my handiwork!" and the red sparks lit the air; "not alone for the blade was the bright steel made;" and he fashion'd the first Plough Share!

And men, taught wisdom from the Past, in friendship join'd their hands, hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall, and plough'd the willing lands, and sang—"Hurra for Tubal Cain! our stanch good friend is he; and for the ploughshare and the plough, to him our praise shall be. But while Oppression lifts its head, or a tyrant would be lord, though we thank him chiefly for the Plough, we'll not forget the Sword!"

LXI.—TIME AND THE SEA-TIDE.—Tennyson.

Break! break! break! on thy cold grey stones, oh Sea! And I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me. Oh well for the fisherman's boy, that he shouts with his sister at play! oh well for the sailor lad, that he sings in his boat on the bay! And the stately ships go on to their haven under the hill; But oh for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still. Break! break! break! at the foot of thy crags, oh Sea! But the tender grace of a day that is dead, will never come back to me.

LXII.—THE PASSIONS.—Collins.

When Music, (heavenly maid!) was young, ere yet in earliest Greece she sung, the Passions, oft, to hear her shell, thronged around her magic cell; exulting,—trembling;—raging,—fainting;—possessed, beyond the Muse's painting. By turns, they telt the glowing mind disturbed,—delighted,—raised,—relined; till once, 'tis said, when all were fired, filled with fury, rapt, inspired, from the supporting myrtles round they snatched her instruments of sound; and, as they oft had heard, apart, sweet lessons of her forceful art, each—for, madness ruled the hour—would prove his own expressive power.

First, Fear—his hand, its skill to try, amid the chords bewildered laid—and back recoiled—he knew not why:—even at the sound himself had made!

Next Anger rushed, his eyes on fire; in lightnings owned his secret stings; with one rude clash he struck the lyre, and swept, with hurried hands, the strings.

With woeful measures, wan Despair:—low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled; a solemn, strange, and mingled air; 'twas sad, by fits—by starts, 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope! with eyes so fair, what was thy delighted measure! Still it whispered promised pleasure, and bade the lovely scenes at distance "Hail!" Still would her touch the strain prolong; and, from the rocks, the woods, the vale, she called on Echo, still, through all her song; and, where her sweetest theme she chose, a soft, responsive voice was heard at every close!—and Hope, enchanted, smiled, and waved her golden hair!

And longer had she sung—but, with a frown, Revenge impatient rose: he threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down; and, with a withering look, the war-denouncing trumpet took, and blew a blast—so loud and dread, were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe: and ever and anon, he beat the doubling drum, with furious heat. And though, sometimes, each dreary pause between, dejected Pity, at his side, her soul-subduing voice applied, yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien; while each strained ball of sight—seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed; sad proof of thy distressful state! Of differing themes the veering song was mixed; and now, it courted Love—now, raving, called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired, pale Melancholy sat retired; and, from her wild, sequestered seat, in notes by distance made more sweet, poured, through the mellow horn, her pensive soul: and, dashing soft, from rocks around, bubbling runnels joined the sound. Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole; or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,—round a holy calm diffusing, love of peace and lonely musing,—in hollow murmurs died away.

But, oh, how altered was its sprightlier tone, when Cheerfulness—a nymph of healthiest hue,—her bow across her shoulder flung, her buskins gemmed with morning dew,—blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung; the hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known. The oak-crowned Sisters, and their chaste-eyed Queen, Satyrs, and Sylvan Boys, were seen peeping from forth their alleys green: brown Exercise rejoiced to hear; and Sport leaped up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last, came Joy's ecstatic trial. he, with viny crown advancing, first to the lively pipe his hand addressed; but soon he saw the brisk awakening viol, whose sweet, entrancing voice he loved the best. They would have thought who heard the strain, they saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids, amid the festal-sounding shades to some unwearied minstrel dancing: while, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings, Love framed, with Mirth, a gay, fantastic round;—loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;—and he, amidst his frolic play, as if he would the charming air repay, shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

heaven,—at all events, with mighty *bonhomie* he talked in raptures of astronomy. "Sir," he exclaimed, between his bumpers: "Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, and all those chaps have had their day; they've written monstrous lies, sir, thumpers! Move round the sun—it's talking treason; the Earth stands still—it stands—to reason. Round as a globe?—stuff—humbug—fable! It's a flat sphere, sir, like a table; and the sun o'erhangs this sphere, and lights it like a chandelier." "But," quoth his neighbour, "when the sun from east to west his course has run, how comes it then he shows his face next morning in his former place?" "O ho!—a pretty question, truly," replied the knight, with an unruly burst of laughter and delight—so much his triumph seemed to please him; "Why, blockhead, he goes back at night, and that's the reason no one sees him!"

III.—THE CHAMELEON.—Merrick.

Oft has it been my lot to mark a proud, conceited, talking spark, with eyes that hardly served at most to guard their master 'gainst a post; yet round the world the blade has been, to see whatever could be seen; returning from his finished tour, grown ten times perter than before: whatever word you chance to drop, the travelled fool your mouth will stop:—"Sir, if my judgement you'll allow—I've seen—and sure I ought to know"—so begs you'd pay a due submission, and acquiesce in his decision. Two travellers of such a cast, as o'er Arabia's wilds they passed, and on their way in friendly chat, now talked of this and then of that, discoursed a while, 'mongst other matter, of the Chameleon's form and nature. "A stranger animal," cries one, "sure never lived beneath the sun: a lizard's body lean and long, a fish's head, a serpent's tongue, its foot with triple claw disjoined; and what a length of tail behind! how slow its pace! and then its hue——who ever saw so fine a blue?" "Hold there," the other quick replies, "'tis green! I saw it with these eyes, as late with open mouth it lay, and warmed it in the sunny ray; stretched at its ease the beast I viewed, and saw it eat the air for food." "I've seen it, sir, as well as you, and I again affirm it blue. At leisure I the beast surveyed, extended in the cooling shade." "'Tis green! 'tis green, sir, I assure ye."—"Green!" cries the other in a fury,—"why, sir, d'ye think I've lost my eyes?" "'Twere no great loss," the friend replies; "for, if they always serve you thus, you'll find them but of little use." So high at last the contest rose, from words they almost came to blows: when luckily came by a third——to him the question they referred; and begged he'd tell 'em, if he knew, whether the thing was green or blue. "Sirs," cries the umpire, "cease you pother, the creature's neither one nor t'other; I caught the animal last night, and viewed it o'er by candlelight—I marked it well—'twas black as jet——You stare—but sirs, I've got it yet, and can produce it."—"Pray, sir, do: I'll lay my life the thing is blue." "And I'll be sworn, that when you've seen the reptile, you'll pronounce him green."

"Well then, at once to end the doubt," replies the man, "I'll turn him out; and when before your eyes I've set him, if you *don't* find him black, I'll eat him." He said; then full before their sight produced the beast, and lo!—'twas white! Both stared! the man looked wondrous wise! "White?" stammered Blue; "What! white?" Green cries, when he'd recovered power of tongue; for all were right, and all were wrong.—Then, gazing at the creature's baffling hue, the *men* changed colour—they looked VERY BLUE!

IV.—THE COUNTRY SQUIRE.—Bentley Ballads.

In a small pretty village in Nottinghamshire, there formerly lived a respectable Squire, who excell'd all his friends in amusements athletic, and whose manner of living was far from ascetic. A wife he had taken for better for worse, whose temper had proved an intolerant curse; but at length, to his great and unspeakable joy, she died when presenting a fine little boy. Strange fancies men have;—the father designed to watch o'er the dawn of his son's youthful mind—that, only approached by the masculine gender, no room should be left him for feelings more tender. "Had I ne'er seen a woman," he often would sigh, "what Squire in the country so happy as I!" The boy was intelligent, active, and bright, and took in his studies uncommon delight;—no juvenile follies distracted his mind—no visions of bright eyes or damsels unkind, and those fair demi-sisterly beings so gay, yclept "pretty cousins," ne'er popped in his way: till at length this remarkably singular son could number of years that had passed twenty-one. Now the father had settled, his promising son should his studies conclude when he reached twenty-one: and he went with a heart beating high with emotion, to launch the young man on life's turbulent ocean. As they entered the town, a young maiden tripped by, with a cheek like a rose, and a light laughing eye. "Oh! father, what's that?" cried the youth with delight, as this vision of loveliness burst on his sight? "Oh that," cried the cautious and politic Squire, who did not the youth's ardent glances admire, "is only a thing called a Goose, my dear son—we shall see many more ere our visit is done." Blooming damsels now passed with their butter and cheese, whose beauty might even an anchorite please: "Merely geese!" said the Squire: "don't mind them, my dear; there are many things better worth looking at here." As onwards they passed, every step brought to view some spectacle equally curious and new; and the joy of the youth hardly knew any bounds at the rope-dancers, tumblers, and merry-go-rounds. And soon, when the tour of the town was completed, the father resolved that the boy should be treated; so, pausing an instant, he said, "My dear son, a new era to-day in your life has begun: now of all this bright scene and the gayeties in it, choose whatever you like—it is yours from this minute." "Choose whatever I like?" cried the youthful recluse; "Oh, thank you, dear father, then give me—a goose!"

V.—THE RAZOR-SELLER.—Dr. Wolcot.

A fellow, in a market-town, most musical cried "Razors!" up and down, and offered twelve for eighteen-pence; which certainly seemed wondrous cheap, and, for the money, quite a heap, as every man should buy—with cash and sense. A country bumpkin the great offer heard: poor Hodge! who suffered by a thick, black beard, that seemed a shoe-brush stuck beneath his nose; with cheerfulness the eighteen-pence he paid, and proudly to himself, in whispers, said, "This rascal stole the razors, I suppose: no matter, if the fellow be a knave, provided that the razors shave, it sartinly will be a monstrous prize." So, home the clown with his good fortune went, smiling,—in heart and soul content,—and quickly soaped himself to ears and eyes. Being well lathered from a dish or tub, Hodge now began with grinning pain to grub, just like a hedger cutting furze: 'twas a vile razor—then the rest he tried—all were impostors. "Ah!" Hodge sighed, "I wish my eighteen-pence within my purse." In vain to chase his beard, and bring the graces, he cut, and dug, and winced, and stamped, and swore; brought blood, and danced, gaped, grinned, and made wry faces, and dashed each horrid razor on the floor. His muzzle, formed of opposition stuff, firm as a statesman, would not lose its ruff, so kept it—laughing at the steel and suds. Hodge, in a passion, stretched his angry jaws, vowing the direst vengeance, with clenched claws, on the vile cheat that sold the goods. "Razors! a vile confounded dog! not fit to scrape a hog!"

Hodge sought the fellow—found him, and began:—"Perhaps, Master Razor-rogue, to you 'tis fun, that people flay themselves out of their lives: you rascal! for an hour have I been grubbing, giving my scoundrel whiskers here a scrubbing, with razors just like oyster-knives. Sirrah! I tell you, you're a knave, to cry up razors that can't shave." "Friend," quoth the razor-merchant, "I'm no knave: as for the razors that you bought, upon my word I never thought—ha, ha!—that they would shave." "Not think they'd shave!" cried Hodge, with wondering eyes, and voice not much unlike an Indian yell; "what were they made for, then, you dog?" he cries. "Made!" quoth the fellow, with a smile—"*to sell.*" How Hodge retired need not in terms be told: he felt that *he* had been completely "sold."

VI.—THE DOCTOR AND HIS APPRENTICE.—Anon.

A pupil of the Æsculapian school was just prepared to quit his master's rule; not that he knew his trade, as it appears, but that he then had learnt it seven years. Yet think not that in knowledge he was cheated; all that he had to study still, was,—when a man was well or ill, and how, if sick, he should be treated. One morn he thus addressed his master:—"Dear sir, my honoured father bids me say, if I could now and then a visit pay, he thinks, with you, to notice how you do, my business I might learn a little faster." "The thought is happy," the preceptor cries; "a better

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Æsculapian line, lived at Newcastle-upon-Tyne: no man could better gild a pill, or make a bill, or mix a draught, or bleed, or blister, or draw a tooth out of your head, or chatter scandal by your bed, or spread a plaster. His fame full six miles round the country ran; in short, in reputation he was *solus*: all the old women called him "A fine man!"—his name was Bolus.

Benjamin Bolus, though in *trade*,—which oftentimes will genius fetter,—read works of fancy, it is said, and cultivated the *Belles Lettres*. And why should this be thought so odd? can't men have taste who cure a phthisic? Of poetry, though patron god, Apollo patronises physic. Bolus loved verse;—and took so much delight in't, that his prescriptions he resolved to write in't. No opportunity he e'er let pass of writing the directions on his labels, in dapper couplets—like Gay's Fables, or rather like the lines in Hudibras. Apothecary's verse!—and where's the treason? 'Tis simple honest dealing—not a crime: when patients swallow physic without reason, it is but fair to give a little rhyme.

He had a patient lying at death's door, some three miles from the town—it might be four; to whom one evening Bolus sent an article, in pharmacy that's called cathartical; and on the label of the stuff, he wrote this verse (which one would think was clear enough, and terse) "*When taken, to be well shaken.*"——Next morning, early, Bolus rose, and to the patient's house he goes upon his pad, which a vile trick of stumbling had: it was indeed a very sorry hack; but that's of course: for what's expected from a horse, with an apothecary on his back?

Bolus arrived, and gave a doubtful tap, between a single and a double rap.—Knocks of this kind are given by gentlemen who teach to dance, by tiddlers, and by opera-singers: one loud, and then a little one behind, as if the knocker fell, by chance, out of their fingers.—The servant let him in with dismal face, long as a courtier's out of place—portending some disaster: John's countenance as rueful looked and grim, as if the apothecary had physicked him, and not his master. "Well, how's the patient?" Bolus said. John shook his head. "Indeed?—hum:—ha!—that's very odd! he took the draught?"—John gave a nod "Well—how?—What then?—Speak out! you dunce." "Why, then," says John, "we *shook* him once." "Shook him!—how?" Bolus stammered out. "We jolted him about." "What! shake a patient, man?—a shake won't do" "No, sir—and so we gave him two." "Two shakes!—odds curse! 'twould make the patient worse." "It did so, sir—and so a third we tried." "Well, and what then?"—"Then, sir, my master—died!"

VIII.—A WATERLOO BALLAD.—Hood.

To Waterloo, with sad ado, and many a sigh and groan, amongst the dead came Patty Head, to look for Peter Stone. "Oh, prithee tell, good sentinel, if I shall find him here; I'm come to weep upon his corse, my Ninety-second dear! Into our town a

sergeant came, with ribbons all so fine a-flaunting in his cap; alas! his bow enlisted mine. They taught him how to turn his toes, and stand as stiff as starch; I thought that it was Love and May, but it was Love and March. A sorry march indeed to leave the friends he might have kep'; no march of intellect it was, but quite a foolish step. Oh, prithee tell, good sentinel, if hereabout he lies: I want a corpse with reddish hair, and very sweet blue eyes." Her sorrow on the sentinel appeared to deeply strike: "Walk in," he said, "among the dead, and pick out which you like." And soon she picked out Peter Stone, half turned into a corse; a cannon was his bolster, and his mattress was a horse. "Oh, Peter Stone! Oh, Peter Stone! sure here has been a skrimmage; what have they done to your poor breast, that used to hold my image?" "Oh, Patty Head! Oh, Patty Head! you've come to my last kissing, before I'm set in the gazette as wounded, dead, and missing. Alas, a splinter of a shell right in my stomach sticks; French mortars don't agree so well with stomachs—as French bricks. This very night a merry dance at Brussels was to be: instead of opening a ball, a ball has opened me. Its billet every bullet has, and well it does fulfil it; I wish mine hadn't come so straight, but been a crooked billet. And then there came a cuirassier, and cut me on the chest; he had no pity in his heart, for he had steeled his breast. Next thing, a lancer with his lance begun to thrust away; I call'd for quarter—but, alas, it was not quarter-day: he ran his spear right through my arm, just here above the joint; O Patty dear, it was no joke, although it had a point. With loss of blood I fainted off, as dead as women do; but soon by charging over me, the Cold-stream brought me too. With kicks, and cuts, and balls, and blows, I throb and ache all over; I'm quite convinced the field of Mars is not a field of clover. O, why did I a soldier turn for paltry gain and pelf! I might have been a butcher in business for myself. O why did I the bounty take!" (and here he gasped for breath) "my shilling's worth of *list* is nailed upon the door of death. Without a coffin I shall lie, and sleep my sleep eternal; not even a shell,—my only chance of being made a kernal. Oh, Patty dear, our wedding bells shall never ring at Chester; here must I lie in honour's bed, that is not worth a tester. Farewell, my regimental mates, with whom I used to dress; my corps is changed, and I am now in quite another mess. Farewell, my Patty dear; I have no dying consolation, except when I am dead, you'll go and see the illumination." But Peter didn't die just then; fate was, like him, a jester: his Patty's *Head* he changed to *Stone*, and he lived—to die at Chester.

IX.—TOBY TOSSPOT.—Colman.

Alas! what pity 'tis that regularity, like Isaac Shove's, is such a rarity. But there are swilling wights in London town, termed —jolly dogs,—choice spirits—*alias*, swine; who pour, in midnight revel, bumpers down, making their throats a thoroughfare for wine. These spendthrifts, who life's pleasures thus run on, dozing with

headaches till the afternoon, lose half men's regular estate of sun, by borrowing too largely of the moon. One of this kidney,—Toby Tosspot hight,—was coming from the Bedford, late at night: and being *Bacchi plenus*,—full of wine, although he had a tolerable notion of aiming at progressive motion, 'twasn't direct——'twas serpentine. He worked with sinuosities along, like Monsieur Corkscrew, worming through a cork; not straight, like Corkscrew's proxy, stiff Don Prong, a fork. At length, with near four bottles in his pate; he saw the moon shining on Shove's brass plate; when reading, "Please to ring the bell;" and being civil beyond measure, "Ring it!" says Toby, "very well; I'll ring it with a deal of pleasure." Toby, the kindest soul in all the town, gave it a jerk that almost jerked it down. He waited full two minutes—no one came; he waited full two minutes more; and then, says Toby, "If he's deaf I'm not to blame; I'll pull it for the gentleman again." But the first peal 'woke Isaac in a fright, who, quick as lightning, popping up his head, sat on his head's antipodes, in bed, pale as a parsnip,—bolt upright. At length, he, wisely, to himself doth say,—calming his fears,—"Tush! 'tis some fool has rung and run away;" when peal the second rattled in his ears. Shove jumped into the middle of the floor; and, trembling at each breath of air that stirred, he groped down stairs, and opened the street-door, while Toby was performing peal the third. Isaac eyed Toby, fearfully askant, and saw he was a strapper stout and tall; then put this question:—"Pray, sir, what dy'e want?" Says Toby,—"I want nothing, sir, at all." "Want nothing!—Sir, you've pulled my bell, I vow, as if you'd jerk it off the wire." Quoth Toby,—gravely making him a bow,—"I pulled it, sir, at your desire." "At mine!"—"Yes, yours; I hope I've done it well; high time for bed, sir: I was hastening to it; but if you write up—*Please to ring the bell*, common politeness makes me stop and do it."

X.—RUSTIC LOGIC—ANONYMOUS.

Hodge, a poor honest country lout, not over-stocked with learning, chanced on a summer's eve to meet the Vicar, home returning. "Ah! Master Hodge," the Vicar cried, "what, still as wise as ever? the people in the village say that you are wondrous clever." "Why, Measter Parson, as to that I beg you'll right conceive me; I do na brag, but yet I knaw a thing or two, believe me." "We'll try your skill," the Parson cried, "for learning what digestion: and this you'll prove or right or wrong, by solving me a question. Noah, of old, three babies had, or grown-up children rather:—Shem, Ham, and Japhet they were called;—now who was Japhet's father?" "Rat it!" cried Hodge, and scratched his head; "that does my wits belabour: but howsomde'er, I'll homeward run, and ax old Giles my neighbour."

To Giles he went, and put the case with circumspect intention: "Thou fool," cried Giles, "I'll make it clear to thy dull compre-

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Locke and Bacon—addle-headed fools! all maxims but the wranglers' I disown, and stick to one sound argument—*your own.* Since you have proved to me, I don't deny, that a pie-John is the same as a John-pie—what follows then, but as a thing of course, that a horse-*chestnut* is a chestnut-*horse*?" Tom scampered home in dudgeon,—sought his room,—locked himself in to fret, and stamp, and fume; if Logic failed to make a horse, alas! he felt that it indeed had made—an *Ass!*

XII.—FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY.—Hood.

Ben Battle was a soldier bold, and used to war's alarms; but a cannon-ball shot off his legs, so he laid down his arms! Now, as they bore him off the field, said he, "Let others shoot, for here I leave my second leg, and the Forty-second foot!"——The army surgeons made him limbs: said he, "They're only pegs: but there's as wooden members quite, as represent my legs!"

Now Ben long loved a pretty maid, whose name was Nelly Gray; and he went to pay her his *devours*, when he'd devoured his pay. But when he called on Nelly Gray, she made him quite a scoff; and when she saw his wooden legs, began to take them off! "Oh, Nelly Gray! oh, Nelly Gray! is this your love so warm? the love that loves a scarlet coat, should be more *uniform!*" Said she, "I loved a soldier once, for he was blythe and brave: but I will never have a man, with both legs in the grave. Before you had those timber toes, your love I did allow: but then, you know, you stand upon *another footing* now!" "Oh, Nelly Gray! oh, Nelly Gray! for all your jeering speeches, at duty's call I left my legs in Badajos's *breaches!*" "Why then," said she, "you've lost the feat of legs in war's alarms: and now you cannot wear your shoes, upon your feat of arms." "Oh, false and fickle Nelly Gray, I know why you refuse: though I've no feet, some other man is standing in my shoes! I wish I ne'er had seen your face, but now, a long farewell! for you will be my death:—alas! you will not be my *Nell.*"

Now when he went from Nelly Gray his heart so heavy got, and life was such a burthen grown, it made him take a knot. So round his melancholy neck a rope he did entwine; and, for the second time in life, enlisted in the line! One end he tied around a beam, and then removed his pegs; and, as his legs were off, of course he soon was off his legs. And there he hung till he was dead as any nail in town: for, though distress had cut him up, it could not cut him down. A dozen men sat on his corpse to find out why he died; and they buried Ben in four cross-roads, with a *stake* in his inside!

XIII.—THE WIDOW'S CHOICE.—Bon Gaultier Ballads.

When folks with headstrong passion blind, to play the fool make up their mind, they're sure to come with phrases nice, and modest air, for your advice; but as a truth unfailing make it, they

ask, but never mean to take it: 'tis not advice they want, in fact, but confirmation in their act. Now mark what did, in such a case, a worthy priest who knew the race. A dame more buxom, blithe, and free, than Mrs Plump. you'll rarely see; so smart her dress, so trim her shape, ne'er hostess offered juice of grape, could for her trade wish better sign; her looks gave flavour to the wine. A smile for all, a welcome glad,—a jovial, coaxing way she had; and, what was more her fate than blame,—a nine months' widow was our dame. But toil was hard, for trade was good, and gallants sometimes will be rude. "And what can a lone woman do? the nights are long and eerie too. John Flagon there 's a likely man, none better draws or taps a can; he's just the man, I think, to suit, if I could bring my courage to't." With thoughts like these, her mind is crossed: the dame, they say, who doubts is lost. "But then the risk? I'll beg a slice of our good parish priest's advice." Pranked in her best, with looks demure, she seeks his reverence, to be sure;—asks if he thinks she ought to wed.—"With such a business on my head, I'm worried off my legs with care, and need some help to keep things square. I've thought of John, sir, truth to tell! he's steady, knows his business well.—What do you think?" When thus he met her: "Oh, take him, ma'am, you can't do better!" "But then the danger, my good pastor, if of the man I make the master.—There is no trusting to these men." "Well, well, my dear, don't have him then!" "But help I must have, there's the curse. I may go farther and fare worse." "Why, take him then!" "But if he should turn out a thankless ne'er-do-good;—in drink and riot waste my all, and rout me out of house and hall?" "Don't have him then! But I've a plan to clear your doubts, if any can. The bells a peal are ringing,—hark! Go now, and what they tell you mark. If they say 'yes!' wed and be blest—if 'no,' why—do as you think best." The bells rung out a triple-bob: oh, how the widow's heart did throb to hear them bang their burden on,—"Marry John, marry John, dear John!" The bells were not long hanging idle: a week—and they rang for her bridal. But, woe the while, they might as well have rung the poor dame's parting knell. The rosy dimples left her cheek, she lost her beauties plump and sleek; John Flagon oftener kicked than kissed, and backed his orders with his fist; proving by deeds as well as words, that servants make the worst of lords. She seeks the Priest, her ire to wreak, and speaks as angry women speak, with tiger looks, and bosom swelling, storming that e'er she took his telling. To all, his calm reply was this:—"You must have read the bells amiss. If they have led you wrong in aught, your wish, I fear, inspired the thought. Just go and mark well what they say." And off she trudged upon her way. Now sure enough their chime went on—"Don't have John, don't have John, knave John!" "Too true, alas! there's not a doubt; what could my ears have been about?" She had forgot, that, as we think, the bell is ever sure to clink. Be you more wise, and ponder well, nor be misled by beau or bell(e.)

XIV.—ASK MAMMA!—A. Melville Bell.

A Bachelor Squire of no great possession, long come to what should have been years of discretion, determined to change his old habits of life, and comfort his days by taking a wife. He had long been the sport of the girls of the place,—they liked his good, simple, quiet, cheery, fat face; and wherever he went to a tea-drinking party, the flirts were in raptures—our friend was so hearty! They'd fasten a cord near the foot of the door, and bring down the jolly old chap on the floor: they'd pull off his wig while he floundered about, and hide it, and laugh till be hunted it out: they would tie his coat-tails to the back of his seat, and scream with delight when he rose to his feet: they would send him at Christmas a box full of bricks, and play on his temper all manner of tricks. One evening they pressed him to play on the flute, and he blew in his eyes a rare scatter of soot! He took it so calmly, and laughed while he spoke, that they hugged him to pardon their nasty "black joke." One really appeared so sincere in her sorrow, that he vowed to himself he would *ask* her to-morrow,—and not one of the girls but would envy her lot, if this jolly old bachelor's offer she got; for they never had dreamed of his playing the beau, or doubtless they would not have treated him so. However, next day, to fair Fanny's amazement, she saw him approach as she stood at the casement; and he very soon gave her to know his desire, that she should become the dear wife of the squire. "La! now, Mr Friendly, what would they all say?"—but she thought that not one of *them* all would say nay:—she was flustered, with pleasure, and coyness, and pride, to be thus unexpectedly sued for a bride. She did not refuse him, but yet did not like to say, "Yes," all at once—the hot iron to strike: so, to give the proposal the greater eclat, she said, "Dear Mr Friendly,—you'd best ask mamma!" "Good morning then, Fanny, I'll do what you say: as she's out, I shall call in the course of the day." Fanny blushed as she gave him her hand for good-bye, and she did not know which to do first,—laugh or cry; to wed such a dear darling man, nothing loth, for variety's sake, in her joy, she did both! "O what will mamma say, and all the young girls?" she thought as she played with her beautiful curls. "I wish I had said yes at once,—'twas too bad not to ease his dear mind—O, I wish that I had! I wish he had asked me to give him a kiss,—but he can't be in doubt of my feelings—that's bliss! O, I wish that mamma would come home for the news; such a good, dear, kind soul, she will never refuse! There's the bell—here she is....O, mamma!"—"Child, preserve us! What ails you, dear Fanny? What makes you so nervous?"

"I really can't tell you just now,—by and bye Mr Friendly will call—and he'll tell you—not I." "Mr Friendly, my child! what about him, I pray?" "O, mamma,—he's to call—in the course of the day. He was here just this moment, and shortly you'll see he'll make you as happy as he has made me.—I declare he has seen you come home,—that's his ring: I will leave you and him now to settle the thing." Fanny left in a flutter: her

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XVII.—THE MAIDEN'S REQUEST.—Lover.

I'll tell you a story that's not in Tom Moore:—Young Love likes to knock at a pretty girl's door: so he called upon Lucy—'twas past ten o'clock; like a spruce *single* man, with a smart *double* knock. Now, a handmaid, whatever her fingers be at, will run like a *puss* when she hears a *rat-tat*; so Lucy ran up, and in two seconds more, had questioned the stranger, and answered the door. The meeting was bliss, but the parting was woe; for the moment will come when such comers must go; so she sighed, and she whispered—poor innocent thing—"The next time you come, love, pray come with a *ring*."

XVIII.—THE LOVER'S SACRIFICE.—Woodworth.

A gay gallant once wooed a fair, of virtue, wealth, and graces rare, but vainly had preferred his claim—the maiden owned no answering flame: at length, by doubt and anguish torn, suspense too painful to be borne, low at her feet the lover kneeled, and in pathetic terms appealed:—"Oh, have compassion, angel fair! pity my languishing despair! Love, that no language can express, implores you now for happiness! Nothing on earth but you I prize, all else is trifling in my eyes; and cheerfully would I resign the wealth of worlds to call you mine!" The lady smilingly replied:—"If my consent to be your bride will make you happy, then be blest; but grant me, first, one small request:—the sacrifice I must demand, and in return will give my hand." "A sacrifice! oh, speak its name! for you I'd forfeit wealth and fame; take my whole fortune—every cent"—"No, no, it was not wealth I meant." "Must I the realms of Neptune trace? Speak but the word—where'er the place, for you, dear idol of my soul, I would explore the frozen pole! Shall I, like Bonaparte, aspire to be the world's imperial Sire? express the wish, and here I vow to place a diadem on that brow; the crown of France to set upon it—or else the very best French bonnet!" "Sir, these are trifles," she replied; "but if you wish me for your bride, to link your destiny with mine, on one condition I am thine: 'twill then become my pleasing duty to contemplate a husband's beauty. Permit me then—'tis all I ask—now to commence the pleasing task: just let me, as becomes my place, cut those huge whiskers from your face." Like lightning from the ground he sprung, the while amazement loosed his tongue:—"Cut off my whiskers! O, she jeers: I'd sooner lose my nose, or ears. Madam, I'd not be so disgraced, so lost to fashion and to taste, to win an empress for my wife! What! sacrifice the grace of life! my whiskers! whew!"—He said no more, but quickly vanished through the door, and sought a less obdurate fair, to take the beau with all his hair!

XIX.—CORNELIUS AGRIPPA.—Barham.

"And hast thou nerve enough?" he said—that grey old man, above whose head unnumbered years had rolled;—"and hast thou

nerve to view," he cried, "the incarnate Fiend that Heaven defied? Art thou indeed so bold? Say, canst thou, with unshrinking gaze, sustain, rash youth, the withering blaze of that unearthly eye that blasts where'er it lights; the breath that, like the Simoom, scatters death, on all that yet can die? Dar'st thou confront that fearful form that rides the whirlwind and the storm, in wild unholy revel? the terrors of that blasted brow—archangel's once, though ruined now—ay, dar'st thou face—the Devil?" "I dare!" the desperate youth replied, and placed him by that old man's side in fierce and frantic glee; unblanched his cheek and firm his limb:—"No paltry, juggling fiend; but him—himself—I fain would see, in all his Gorgon terrors clad! his worst, his fellest shape!" the lad rejoined in reckless tone. "Have then thy wish!" Agrippa said; and sighed, and shook his hoary head, with many a bitter groan. He drew the mystic circle's bound, with skull and cross-bones fenced around; be traced full many a sigil there, he muttered many a backward prayer, that sounded like a curse. "He comes!" he cried with wild grimace, "the fellest of Apollyon's race!" Then in his startled pupil's face—he dashed.....*an empty purse!*

XX.—THE ALARM.—Anon.

His eye was stern and wild; his cheek was pale and cold as clay; upon his tighten'd lip a smile of fearful meaning lay. He mused awhile, but not in doubt; no trace of doubt was there; it was the steady, solemn pause of resolute despair! Once more he look'd upon the scroll, once more its words he read; then calmly, with unflinching hand, its folds before him spread. I saw him bare his throat, and seize the blue, cold, gleaming steel, and grimly try the temper'd edge he was so soon to feel. A sickness crept upon my heart, and dizzy swam my head; I could not stir—I could not cry—I felt benumb'd and dead! Black icy horrors struck me dumb, and froze my senses o'er; I closed my eyes in utter fear, and strove to think no more.—Again I look'd: a fearful change across his face had pass'd; he seemed to rave—on cheek and lip a flaky foam was cast. He raised on high the glittering blade;—then first I found a tongue: "Hold, madman! stay the frantic deed!" I cried, and forth I sprung. He heard me, but he heeded not; one glance around he gave; and ere I could arrest his hand, he had—begun to shave!

XXI.—THE QUARREL.—Charles Mackay.

"Hush, Joanna! 'tis quite certain that the coffee was not strong:—own your error,—I'll forgive you!—why so stubborn in the wrong?" "You'll forgive me? sir, I hate you! you have used me like a churl: have my senses ceased to guide me? do you think I am a girl?" "O, no! you're a girl no longer, but a woman formed to please, and it's time you should abandon childish follies such as these" "Oh! I hate you! but why vex me?

if I'm old, you're older still: I'll no longer be your victim, and the creature of your will." "But, Joanna, why this pother? it might happen I was wrong: but, if common sense inspire me, still, that coffee was not strong." "Common sense! you never had it! Oh! that ever I was born to be wedded to a MONSTER who repays my love with scorn." "Well, Joanna, we'll not quarrel: what's the use of bitter strife? but I'm sorry I am married;—I was mad to take a wife!" "Mad indeed! I'm glad you know it; but if law can break the chain, I'LL BE TIED TO YOU NO LONGER *in this misery and pain.*" "Hush, Joanna! shall the servants hear you argue ever wrong? can you not have done with folly? own the coffee was not strong." "Oh! you goad me past endurance, trifling with my woman's heart; but I loathe you and detest you! villain! monster! let us part." Long this foolish quarrel lasted; till Joanna, half afraid that her empire was in peril, summoned never-failing aid,—summoned tears in copious torrents,—tears, and sobs, and piteous sighs: well she knew the potent practice, the artillery of the eyes. And it chanced as she imagined: beautiful in grief was she, beautiful to best advantage, and a tender heart had he. Kneeling at her side he soothed her, —"Dear Joanna! I was wrong! never more I'll contradict you, —but, O, make my coffee strong."

XXII.—THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE.—SOUTHEY.

A well there is in the west country, and a clearer one never was seen; there is not a wife in the west country, but has heard of the Well of St Keyne. An oak and an elm-tree stand beside, and behind does an ash-tree grow, and a willow from the bank above droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St Keyne; joyfully he drew nigh, for from cock-crow he had been travelling, and there was not a cloud in the sky. He drank of the water so cool and clear, for thirsty and hot was he; and he sat him down upon the bank, under the willow tree.

There came a man from the neighbouring town, at the Well to fill his pail; on the Well-side he rested it, and he bade the stranger hail. "Now, art thou a bachelor, stranger?" quoth he; "for, an' if thou hast a wife, the happiest draught thou hast drunk this day that ever thou didst in thy life: or has thy good woman—if one thou hast—ever here in Cornwall been? for, an' if she have, I'll venture my life she has drunk of the Well of St Keyne." "I have left a good woman who never was here," the stranger he made reply; "but that my draught should be better for that, I pray you answer me why." "St Keyne," quoth the Cornish-man, "many a time drank of this crystal Well, and before the angel summoned her, she laid on the water a spell:—if the husband, of this gifted Well shall drink before his wife, a happy man henceforth is he, for he shall be master for life; but if the wife should drink of it first,—heaven help the husband then!"—The stranger stooped to the Well of St Keyne, and drank of the water again

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

with the tale, the other licks his chops, makes his congée, and seeks this shop of shops. Entering, he seats himself just at his ease. "What will you take, sir?"——"*Vat you please!*"—— The waiter looked as pale as Paris plaster, and, upstairs running, thus addressed his master: "These vile *Mounseers* come over sure in pairs; sir, there's another '*vat you please*' down stairs!" ——This made the landlord rather crusty; "Too much of one thing"—the proverb's somewhat musty: *once* to be done his anger didn't touch; but when a *second* time they tried the treason—it made him *crusty*, sir, and with good reason:—you would be crusty were you *done* so much.

There is a kind of instrument which greatly helps a serious argument, and which, when properly applied, occasions some most unpleasant tickling sensations!—'twould make more clumsy folks than Frenchmen skip; 'twould *strike* you presently—a stout horse-whip. This instrument our *maitre d'hote* most carefully concealed beneath his coat; and, seeking instantly the Frenchman's station, addressed him with the usual salutation. Our Frenchman, bowing to his threadbare knees, determined while the iron's hot to strike it, quick with his lesson answers——"*Vat you please!*" But scarcely had he let the sentence slip, when round his shoulders twines the pliant whip. "Sare, sare! ah, *misericorde! parbleu!* oh dear! Monsieur! vat make you use me so? Vat you call dis?" ——"Ah, don't you know? that's *what I please*," says Bony, "how d'ye like it? Your friend, though I paid dearly for his funning, deserved the goose he gained, sir, for his cunning; but you, Monsieur, or else my time I'm wasting, are *goose* enough—and only wanted *basting*."

XXIV.—A DEAR DINNER.—Anon.

A Monsieur from the Gallic shore, who, though not over rich, wished to appear so, came over in a ship, with friends a score,—poor emigrants, whose wealth, good lack! dwelt only on each ragged back. They thought him rich, they heard him oft declare so, for he was proud as Satan's self, and often bragged about his pelf; and as a proof the least that he could give, he promised, when on land, at the first inn they saw, in style most grand. to give them all a feast. Then at the very first hotel on shore they stopped—but here occurred a grievous bore: Monsieur of English knew but little; the landlord knew of French no tittle. In ordering dinner therefore 'tis no wonder that there occurred a serious blunder. The order seemed immense.to Boniface; but the more expense, to him the greater fun; for all that from the order he could trace, was, "Monsieur Bull, you lette me have, I say—vich for vid cash I sall you pay—fifteen of—those vid vich the sheep do run." From which old Tapps could only understand (but whether right or wrong cared not a button) that what Monsieur desired with air so grand, was for the dinner fifteen legs of mutton! "A dinner most enormous!" thought the elf; "why, each must eat a gigot to himself!" However they seemed a set of hungry

curs; and so without more bother or demurs, he to his cook the order soon expressed, and fifteen legs of mutton quick were dressed. And now within the parlour, all elate, the Frenchman's friends the dinner-hour await; joy sparkled in their eager eyes, when they beheld with glad surprise, Tapps come with leg of mutton hot, smoking, just taken from the pot. They stared and chuckled more and more, when two they saw, then three, then four! and then a fifth their wondering glances blessed; and then a sixth, larger than all the rest! The Frenchman's visage from the first had changed; he writhed with wrath as Tapps the dishes ranged, and while his hungry friends prepared to feast, he got his tongue at last for speech released. "Tenez, monsieur, hola! vy for you make dis vera great mistake? vy for you bring to me dese mouton legs?" Tapps with politest bow his pardon begs—"I've done but as you ordered, sir," said he; "did you not order fifteen legs of me? Six are now ready,—I have placed the chairs; the other nine are nearly done down stairs! Here John!" "Ah no! no Jean! vot ass you are to bring me to dis pass! Take 'vay dis meat, for vich I sall no pay; I did no order dat."—"What's that you say?" Tapps answered with a frown and stare; "you ordered fifteen legs, I'll swear." "No, no; de tings vid vich de sheep do run!" "Why, that's the same—come, come, I'll not be done." "Parbleu! Monsieur, vy you no comprehend? you may take back de legs into de pot; I tell you, sare, 'tis not dese legs I vant—but de small leetle tings vid vich the sheep do trot." Dumfoundered to the door the landlord totters—"Why, hang the fool! he wanted only trotters!" The boastful Gaul then 'mid his comrades' scoff, shrugged up his shoulders, and, in haste, slunk off.

XXV.—THE FARMER'S BLUNDER.—Anon.

A Farmer once to London went, to pay the worthy Squire his rent: he comes, he knocks, soon entrance gains—who at the door such guest detains? Forth struts the Squire exceeding smart: "Farmer, you're welcome to my heart; you've brought my rent then—to a hair! The best of tenants, I declare!" The steward called,—the account made even,—the money paid,—the receipt is given. "Well," said the Squire, "now you shall stay and dine with me, old friend, to-day." Hob scratched his ears, and held his hat, and said, "No, zur, two words to that: for look, d'ye see, when I'ze to dine with gentlefolks so cruel fine, I'ze use to make—and 'tis no wonder—in word or deed, some plaguy blunder: so, if your honour will permit, I'll with your servants pick a bit." "Pooh!" says the Squire, "it sha'n't be done," and to the parlour pushed him on. To all around he nods and scrapes, not waiting-maid or butler scapes; with often bidding takes his seat, but at a distance mighty great. Though often asked to draw his chair, he nods, nor comes an inch more near. By madam served,—with body bended,—with knife and fork, and arms extended,—he reached as far as he was able, to plate that overhung the table; with little morsels cheats his chops, and

in the passage some he drops. To show where most his heart inclined, he talked and drank to John behind: when drunk to in a modish way, "Your love's sufficient, zur," he'd say; and to be thought a man of manners, still rose to make his awkward honours. "Tush," says the Squire, "pray, keep your sitting." "No, no!" he cries, "zur, 'tis not fitting; though I'm no scholar versed in letters, I knows my duty to my betters." Much mirth the farmer's ways afford, and hearty laughs went round the board; thus the first course was ended well, but at the next—ah! what befel? The dishes were now timely placed, and table with fresh luxury graced: when drunk to by a neighbouring charmer, up, as usual, starts the farmer: a wag, to carry on the joke, thus to his servant softly spoke:—"Come hither, Dick, step gently there, and pull away the farmer's chair." 'Tis done! his congée made, the clown draws back, and stoops to sit him down; but by his body overweighed, and of his trusty seat betrayed, as men at twigs in rivers sprawling, he caught the cloth to save his falling. In vain! sad fortune! down he wallowed, and rattling all the dishes followed! Here tumbled turkeys, tarts, and widgeons, and there minced pies, and geese, and pigeons. What an ado! 'twixt belles and beaux,—some rage, some wail, and rub their clothes! One spark bemoans his greased waistcoat; one, "Rot him, he has spoiled my best coat!" Amidst the rout the farmer long some pudding sucked, and held his tongue; at length aroused by general screech, he scrambles up to make his speech. "Plague take't! I'ze tell you how 'twould be; look, here's a pickle, zurs, d've see?"—"Peace, brute, begone!" the ladies cry: the beaux exclaim, "Fly, rascal, fly!" "I'll tear his eyes out," squeaks Miss Dolly, "I'll pink his soul out," roars a bully. At this the Farmer shrinks with fear, and thinking 'twas ill tarrying here, runs off, and cries, "Ay, kill me then, whene'er you catch me here again!"

XXVI.—THE FARMER AND THE BARRISTER.—Smith.

A Counsel in the Common Pleas, who was esteemed a mighty wit upon the strength of a chance hit, amid a thousand flippancies, and his occasional bad jokes in bullying, bantering, browbeating, ridiculing and maltreating women or other timid folks, in a late cause resolved to hoax a clownish Yorkshire farmer—one, who, by his uncouth look and gait, appeared expressly meant by Fate for being quizzed and played upon: so, having tipped the wink to those in the back rows, who kept their laughter bottled down until our wag should draw the cork, he smiled jocosely on the clown, and went to work.

"Well, Farmer Numscull, how go calves at York?" "Why—not, sir, as they do wi' you, but on four legs instead of two." "Officer!" cried the legal elf, piqued at the laugh against himself, "do pray keep silence down below there. Now look at me, clown, and attend: have I not seen you somewhere, friend?" "Yees—very like—I often go there." "Our rustic's waggish—

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

I'm stripped—'tis raining cats and dogs." "Hush, hush!" quoth Hal, "I'm fast asleep;" and then he snored as loud and deep as a whole company of hogs. "But hark ye, Ben, I'll grant admittance at the same rate I paid myself." "Nay, master, leave me half the pittance," replied the avaricious elf. "No; all or none—a full acquittance; the terms I know are somewhat high; but you have fixed the price, not I—I won't take less—I can't afford it." So, finding all his haggling vain, Ben, with a growl and groan of pain, drew out the guinea and restored it.

"Surely you'll give me," growled the outwitted porter when again admitted, "something, now you've done your joking, for all this trouble, time, and soaking." "Oh, surely,—surely!" Harry said: "since, as you urge, I broke your rest, and you're half drowned and quite undressed, I'll give you," said the generous fellow—free, as most people are——when mellow,—"yes, I'll give you—leave to go to bed."

XXVIII.—THE FRENCHMAN AND THE RATS.—Anon.

A Frenchman once, who was a merry wight, passing to town from Dover in the night, near the road-side an ale-house chanced to spy; and being rather tired as well as dry, resolved to enter; but first he took a peep, in hopes a supper he might get, and cheap. He enters: "Hallo! garçon, if you please, bring me a leetel bit of bread and cheese; aussi, garçon! some portare too"—he said, "vich I sall take, and then myself to bed."

His supper done, some scraps of cheese were left, which our poor Frenchman, thinking it no theft, into his pocket put; then slowly crept to wished-for bed; but scarce a wink he slept, for on the floor some sacks of flour were laid, to which the rats a nightly visit paid. Our hero when undressed, popped out the light, put on his cap, and bade the world good night: but first the garment, which contained the fare, under his pillow he had placed with care. Sans ceremonie, soon the rats began; from sack to sack full greedily they ran; when, in their merry gambols smelling round, under the pillow, hah! the cheese they found; and, while at this feast they regaling sat, their happy jaws disturbed the Frenchman's nap; who, half awake, cries out, "Hallo! hallo! vat is dat nibbel at my pillow so? Ah! 'tis von huge, big, monstare rat! Vat is it dat he nibbel, nibbel at?" And then, instinctively, to calm his fears, he felt if all was right with both his ears.

In vain our little hero sought repose; sometimes the vermin galloped o'er his nose; and such the pranks they kept up all the night, that he, on end antipodes upright, bawling aloud, called stoutly for a light:—"Hallo! maison! garçon! landlord! I say! bring me de bill for vat I have to pay!"

The bill was brought, and to his great surprise, "Ten Shillings" charged—he scarce believes his eyes! With eager haste he runs it o'er, and, every time he views it, thinks it more. "Vy, sare! O sare! comment?—I sall no pay; vat! charge ten shellan for vat I've mangé?—a leetel sup of portare—dis vile bed, vare all

the rats do run about my head?" "Plague on those rats!" the landlord muttered out: "I wish, Mounseer, that I could make 'em scout: I'll pay him well that can." "Vat's dat you say! you'll pay him vell that can?—Attendez, pray: vill you dis charge forego dat I am at, if from your house I drive away de rat?" "With all my heart," the jolly host replies. "Ecoutez donc, ami," the Frenchman cries. "First, den—regardez, if you please—bring to dis spot a leetel bread and cheese. Eh bien! a half-filled pot of portare too; and den invite de rats to sup vid you; and after dat—no matter dey be villing—for vat dey eat you charge dem just ten shellan; and I am sure, ven dey behold de score, dey'll quit your house, and nevare come no more."

XXIX.—LODGINGS FOR SINGLE GENTLEMEN.—Colman

Who has e'er been in London, that overgrown place, has seen "*Lodgings to Let*," stare him full in the face. Some are good, and let dearly; while some, 'tis well known, are so dear, and so bad, they are best let alone.—

Will Waddle, whose temper was studious and lonely, hired lodgings that took *Single* Gentlemen only; but Will was so fat he appeared like a tun,—or like *two* "Single Gentlemen" rolled into one. He entered his rooms, and to bed he retreated; but, all the night long, he felt fevered and heated; and, though heavy to weigh as a score of fat sheep, he was not, by any means heavy to sleep. Next night 'twas the same—and the next—and the next! he perspired like an ox, he was nervous and vexed; week passed after week, till, by weekly succession, his weakly condition was past all expression.

In six months his acquaintance began much to doubt him; for his skin, "like a lady's loose gown," hung about him: he sent for a doctor, and cried, like a ninny, "I have lost many pounds—make me well—there's a guinea." The doctor looked wise:—"A slow fever," he said; prescribed sudorifics,—and going to bed. "Sudorifics in bed are, I tell you, humbugs! I've enough of them there without paying for drugs!" Will kicked out the doctor.—but when ill indeed, e'en dismissing the doctor don't always succeed; so, calling his host—he said—"Sir, do you know, I'm the *fat* "Single Gentleman," six months ago? Look ye, Landlord, I think," argued Will with a grin, "that with honest intentions you first *took me in*: but from that first night—to declare it I'm bold—I've been so very *hot*, that I'm sure I caught *cold!*" Quoth the Landlord,—"Till now I ne'er had a dispute; I've let lodgings ten years—I'm a *baker* to boot; in airing your sheets, sir, my wife is no sloven; and your bed is immediately—over my OVEN." "The OVEN!"—roars Will: says the host, "Why this passion? in that excellent bed died three people of fashion. Why so *crusty*, good sir?"—"Why!" cried Will in a taking, "who *would* not be crusty, with half a year's *baking*?"

Will paid for his rooms:—and the host with a sneer, said, "I see you've been *going* away half a year." "Friend, we can't well

agree ;—yet no quarrel," Will said :—" but I'd rather *not* perish, while you make your *bread*."

XXX—YORKSHIRE ANGLING.—Anon.

It happened once that a young Yorkshire clown, but newly come to far-famed London town, was gaping round at many a wondrous sight, grinning at all he saw with vast delight; attended by his terrier Tyke, that was as sharp as sharp may be: and thus the master and the dog, d'ye see, were very much alike. After wandering far and wide, and seeing every street and square, the parks, the plays, the Queen, and the Lord Mayor, with all in which your cockneys place their pride; and being quizzed by many a city spark, for coat of country cut, and red bair'd pate; he came at length to noisy Billingsgate. he saw the busy scene with mute surprise, opening at once, ears, mouth, and eyes, at the loud clamour, and the monstrous fish, hereafter doom'd to grace full many a dish. Close by him was a turbot on a stall, which, with stretch'd mouth, as if to pant for breath, seem'd in the agonies of death: said Lubin, "What name, sur, d'ye that fish call?" "That 'ere? a turbot;" ("Now, d'ye buy, buy, buy!") he answered, keeping up his business cry: then "Bless the noodle!" added the sarcastic elf; "A *flat* you see—so something like yourself." Said Lubin, "Do ye think, sur, that he'll bite?" "Why," said the fellow with a roguish grin, "his mouth is open, —put your finger in, and then you'll know." "No, sur," replied the wight, "I should not like to try; but there's my Tyke shall put his tail there, an' ye like." "Agreed," rejoined the man, and laughed delight. Within the turbot's teeth was placed the tail, and the fish bit with all his might: the dog no sooner felt the bite than off he ran, the dangling turbot meanwhile holding tight. The astonished man began most furiously to bawl _d rail; but, after numerous escapes and dodgings, Tyke safely got to Master Lubin's lodgings. Thither the fishmonger in anger flew.— Says Lubin, "Lunnun tricks on me wont do; I'ze come from York to queer such *flats* as you; and Tyke, my dog, is Yorkshire too!" "I'll York the whelp! I'll York him without fail, if I can catch him by his thievish tail." Tyke sprang out at his master's look, and caught the cockney by a hook! He roared and swore! Tyke tugged the more! while Lubin shouting, cheered and laughed. At last acknowledging the rustic's craft superior to his own, with many a groan the man released himself and sneaked away, and Tyke and Lubin dined upon the fish that day!

XXXI.—A RARA AVIS.—Anon.

A wealthy gentleman in Hertfordshire, not troubled with an overplus of brains, like many a worthy country squire, whose craniums give them very little pains, lived quietly on his own estate: he was a bachelor, but whether that argues in favour of his understanding, or militates against it, is a question that I

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XXXII.—THE SPIRIT OF CONTRADICTION.—Lloyd.

The very silliest things in life create the most material strife what scarce will suffer a debate, will oft produce the bitterest hate. "It is I" you say,——I say, "'Tis not I" Why, you grow warm—and I am hot. Thus each alike with passion glows, and words come first—and after, blows.

Friend Jerkin had an income clear, some fifty pounds or more a year; and rented, on the farming plan, grounds at much greater sums *per ann.* A man of consequence no doubt, 'mongst all his neighbours round about: he was of frank and open mind, too honest to be much refined; would smoke his pipe, and tell his tale, sing a good song, and drink his ale.

His wife was of another mould; her age was—neither young nor old; her features, strong, yet somewhat plain; her air, not bad, but rather vain; her temper, neither new nor strange; a woman's—very apt to change: what she most hated was—CONVICTION; what she most loved—FLAT CONTRADICTION! A charming housewife, ne'ertheless; tell me a thing she could not dress: soups, hashes, pickles, puddings, pies, nought came amiss—she was so wise! for she, bred twenty miles from town, had brought a world of breeding down, and Cumberland had seldom seen a farmer's wife with such a mien. She could not bear the sound of Dame; no;—"Mistress Jerkin" was her name.

Once on a time, the season fair for exercise and cheerful air, it happened in his morning's roam he killed some birds, and brought them home. "Here, Cicely, take away my gun: how shall we have these starlings done?" "—Done! what, my love? your wits are wild! starlings, my dear! they're thrushes, child."—"Nay, now, but look, consider, wife; they're starlings."—"No, upon my life! sure I can judge as well as you, I know a thrush and starling too."—"Who was it shot them, you or I? they're starlings!"—"Thrushes!"—"Wife, you lie."—"Pray, sir, take back your dirty word, I scorn your language as your bird; it ought to make a husband blush to treat a wife so 'bout a thrush."—"Thrush, Cicely!"—"Yes."—"A starling!"—"No."—The lie again, and then the blow. Blows carry strong and quick conviction, and mar the powers of contradiction. Peace soon ensued, and all was well: it were imprudence to rebel, or keep the ball up of debate against these arguments of weight.

A year rolled on in perfect ease; 'twas, "As you like!" and, "What you please!"—At length returned, in annual flight, the day of this most *fowlish* fight; quoth Cicely—"Ah, this charming life, no tumults now, no blows, no strife! what fools we were this day last year! Law! how you beat me then, my dear! Sure it was idle and absurd, to wrangle so about a bird, a bird not worth a single rush"—"A starling."—"No, my love, a thrush! that I'll maintain."—"That I'll deny!"—"You're wrong, good husband."—"Wife, you lie!" Again the self-same wrangle rose, again the lie, again the blows. Thus, every year, this man, or wife, begins the same domestic strife: thus, too, each year their quarrel ends

—they argue, fight, and kiss, and friends. 'Tis "Starling!"—"Thrush!"—and "Thrush!"—and "Starling!"—"You dog!"—"You cat!"—"My dear!"—"My darling!"

XXXIII.—REPORT OF A LAW-SUIT—GOODY GRIM VERSUS LAPSTONE.—SMITH. (MATTHEWS "AT HOME.")

What a profound study is the law! and how difficult to fathom! Well, let us consider the law; for our laws are ery considerable, both in bulk and numbers; according s the statutes declare,—*considerandi, considerandlo, considerandum*—and are not to be meddled with, by those who don't understand them.

Law, always expresses itself with true grammatical precision, never confounding moods, cases, or genders,—except, indeed, when a woman happens accidentally to be slain, then a verdict is always brought in *man-slaughter*. The essence of the law is altercation; for the law can altercate, fulminate, deprecate, irritate, and go on at any rate. "Your son follows the law, I think, Sir Thomas?" "Yes, Madam, but I am afraid he will never overtake it; a man following the law, is like two boys running round a table; *he* follows the law, and the law follows *him*." However, if you take away the whereofs, whereases, wherefores, and notwithstandings, the whole mystery vanishes; it is then plain and simple. Now, the quintessence of the law, has, according to its name, five parts:—the first is the beginning, or *incipiendum*; the second, the uncertainty, or *dubitandum*; the third, delay, or *puzzle-endum*; fourthly, replication without *endum*; and fifthly, *monstrum et horrendum*: all which are clearly exemplified in the following case—GOODY GRIM AGAINST LAPSTONE. This trial happened in a certain town, which, for reasons, shall be nameless, and is as follows:—Goody Grim inhabited an alms-house, No. 2; Will Lapstone, a superannuated cobbler, lived in No. 3; and a certain Jew Pedlar, who happened to pass through the town where those alms-houses were situated, could only think of number One. Goody Grim was in the act of killing one of her own proper pigs; but the animal, disliking the ceremony, burst from her hold—ran through the semi-circular legs of the aforesaid Jew,—knocked him in the mud,—ran back to Will Lapstone's the cobbler, upset a quart bottle full of gin belonging to the said Lapstone, and took refuge in the cobbler's state bed.

The parties, being, of course, in the most opulent circumstances, consulted counsel learned in the law. The result was, that Goody Grim was determined to bring an action against Lapstone "for the loss of her pig with a curly tail;" and Lapstone to bring an action against Goody Grim for the loss of a quart bottle full of Hollands-gin; and Mordecai to bring an action against them both for "do losh of a tee-totum dat fell out of his pocket in the rencounter." They all delivered their briefs to counsel, before it was considered they were all parties and no witnesses. But Goody Grim, like a wise old lady as she was, now changed her battery, determined to bring an action against Lapstone, and lead over Mordecai as an evidence.

The indictment set forth, "That he, Lapstone, not having the fear of the Assizes before his eyes, but being moved by pig, and instigated by prumsence, did, on the first day of April, a day sacred in the annals of law, steal, pocket, hide, and crib, divers, that is to say, five hundred hogs, sows, boars, pigs, and porkers, with curly tails; and did secrete the said five hundred hogs, sows, boars, pigs, and porkers, with curly tails, in the said Lapstone's bed, against the peace of our Lady the Queen, her crown, and dignity."

Mordecai was examined by counsellor Puzzle.

"Well, sir, what are you?"

"I sells old, clo', and sealing-vax, and puckles."

"I did not ask you what you sold; I ask you what you are?"

"I am about five and forty."

"I did not ask your age; I ask you what you are?"

"I am a Jew."

"Why couldn't you tell me that at first? Well, then, sir, if you are a Jew, tell me what you know of this affair.".

"As I vas a valking along"—

"Man—I didn't want to know where you were walking."

"Vel, vel, vel! As I vas a valking along"—

"So, you will walk along in spite of all that can be said."

"Plesh ma heart, you frighten me out of my vits—As I vas a valking along, I seed de unclean animal coming towards me—and so, says I—Oh! Father Abranam, says I"—

"Father Abraham, sir, is no evidence."

"You must let me tell my story my own vay, or I cannot tell it at all. As I vas a valking along, I seed de unclean animal coming towards me—and so, says I—Oh, Father Abraham, says I, here comes de unclean animal towards me, and he runned between my legs, and upshet me in te mut."

"Now, do you mean to say, upon your oath, that that little animal had the power to upset you in the mud."

"I vill take my oash dat he upshet me in te mut."

"And pray, sir, on what side did you fall?"

"On te mutty side."

"I mean, on which of your own sides did you fall?"

"I fell on my left side."

"Now, on your oath, was it your left side?"

"I vill take ma oash it vas my left side."

"And, pray, what did you do when you fell down?"

"I got up again as fast as I could."

"Perhaps you could tell me whether the pig had a curly tail

"I vill take ma cash his tail vas so curly as my peard."

"And, pray, where were you going when this happened?"

"I vas going to de sign of de Goose and Gridiron."

"Now, on your oath, what has a goose to do with a gridiron?"

"I don't know, only it was de sign of de house. And all more vat I know vas, dat I lose an ivory tee-totum out of ma pocket."

"Oh, you lost a tee-totum, did you? I thought we should bring

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

in summing up the evidence, addressed the jury :—"Gentlemen of the jury, it is wholly unnecessary to recapitulate the evidence; for the removal of this objection removes all ground of action. And, notwithstanding the ancient statute, which says, '*Seriuin pigum, et boreum pigum, et vendi curlum tailum*,' there is an irrefragable proof, by ocular demonstration, that Goody Grim's grunter had a straight tail, and, therefore, the prisoner must be acquitted."——This affair is thrown into Chancery, and it is expected it will be settled about the end of the year 1970.

XXXIV.—BLINDMAN'S BUFF.—Horace Smith.

Three wags (whom some fastidious carpers might rather designate three sharpers) entered, at York, the Cat and Fiddle; and, finding that the host was out on business for two hours or more, while Sam, the rustic waiter, wore the visage of a simple lout, whom they might safely try to diddle,—they ordered dinner in a canter,—cold or hot, it mattered not, provided it was served *instanter*. Sam soon produced a first-rate dinner, on which an alderman might dine; joints hot and cold, dessert and wine, he spread before each hungry sinner. With talking, laughing, eating, and quaffing, the bottles stood no moment still. They rallied Sam with joke and banter, and, as they drained the last decanter, called for the bill.

'Twas brought,—when one of them, who eyed and added up the items, cried,—"Extremely moderate, indeed! I'll make a point to recommend this inn to every travelling friend; and you, Sam, shall be doubly fee'd." This said, a weighty purse he drew, when his companion interposed:—"Nay, Harry, that will never do; pray let your purse again be closed; you paid all charges yesterday; 'tis clearly now my turn to pay." Harry, however, wouldn't listen to any such insulting offer; his generous eyes appeared to glisten indignant at the very proffer; and though his friend talked loud, his clangor served but to aggravate Hal's anger. "My worthy fellow," cried the third, "now, really, this is too absurd. What! do you both forget, I haven't paid a farthing, yet? Am I in every house to cram, at your expense? 'Tis childish, quite. I claim this payment as my right. Here, how much is the money, Sam?"

The others bawled out fierce negation, and hot became the altercation, each in his purse his money rattling, insisting, arguing and battling. One of them cried, at last:—"A truce! Wrangling for trifles is no use. That we may settle what we three owe, we'll blindfold Sam, and whichsoe'er he catches of us first shall bear all the expenses of the trio, with half-a-crown (if that's enough) to Sam, for playing blindman's buff." Sam liked it hugely,—thought the ransom for a good game of fun was handsome; gave his own handkerchief, beside, to have his eyes securely tied, and soon began to grope and search; when the three knaves, I needn't say, adroitly left him in the lurch, slipped down the stairs, and stole away. Poor Sam continued hard at work. Now

o'er a chair he gets a fall; now floundering forward with a jerk, he bobs his nose against the wall; and now, encouraged by a subtle fancy that they're near the door, he jumps behind it to explore, and breaks his shins against the scuttle. Just in the crisis of his doom, the host, returning, sought the room; Sam pounced upon him like a bruin, and almost shook him into ruin. "Huzza! I've caught you now; so down with cash for all, and my half-crown!" Off went the bandage, and his eyes seemed to be goggling o'er his forehead, while his mouth widened with a horrid look of agonized surprise. "You gudgeon!" roared his master; "gull! and dunce! fool, as you are, in that you're right for once; 'tis clear that I must pay the sum; but this one thought my wrath assuages —that every half-penny shall come, dolt! from your wages!"

XXXV.—DINING BY STEAM.—A. Melville Bell.

A hungry fellow passing a hotel,—whence steamed a luscious, savoury smell of viands far advanced in cooking,—stopped, sniffed, and, through a corner looking where the dim glass was broken out, beheld within, the culinary rout. His eyes he feasted on a giant goose, which, turning towards him on the spit, still rolled,—but came more near no whit, spitting, as if in mockery, its envied juice. The busy cook-maids ranged full many a dish, surcharged with rich variety of flesh and fish; kickshaws might tempt a sated maw, roast, boil, and stew;—of each a host he saw. Poor fellow! what an ecstacy 'twould be, could you but taste as cheaply as you see! Now quickly off they bear the goodly cheer, some distant passing, and some crossing near; till one, with pork, that might entice a Jew, stood underneath our hero, and upflew in playful curls the steam—a balmy gale, which well his nose may greedily inhale! Sniff! sniff! his nostrils stretch with suction wide! too tardily they yield; and now his mouth's applied: spreading his broad lips on the broken pane, he draws the vapour in, with might and main! As ladies, learning snuffing by degrees, by smelling at the box, are made to sneeze; as brewers, by the fumes their vats exhale, grow tipsy, just as if they drank the ale; so did our hero, at the window, fare upon his unsubstantial dish of air: and when the maid the cover had put on, his hunger was appeased,—completely gone!

The landlord, who had seen his eager face, guessed by his looks the merits of the case; and now accosted him in merry mood: "Well, friend, I hope your appetite's subdued?" The man confessed: "then, sir, just step this way;—you've dined at my expense, and so must pay!" The man protested,—swore he'd rouse the town,—'Twas base, 'twas — "Sir, you pay me half-a-crown: you have inhaled a dinner from my food." "What? pay? I can't—nor would I if I could!" "Oho! here, waiter, see that this man pays his bill, or that till my return he stays."

The jolly host bent on his bit of fun—to tease the wight, and feed him when he'd done,—brought out some guests to see the way, and, whispering one of them the bill to pay, slipped quietly

the half-crown into his hand; then, putting on a grave and solemn face, before the umpire-guests he states the case. They give the verdict that the charge is just: "Then, sir," the landlord banters, "pay you must!" "I won't!" "You shall!" "Let go!" "No, here you stand!" This nickering went on until the guest feigned pity on the wretch so sorely prest, and gave him the amount to pay the bill. He then, with glistening eye, pulled out a tin snuff-box, and dropped the two-and-sixpence in,—and honourably paid the debt, by skill! "I have not *used* your dinner, therefore, you have no just claim to touch the cash, I think; but, as I smelt your food, I'll justice do; and, hark ye! let you hear the money *chink!*" He thanked the guest, gave Boniface a grin, and walked off rattling merrily his TIN!

XXXVI.—THE TWO CATS.—EDWARD HOWARD.

There was a master's-mate, who, on the ocean, like Hamlet erst, "that very noble Dane," because he "lacked promotion," would moralize, not with deep sighs, but in a tongue decidedly profane. His skipper was a haughty officer! Orders are sometimes foolish, sometimes wrong: but wrong or foolish, if you dared to scoff his, sir, the ship would prove too hot to hold you long. This blustering captain's name was Torrabello, the frigate he commanded, the Tornado; his mate's cognomen was "Old Smash," a harum-scarum renegado, foremost to cut a dash, prone both to gluttony and getting mellow. Well—the Tornado, just from a long cruise, at single anchor swung. Hers was the hungriest of all hungry crews, and of the crew the hungriest, Mr Smash. He had sprained his jaws, and blistered all his tongue crunching salt junk, and biscuit hard as flint, (fresh victuals to procure he wanted cash;) whilst under the half-deck there tempting hung a plump young hare—most delicate and sweet,—to stuff the nobs,—itself being stuffed with mint, and other odoriferous savoury herbs—a treat which hungry Smash most naturally longed to eat. And Smash's longing grew a passion quite; so he went down "i' the witching time o' night"—which is the hour when the lone church clock tells, by twelve deep sounds, another day is past; (at sea they only say, "'t has gone eight bells.")—The larboard watch was called, and so at last Smash got below, where, with his eyes expanded, and staring hard as ever cat or man did, to make his visuals in the dark of use, he met the expanded eyes of mousing Puss!——"The deed is done!—didst thou not hear a noise?" A smothered squeak, and all again was calm.—'Tis now farewell to all his woes and joys; as Pope has sung, "It now avails him not to whom related, or by whom begot." Tabby's nine lives died with his mews; not one survives, not one of the nine, "soft pity to infuse,"—to sing his virtues and his name embalm;—and yet he died not on this sinful earth, but met his death down in the larboard berth. It needs not many words to tell, how from his robe of fur, and soon, Puss was relieved: and then how well he was decaudalized. At noon next day he swung, just where

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Mr Long came kindly in, and told me not to swoon. Why can't be come again without the Phœnix and the Sun? we cannot always have a flue on fire at Number One. I am not old! I am not plain, nor awkward in my gait; I am not crooked like the bride that went from Number Eight. I'm sure white satin made her look as brown as any bun; but even beauty has no chance, I think, at Number One! At Number Six, they say Miss Rose has slain a score of hearts; and Cupid, for her sake has been quite prodigal of darts. The imp they show with bended bow—I wish he had a g n! but if he had, he'd never deign to shoot with Number One. It's very hard! and so it is, to live in such a row! and here's a ballad singer come, to aggravate my woe: O take away your foolish song, and tones enough to stun; there is "Nae luck about the house," I know, at Number One.

XXXVIII.—THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.—Mary Howitt.

"Will you walk into my parlour?" said a spider to a fly; "'tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you did spy. The way into my parlour is up a winding stair, and I have many pretty things to show you when you're there." "Oh no, no!" said the little fly, "to ask me is in vain, for who goes up your winding stair can ne'er come down again."—"I'm sure you must be weary with soaring up so high; will you rest upon my little bed?" said the spider to the fly. "There are pretty curtains drawn around, the sheets are fine and thin, and if you like to rest awhile, I'll snugly tuck you in." "Oh no, no!" said the little fly, "for I've often heard it said, they never, never wake again, who sleep upon your bed!"—Said the cunning spider to the fly, "Dear friend, what shall I do to prove the warm affection I've always felt for you? I have within my pantry good store of all that's nice; I'm sure you're very welcome—will you please to take a slice?" "Oh no, no!" said the little fly, "kind sir, that cannot be; I've heard what's in your pantry, and I do not wish to see."—"Sweet creature!" said the spider, "you're witty and you're wise. How handsome are your gauzy wings, how brilliant are your eyes! I have a little looking-glass upon my parlour shelf; if you'll step in one moment, dear, you shall behold—yourself." "I thank you gentle sir," she said, "for what you're pleased to say, and, bidding you good morning now, I'll call another day."——The spider turned him round about, and went into his den; he knew the vain and silly fly would soon come back again: so he wove a subtle web in a little corner sly, and set his table ready, to dine upon the fly. Then he went out to his door again, and merrily did sing, "Come hither, hither, pretty fly, with the pearl-and-silver wing your robes are green and purple—there's a crest upon your head, your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine are dull as lead."

Alas, alas! how very soon this silly little fly, hearing his wily, flattering words, came slowly flitting by; with buzzing wings she hung aloft, then near and nearer drew, thinking only of her brilliant eyes, her green and purple hue, and dreaming of her

crested head—poor foolish thing! At last...up jumped the cunning spider, and fiercely held her fast. He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dismal den, within his little parlour—but she ne'er came out again! And now, do you take warning! all who this story hear; to idle, silly, flattering words, I pray you ne'er give ear: to all deceitful counsellors, close heart, and ear, and eye;—and take a lesson from this tale, of the Spider and the Fly.

XXXIX.—CONTEST BETWEEN THE NOSE AND THE EYES.—Cowper.

Between Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose, the spectacles set them unhappily wrong; the point in dispute was, as all the world knows, to which the said spectacles ought to belong. So the Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the cause with a great deal of skill, and a wig full of learning; while chief-baron Ear sat to balance the laws, so famed for his talent in nicely discerning. "In behalf of the Nose, it will quickly appear, and your lordship," he said, "will undoubtedly find, that the nose has had spectacles always in wear, which amounts to possession, time out of mind." Then holding the spectacles up to the court—"Your lordship observes they are made with a straddle, as wide as the ridge of the nose is; in short, designed to sit close to it, just like a saddle. Again, would your lordship a moment suppose ('tis a case that has happened, and may be again,) that the visage or countenance had not a Nose, pray, who would, or who could, wear spectacles then? On the whole, it appears, and my argument shows, with a reasoning the court will never condemn, that the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose, and the Nose was as plainly intended for them."

Then shifting his side, as a lawyer knows how, he pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes; but what were his arguments few people know, for the Court did not think they were equally wise. So his lordship decreed, in a grave solemn tone, decisive and clear, without one *if* or *but*, that—"Whenever the Nose put his spectacles on, by daylight or candle-light—Eyes should be shut."

XL.—THE DUEL.—Thomas Hood.

In Brentford town, of old renown, there lived a Mister Bray, who fell in love with Lucy Bell,—and so did Mr Clay. Said Mr Bray to Mr Clay, "You choose to rival me, and court Miss Bell; but there your court no thoroughfare shall be. Unless you now give up your suit, you may repent your love; I who have shot a pigeon match, can shoot a turtle dove." Said Mr Clay to Mr Bray, "Your threats I quite explode; one who has been a volunteer, knows how to prime and load. And so I say to you, unless your passion quiet keeps, I, who have shot and hit bulls' eyes, may chance to hit a sheep's." Now gold is oft for silver changed, and that for copper red; but these two went away to give each other change for lead. But first they sought a friend a-piece, this

pleasant thought to give,—When they were dead, they thus should have two seconds still to live. To measure out the ground not long the seconds then forbore, and, having taken one rash step, they took a dozen more. They next prepared each pistol-pan against the deadly strife, by putting in the prime of death to blast the prime of life. Now all was ready for the foes; but when they took their stands, fear made them tremble so, they found they both were shaking hands. Said Mr C. to Mr B., "Here one of us may fall, and like St Paul's Cathedral, now be doomed to have a ball. I do confess I did attach misconduct to your name; if I withdraw the charge, will then your ramrod do the same?" Said Mr B., "I do agree;—but think of Honour's Courts! if we go off without a shot, there will be strange reports. But look, the morning now is bright, though cloudy it begun; why can't we aim above, as if we had called out the sun?" So up into the harmless air, their bullets they did send; and may all other duels have that upshot in the end!

XLI.—BLACK BEER, FOR "BROWN STOUT."—ANON.

A Brewer, in a country town, had got a monstrous reputation! no other beer than his went down:—the Hosts of the surrounding station carving his name upon their mugs, and painting it on every shutter; and though some envious folks would utter hints that its flavour came from drugs, others maintain'd 'twas no such matter, but owing to his monstrous vat—as corpulent, at least, as that at Heidelberg—and some say fatter. His foreman was a lusty black, an honest fellow; but one that had an ugly knack of tasting samples, as he brew'd, till he was stupified and mellow. One day, in this top-heavy mood, having to cross the vat aforesaid, (just then with boiling beer supplied,) o'ercome with giddiness and qualms, he...reel'd—FELL IN—and nothing more said, but, in his favourite liquor, died, like Clarence in his butt of Malmsey. In all directions round about, the negro absentee was sought, but as no human noddle thought that our fat black was made brown stout, they settled that the negro left the place for debt, or crime, or theft. Meanwhile, the beer was, day by day, drawn into casks, and sent away, until the lees flow'd thick, and thicker, when, lo! outstretch'd upon the ground, once more their missing friend they found, as they'd oft done before—*in liquor!* "See," cried his moralizing master, "I knew the fellow always drank hard, and prophesied some sad disaster. His fate should other tipplers strike. Poor Mungo! there he welters, like a toast at bottom of a tankard!"

Next morn, a Publican, whose tap had help'd to drain the vat so dry, not having heard of the mishap, came to demand a fresh supply; protesting loudly, that the last all previous specimens surpass'd—possessing a much richer gusto than formerly it ever used to, and begging,—as a special favour,—more of *exactly* the same flavour. "Why!" cried the brewer, "that's a task more difficult to *grant* than ask! Most gladly,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

bull, as it was very natural for a hungry bull to do, came down town to look for a dinner; and, observing, discovering, seeing, spying, and prying out, some turnips in the bottom of the ferry-boat, the bull scrambled into the ferry-boat, ate up the turnips, and, to make an end of his meal, fell to work upon the hay-band: the boat being eaten from its moorings, floated down the river, with the bull in it; it struck against a rock; beat a hole in the bottom of the boat, and tossed the bull overboard: whereupon the owner of the bull brought his action against the boat, for running away with the bull; and the owner of the boat brought his action against the bull, for running away with the boat: and thus notice of trial was given, "Bullum *versus* Boatum, Boatum *versus* Bullum."

Now the counsel for the bull began with saying, "My lord, and you, gentlemen of the jury, we are counsel in this cause for the bull. We are indicted for running away with the boat. Now, my lord, we have heard of running horses, but never of running bulls before. Now, my lord, the bull could no more run away with the boat, than a man in a coach may be said to run away with the horses: therefore, my lord, how can we punish what is not punishable? How can we eat what is not eatable? How can we drink what is not drinkable? Or, as the law says, how can we think on what is not thinkable? Therefore, my lord, as we are counsel in this cause for the bull, if the jury should bring the bull in guilty, the jury would be guilty of a bull."

The counsel for the boat observed, that the bull should be non-suited, because, in his declaration, he had not specified what colour he was of; for, thus wisely, and thus learnedly, spoke the counsel: "My lord, if the bull was of no colour, he must be of some colour; and, if he was not of any colour, what colour could the bull be of?" I overruled this motion myself, by observing, the bull was a white bull, and that white is no colour; besides, as I told my brethren, they should not trouble their heads to talk of colour in the law, for the law can colour anything.

This cause being afterwards left to a reference, upon the award both bull and boat were acquitted; it being proved, that the tide of the river carried them both away; upon which I gave it as my opinion, that, as the tide of the river carried both bull and boat away, both bull and boat had a good action against the water-bailiff.

My opinion being taken, an action was issued, and, upon the traverse, this point of law arose;—how, wherefore, and whether, —why, when, and what,—whatsoever, whereas, and whereby,—as the boat was not a *compos mentis* evidence, how could an oath be administered? That point was soon settled, by Boatum's attorney, declaring, that, for his client, he would swear anything.

The water-bailiff's charter was then read, taken out of the original record, in true law Latin, and was as follows:—"*Aquæ bailiffi est magistratus in choisi, super omnibus fishibus qui habuerunt finnos et scalos, claws, shells, et talos; qui swimmare in freshibus, vel saltibus, riveris, lakis, pondis, canalibus, et well*

boatis; sive oysteri, prawni, whitini, shrimpi, turbutus, solus;" that is, not turbots alone, but turbots and soles together. But now comes the nicety of the law: the law is as nice as a new-laid egg, and not to be understood by addle-headed people. Bullum and Boatum mentioned both ebb and flood, to avoid quibbling; but, it being proved, that they were carried away neither by the tide of flood, nor by the tide of ebb, but exactly upon the top of high water, they were nonsuited; but such was the lenity of the court, that, upon their paying all costs, they were allowed to begin again, *de novo*.

XLIV.—SPEECH OF SERJEANT BUZFUZ.—Dickens.

Never, in the whole course of my professional experience—never, from the very first moment of my applying myself to the study and practice of the law—have I approached a case with feelings of such deep emotion, or with such a heavy sense of the responsibility imposed upon me;—a responsibility, I will say, which I could never have supported, were I not buoyed up and sustained by a conviction so strong, that it amounts to positive certainty, that the cause of truth and justice, or, in other words, the cause of my much injured and most oppressed client, must prevail with the high-minded and intelligent dozen of men whom I now see in that box before me.

The plaintiff, gentlemen, the plaintiff is a widow; yes, gentlemen, a widow. The late Mr Bardell, after enjoying, for many years, the esteem and confidence of his sovereign, as one of the guardians of his royal revenues, glided almost imperceptibly from the world, to seek elsewhere for that repose and peace which a custom-house can never afford.

Sometime before his death, he had stamped his likeness upon a little boy. With this little boy, the only pledge of her departed exciseman, Mrs Bardell shrunk from the world, and courted the retirement and tranquillity of Goswell-street, and here she placed in her front parlour window, a written placard, bearing this inscription,—"Apartments, furnished, for a single gentleman. Enquire within." I entreat the attention of the jury to the wording of this document—"Apartments, furnished, for a single gentleman!" Mrs Bardell's opinions of the opposite sex, gentlemen, were derived from a long contemplation of the inestimable qualities of her lost husband. She had no fear—she had no distrust—she had no suspicion. Mr Bardell, said the widow; Mr Bardell was a man of honour—Mr Bardell was a man of his word—Mr Bardell was no deceiver—Mr Bardell was once a single gentleman himself: to single gentlemen I look for protection, for assistance, for comfort, for consolation;—in single gentlemen I shall perpetually see something to remind me of what Mr Bardell was, when he first won my young and untried affections; to a single gentleman, then, shall my lodgings be let. Actuated by this beautiful and touching impulse, (among the best impulses of our imperfect nature,

gentlemen,) the lonely and desolate widow dried her tears, furnished her first floor, caught her innocent boy to her maternal bosom, and put the bill up in her parlour window. Did it remain there long? No. The serpent was on the watch, the train was laid, the mine was preparing, the sapper and miner was at work. Before the bill had been in the window three days—three days, gentlemen—a being, erect upon two legs, and bearing all the outward semblance of a man, and not of a monster, knocked at the door of Mrs Bardell's house. He enquired within; he took the lodgings; and on the very next day he entered into possession of them. That man was Pickwick—Pickwick the defendant.

I shall show you, gentlemen, that for two years Pickwick continued to reside constantly, and without interruption or intermission, in Mrs Bardell's house. I shall show you that Mrs Bardell, during the whole of that time, waited on him, attended to his comforts, cooked his meals, looked out his linen for the washerwoman when it went abroad, darned, aired, and prepared it for wear, when it came home, and, in short, enjoyed his fullest trust and confidence. I shall show you that, on many occasions, he gave halfpence, and on some occasions even sixpences, to her little boy; and I shall prove to you, by a witness whose testimony it will be impossible for my learned friend to weaken or controvert, that on one occasion he patted the boy on the head, and, after inquiring whether he had won any *alley tors* or *commoneys* lately, (both of which I understand to be particular species of marbles much prized by the youth of this town,) made use of this remarkable expression,—"How should you like to have another father?"

And now, gentlemen, but one word more. Two letters have passed between these parties; letters which are admitted to be in the hand-writing of the defendant, and which speak volumes indeed. These letters, too, bespeak the character of the man. They are not open, fervent, eloquent epistles, breathing nothing but the language of affectionate attachment. They are covert, sly, underhanded communications; but, fortunately, far more conclusive than if couched in the most glowing language and the most poetic imagery—letters that must be viewed with a cautious and suspicious eye—letters that were evidently intended at the time, by Pickwick, to mislead and delude any third parties into whose hands they might fall. Let me read the first:—"Garraway's, twelve o'clock.—Dear Mrs B. Chops and tomato sauce. Yours, PICKWICK." Gentlemen, what does this mean? Chops and tomato sauce! yours, PICKWICK! Chops! gracious heavens! and tomato sauce! Gentlemen, is the happiness of a sensitive and confiding female to be trifled away by such shallow artifices as these? The next has no date whatever, which is in itself suspicious.—"Dear Mrs B., I shall not be at home till to-morrow. Slow coach." And then follows this very remarkable expression—"Don't trouble yourself about the warming-pan!" The warming-pan! Why, gentlemen, who *does* trouble himself about a

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

school, and from thence to the university, with a view of qualifying myself for holy orders. Here, having but a small allowance from my father, and being naturally of a timid, bashful disposition, I had no opportunity of rubbing off that native awkwardness, which is the fatal cause of all my unhappiness, and which, I now begin to fear, can never be amended. You must know, I am of such extreme susceptibility of shame, that, on the slightest subject of confusion, my blood all rushes into my cheeks, and I appear a perfect full-blown rose. The consciousness of this unhappy failing made me avoid society, and I became enamoured of a college life; particularly when I reflected that the uncouth manners of my father's family were little calculated to improve my outward conduct. I had therefore resolved on living at the university, and taking pupils; when two unexpected events greatly altered the posture of my affairs—namely, my father's death, and the arrival of a rich uncle from the Indies.

This uncle also died, after a short illness; leaving me heir to all his property. And now, behold me, at the age of—no matter what,—well stocked with Latin, Greek, and mathematics—possessed of an ample fortune—but so awkward, and unversed in any gentlemanlike accomplishment, that I am pointed at by all who see me, as the wealthy learned clown.

I have lately purchased an estate in the country, which abounds with what is called a fashionable neighbourhood; and when you reflect on my parentage and uncouth manners, you will hardly think how much my company is courted by the surrounding families—especially by those who have marriageable daughters! From these gentlemen I have received familiar calls, and the most pressing invitations; and though I wished to accept their offered friendship, I have repeatedly excused myself, under the pretence of not being quite settled; but the truth is, when I have ridden or walked, with full intention to return their several visits—my heart has failed me as I approached their gates, and I returned homewards, resolving to try again to-morrow.

However, I at length determined to conquer my timidity, and, three days ago, accepted of an invitation to dine, this day, with one, whose open, easy manner left me no room to doubt a cordial welcome. Sir Thomas Friendly, who lives about three miles distant, is a baronet, with an estate of about two thousand pounds a-year, adjoining that which I purchased. He has two small sons and five tall daughters, all grown-up, and living at Friendly-hall, dependent on their father. Conscious of my unpolished gait, I have, for some time past, taken private lessons from a professor, who teaches "grown-up gentlemen to dance;" and although I at first found wondrous difficulty in the art he taught, yet my knowledge of the mathematics was of prodigious use, in teaching me the equilibrium of my body, and the due adjustment of the centre of gravity to the five positions. Having now acquired the art of walking without tottering, and learned to make a bow, I boldly ventured to accept the Baronet's invitation to a family

dinner; not doubting but my new acquirements would enable me to see the ladies with tolerable intrepidity: but alas! how vain are all the hopes of theory, when unsupported by habitual practice! As I approached the house, a dinner-bell alarmed my fears, lest I had spoiled the dinner by want of punctuality. Impressed with this idea, I blushed the deepest crimson, as my name was repeatedly announced by the several livery servants, who ushered me into the library, hardly knowing whom or what I saw. At my first entrance, I summoned all my fortitude, and made my newly-acquired bow to Lady Friendly; but, unfortunately, bringing back my left foot into the third position, I trod upon the gouty toe of poor Sir Thomas, who had followed close at my heels to be the nomenclator of the family. The confusion this accident occasioned in me is hardly to be conceived, since none but bashful men can judge of my distress. The Baronet's politeness by degrees dissipated my concern; and I was astonished to see how far good-breeding could enable him to suppress his feelings, and to appear at perfect ease after so painful an accident.

The cheerfulness of her ladyship, and the familiar chat of the young ladies, insensibly led me to throw off my reserve and sheepishness, till, at length, I ventured to join in the conversation, and even to start fresh subjects. The library being richly furnished with books in elegant bindings, I conceived Sir Thomas to be a man of literature; and ventured to give my opinion concerning the several editions of the Greek classics—in which the Baronet's ideas exactly coincided with my own! To this subject I was led by observing an edition of Xenophon, in sixteen volumes; which (as I had never before heard of such a thing) greatly excited my curiosity, and I approached to examine what it could be. Sir Thomas saw what I was about, and (as I supposed) willing to save me trouble, rose to take down the book, which made me more eager to prevent him; and, hastily laying my hand on the first volume, I pulled it forcibly—when, lo! instead of books, a board, which, by leather and gilding, had been made to look like sixteen volumes, came tumbling down, and, unluckily, pitched upon a Wedgewood ink-stand on the table under it. In vain did Sir Thomas assure me there was no harm done. I saw the ink streaming from an inlaid table on the Turkey carpet; and, scarce knowing what I did, attempted to stop its progress with my cambric handkerchief. In the height of this confusion, we were informed that dinner was served up.

In walking through the hall and suite of apartments to the dining-room, I had time to collect my scattered senses; till I was desired to take my seat at table, betwixt Lady Friendly and her eldest daughter. Since the fall of the wooden Xenophon, my face had been continually burning like a fire-brand; and I was just beginning to recover myself, and to feel comfortably cool, when an unlooked-for accident rekindled all my heat and blushes. Having set my plate of soup too near the edge of the table, in bowing to Miss Dinah, who politely complimented the pattern of my waistcoat, I tumbled the whole scalding contents into my lap.

In spite of an immediate supply of napkins to wipe the surface of my clothes, they were not stout enough to save me from the painful effects of this sudden fomentation, and, for some minutes, my legs and thighs seemed stewed in a boiling caldron; but, recollecting how Sir Thomas had disguised his torture when I trod upon his gouty toe, I firmly bore my pain in silence, and sat with my lower extremities parboiled, amidst the stifled giggling of the ladies and servants. I will not relate the several blunders which I made during the first course, or the distresses occasioned by my being desired to carve a fowl, or help to various dishes that stood near me, spilling a sauce-boat, and knocking down a salt-cellar; rather let me hasten to the second course, where fresh disasters quite overwhelmed me.

I had a piece of rich sweet pudding on my fork, when Miss Louisa Friendly begged to trouble me for part of a pigeon that stood near me. In my haste, scarce knowing what I did, I whipped the pudding into my mouth—hot as a burning coal! it was impossible to conceal my agony; my eyes were starting from their sockets! At last, in spite of shame and resolution, I was obliged to——drop the cause of torment on my plate. Sir Thomas and the ladies all compassionated my misfortune, and each advised a different application. One recommended oil, another water, but all agreed that wine was perhaps the best for drawing out the heat; and a glass of sherry was brought me from the side-board —I snatched it up with eagerness: but oh! how shall I tell the sequel? Whether the butler by accident mistook, or purposely designed to drive me mad, I know not; but he gave me the strongest brandy, with which I filled my mouth, already flayed and blistered. Totally unused to every kind of ardent spirits, with my tongue, throat, and palate, as raw as beef, what could I do? I could not swallow, and, clapping my hands upon my mouth, the burning liquor squirted through my nose and fingers, like a fountain, over all the dishes, and I was crushed by bursts of laughter from all quarters. In vain did Sir Thomas reprimand the servants, and Lady Friendly chide her daughters; the measure of my shame and their diversion was not yet complete. To relieve me from the intolerable state of perspiration which this accident had caused, without considering what I did, I wiped my face with that ill-fated handkerchief, still wet from the consequences of the fall of Xenophon, and covered my features with streaks of ink in every direction! The Baronet himself could not support this shock, but joined his lady in the general laugh; while I sprang from the table in despair, rushed out of the house, and ran home, in an agony of confusion and disgrace, which the most poignant sense of guilt could not have excited.

Let me entreat that you will not add to my sufferings by ungenerous ridicule; or still further increase my unhappy notoriety, by making my infirmity, at any future time, the subject of your conversation.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This—in a moment, brings me to an end;
But this—informs me, I shall never die!
The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.—
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years:
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt, amid the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!

III.—A PLEA FOR MERCY.—Shakspeare.

The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes: 'tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes the thronèd monarch better than his crown; his sceptre shows the force of temporal power, the attribute to awe and majesty, wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings: but, mercy is above this sceptred sway; it is enthronèd in the hearts of kings, it is an attribute to God himself; and earthly power doth then show likest God's, when mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Man, though justice be thy plea, consider this,—that, in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation. We do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy.

IV.—DOUGLAS'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF.—Home.

My name is Norval. On the Grampian hills my father feeds his flocks; a frugal swain, whose constant cares were to increase his store, and keep his only son, myself, at home: for I had heard of battles, and I longed to follow to the field some warlike lord; and Heaven soon granted what my sire denied. This moon, which rose last night round as my shield, had not yet filled her horns, when, by her light, a band of fierce barbarians, from the hills, rushed, like a torrent, down upon the vale, sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled for safety and for succour. I alone,—with bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,—hovered about the enemy, and marked the road he took; then hastened to my friends; whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men, I met advancing. The pursuit I led, till we o'ertook the spoil-encumber'd foe. We fought—and conquer'd! Ere a sword was drawn, an arrow from my bow had pierced their chief, who wore, that day, the arms which now I wear. Returning home in triumph, I disdained the shepherd's slothful life; and, having heard that our good king had summoned his bold peers to lead their warriors to the Carron side, I left my father's house, and took with me a chosen servant to conduct my steps—yon trembling coward, who forsook his master. Journeying with this intent, I passed these towers; and, heaven-directed, came this day, to do the happy deed, that gilds my humble name.

V.—SOLILOQUY OF KING CLAUDIUS IN "HAMLET."

Shakspeare.

Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to Heaven!
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon't;
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not:
Though inclination be as sharp as 'twill
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent:
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin—
And both neglect. What if this cursèd hand

Were thicker than itself with brother's blood—
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heaven
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall;
Or pardoned, being down?—Then I'll look up,
My fault is past.—But oh! what form of prayer
Can serve my turn?—"Forgive me my foul murder!"—
That cannot be, since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder—
My crown, my own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned, and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by Justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above—
There is no shuffling: there the action lies
In its true nature, and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can:—what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
Oh, wretched state! oh, bosom black as death!
Oh, limèd soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels!—Make essay:
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
All may be well.

VI.—QUEEN MAB.—SHAKSPEARE.

O, then, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife; and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams:
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film:
Her wagoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid:
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner Squirrel, or old Grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love:
On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight,
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees:
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream.
Sometimes she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit:
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson as he lies asleep—
Then dreams he of another benefice:
Sometimes she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,

And then dreams he of cutting foreign throcts,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear; at which he starts, and wakes;
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again.

VII.—THE SLAVE'S REMONSTRANCE.—KNOWLES.

That I were dead! O, what is death compared to slavery! Brutes may bear bondage—they were made for it, when Heaven set man above them! but no mark, definite and indelible, it put upon one man to mark him from another, that he should live his slave. O heavy curse! To have thought, reason, judgement, feelings, tastes, passions, and conscience, like another man, and not have equal liberty to use them, but call his mood their master! Why was I born with passion to be free—with faculties to use enlargement—with desires that cleave to high achievements—and with sympathies attracting me to objects fair and noble,—and yet with power over myself as little as any beast of burden? Why should I live? There are of brutes themselves that will not tame, so high in them is nature; whom the spur and lash, instead of curing, only chafe into a prouder mettle;—that will let you kill them, ere they will suffer you to master them. I am a man, and live!

VIII.—MARULLUS TO THE ROMAN MOB.—SHAKSPEARE.

Wherefore rejoice? That Cæsar comes in triumph?—What conquests brings he home? What tributaries follow him to Rome, to grace, in captive bonds, his chariot wheels? You blocks! you stones! you worse than senseless things! O you hard hearts! you cruel men of Rome!—Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft have you climbed up to walls and battlements, to towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops, your infants in your arms; and there have sat the livelong day, with patient expectation, to see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome. And when you saw his chariot but appear, have you not made a universal shout, that Tiber trembled underneath her banks, to hear the replication of your sounds made in her concave shores? And do you now put on your best attire? And do you now cull out a holiday? And do you now strew flowers in his way that comes in triumph over Pompey's blood? Begone! Run to your houses, fall upon your knees, pray to the gods to intermit the plagues that needs must light on this ingratitude!

IX.—CASSIUS INSTIGATING BRUTUS.—SHAKSPEARE.

Well, Honour—is the subject of my story.—I cannot tell what you, and other men think of this life; but for my single self, I had as lief not be, as live to be in awe of such a thing as I myself. I was born free as Cæsar; so were you; we both have fed as well; and we can both endure the winter's cold as well as he. For, once, upon a raw and gusty day, the troubled Tiber chafing with her shores, Cæsar says to me,—'Dar'st thou, Cassius, now leap in with me, into this angry flood, and swim to yonder point?"—Upon the word, accoutred as I was, I plunged in, and bade him follow; so, indeed, he did. The torrent roared, and we did buffet it with lusty sinews, throwing it aside, and stemming it, with hearts of controversy. But ere we could arrive the point proposed, Cæsar cried,—"Help me, Cassius, or I sink." I, as Æneas, our great ancestor, did from the flames of Troy, upon his shoulder the old Anchises bear, so, from the waves of Tiber, did I—the tired Cæsar; and this man—is now become a god; and Cassius is a wretched creature, and must bend his body, if Cæsar carelessly but nod on him

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

The good is oft interrèd with their bones:
So let it be with Cæsar!—The noble Brutus
Hath told you, Cæsar was ambitious—
If it were so, it was a grievous fault;
And grievously hath Cæsar answered it!
Here, under leave of Brutus, and the rest—
For Brutus is an honourable man,
So are they all, all honourable men—
Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me—
But Brutus says, he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff—
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man.
You all did see, that, on the Lupercal,
I, thrice, presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition?
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And sure he is an honourable man.
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke;
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once? not without cause!
What cause withholds you, then, to mourn for him?
O Judgement! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason!—Bear with me:
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar;
And I must pause till it come back to me!—
But yesterday the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world—now lies he there,
And none so poor as do him reverence!
O masters! if I were disposed to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honourable men!—
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself, and you,
Than I will wrong such honourable men!
But here's a parchment with the seal of Cæsar—
I found it in his closet—'tis his will!
Let but the Commons hear this testament—
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,—
And they will go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,
Unto their issue!—
If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle? I remember
The first time ever Cæsar put it on:
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent—
That day he overcame the Nervii!—
Look! in this place ran Cassius' dagger through!—
See! what a rent the envious Casca made!—
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed!

And, as he plucked his cursèd steel away,
Mark how the blood of Cæsar followed it!—
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
If Brutus so unkindly knocked, or no;—
For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel!
Judge, O ye Gods, how dearly Cæsar loved him!—
This, this was the unkindest cut of all;
For, when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquished him. Then burst his mighty heart;
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statue—
Which all the while ran blood—great Cæsar fell!
Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us, fell down,
Whilst bloody treason flourished over us!—
Oh, now you weep, and I perceive you feel
The dint of pity: these are gracious drops!
Kind souls!—what! weep you when you but behold
Our Cæsar's vesture wounded?—look you here!
Here is himself—marred, as you see, by traitors!——
Good friends! sweet friends! let me not stir you up
To such a sudden flood of mutiny!
They that have done this deed are honourable!—
What private griefs they have, alas! I know not,
That made them do it: they are wise and honourable,
And will, no doubt, with reason answer you!
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts;
I am no orator, as Brutus is;
But, as you know me all, a plain, blunt man,
That loves his friend;—and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him:—
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
To stir men's blood: I only speak right on!
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds,—poor, poor, dumb mouths!—
And bid them speak for me. But, were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Cæsar, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny!

XII.—WILLIAM TELL TO HIS NATIVE MOUNTAINS.—

J. S. KNOWLES.

Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again! I hold to you the hands you first beheld, to show they still are free. Methinks I hear a spirit in your echoes answer me, and bid your tenant welcome to his home again —O sacred forms how proud you look! how high you lift your heads into the sky! how huge you are, how mighty, and how free! Ye are the things that tower, that shine; whose smile makes glad—whose frown is terrible; whose forms, robed or unrobed, do all the impress wear of awe divine. Ye guards of liberty, I'm with you once again!—I call to you with all my voice!—I hold my hands to you to show they still are free. I rush to you as though I could embrace you!

Scaling yonder peak, I saw an eagle wheeling near its brow, o'er the abyss: his broad expanded wings lay calm and motionless upon the air, as if he floated there without their aid, by the sole act of his unlorded will, that buoyed him proudly up. Instinctively I bent my bow: yet

kept he rounding still his airy circle, as in the delight of measuring the ample range beneath, and round about; absorbed, he heeded not the death that threatened him.—I could not shoot—'twas liberty!—I turned my bow aside, and let him soar away!

Heavens! with what pride I used to walk these hills, and look up to my God, and think the land was free. Yes, it was free!—from end to end, from cliff to lake, 'twas free—free as our torrents are that leap our rocks, and plough our valleys without asking leave; or as our peaks that wear their caps of snow in very presence of the regal sun. How happy was I then! I loved its very storms. Yes, I have often sat in my boat at night, when—midway o'er the lake—the stars went out, and down the mountain-gorge the wind came roaring. I have sat and eyed the thunder breaking from his cloud, and smiled to see him shake his lightnings o'er my head, and think I had no master save his own.—On the wild jutting cliff, o'ertaken oft by the mountain blast, I've laid me flat along; and while gust followed gust more furiously, as if to sweep me o'er the horrid brink, then I have thought of other lands, whose storms are summer flaws to those of mine, and just have wished me there;—the thought that mine was free has checked that wish, and I have raised my head, and cried, in thraldom to that furious wind, Blow on! this is the land of liberty!

XIII.—CLARENCE'S DREAM.—Shakspeare.

O, I have passed a miserable night, so full of ugly sights, of ghastly dreams, that, as I am a Christian faithful man, I would not spend another such a night, though 'twere to buy a world of happy days; so full of dismal terror was the time. Methought that I had broken from the Tower, and was embarked to cross to Burgundy,—and in my company my brother Glo'ster; who from my cabin tempted me to walk upon the hatches. Thence we looked toward England, and cited up a thousand heavy times during the wars of York and Lancaster, that had befallen us. As we paced along upon the giddy footing of the hatches, methought that Glo'ster stumbled, and, in falling, struck me (that sought to stay him) overboard, into the tumbling billows of the main. Oh, Heaven! methought what pain it was to drown! What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears! What sights of ugly death within mine eyes! I thought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks; a thousand men that fishes gnawed upon; wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl, inestimable stones, unvalued jewels: some lay in dead men's skulls; and in those holes where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept, as 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems, that wooed the slimy bottom of the deep, and mocked the dead bones that lay scattered by. And often did I strive to yield the ghost; but still the envious flood kept in my soul, and would not let it forth to find the empty, vast, and wandering air; but smothered it within my panting bulk, which almost burst to belch it in the sea. Yet 'waked I not with this sore agony—Ah no; my dream was lengthened after life: O then began the tempest of my soul! I passed, methought, the melancholy flood, with that grim ferryman whom poets write of, unto the kingdom of perpetual night. The first that there did greet my stranger-soul, was my great father-in-law, renownèd Warwick, who cried aloud,——"What scourge for perjury can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?" and so he vanished. Then came wandering by a shadow like an angel, with bright hair dabbled in blood; and he shrieked out aloud,——"Clarence is come, false, fleeting, perjured Clarence, that stabbed me in the field by Tewkesbury: seize on him, furies, take him to your torments!"——With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends environed me, and howlèd in mine ears such hideous cries, that with the very noise I, trembling, waked; and for a season after could not believe but that I was in hell: such terrible impression made my dream.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

fathers, that, like so many Alexanders, have, in these parts, from morn till even fought, and sheathed their swords for lack of argument! I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips, straining upon the start. The game's a-foot; follow your spirit; and upon this charge, cry, Heaven for Harry, England, and St George!

XVII.—MACBETH TO THE DAGGER VISION.—SHAKSPEARE.

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:——
I have thee not; and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind; a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw!
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use!
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest:—I see thee still!
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before!——There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business, which informs
Thus to mine eyes.——Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep; now witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and withered Murder,
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl 's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk; for fear
Thy very stones prate of my where-about,
And take the present horror from the time
Which now suits with it. While I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives. [*A bell rings.*]
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan! for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell!

XVIII.—ROLLA TO THE PERUVIANS.—SHERIDAN.

My brave associates—partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame!—Can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts?—No! you have judged, as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you. Your generous spirit has compared, as mine has, the motives which, in a war like this, can animate their minds and ours. They, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule;—we, for our country, our altars, and our homes. They follow an adventurer whom they fear, and obey a Power which they hate;—we serve a monarch whom we love, a God whom we adore. Where'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress! whene'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship! They boast they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error:—Yes; they will give enlightened freedom to our minds, who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride!—They offer us their protection:—yes! such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them!—They call on us to barter all the good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance

of something better—which they promise. Be our plain answer this: the throne we honour is the people's choice—the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy—the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this: and tell them too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us.

XIX.—OTHELLO'S DEFENCE.—SHAKSPEARE.

Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters,—
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her;
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace;
For, since these arms of mine had seven years' pith
Till now, some nine moons wasted, they have used
Their dearest action in the tented field
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
In speaking for myself: yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnished tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms
What conjuration, and what mighty magic,
(For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)
I won his daughter with.
Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life
From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have passed.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bade me tell it:
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents, by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And portance in my travel's history.
These things to hear,
Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house-affairs would draw her thence.
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse: which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively: I did consent;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffered. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs;
She swore,—In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful;
She wish'd she had not heard it; yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me;
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,

I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake:
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.——
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd.

XX.—THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE IN DEFENCE OF KING RICHARD II.—SHAKSPEARE.

Worst in this royal presence may I speak, yet best beseeming me to speak the truth. I would that any in this noble presence were enough noble to be upright judge of noble Richard; then true nobleness would teach him forbearance from so foul a wrong. What subject can give sentence on a king? And who sits here that is not Richard's subject? Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear, although apparent guilt be seen in them: and shall the figure of Heaven's Majesty, his captain, steward, deputy elect, anointed, crownèd, planted many years, be judged by subject and inferior breath, and he himself not present? O, forbid it, heaven, that, in a Christian climate, souls refined should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed! I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks, stirred up by Heaven, thus boldly for his king. My lord of Hereford here, whom you call king, is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king: and if you crown him, let me prophesy—the blood of English shall manure the ground, and future ages groan for this foul act; peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels, and, in this seat of peace, tumultuous wars shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound; disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny, shall here inhabit, and this land be called the field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls. O! if you rear this house against this house, it will the wofulest division prove that ever fell upon this curséd earth! Prevent,—resist it,—let it not be so,—lest children's children cry against you—woe!

XXI.—HAMLET ON HIS MOTHER'S MARRIAGE.

SHAKSPEARE.

Oh! that this too, too solid flesh would melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! or that the Everlasting had not fixed his canon 'gainst self-slaughter!—O God! O God! how weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable, seem to me all the uses of this world! Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden, that grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature possess it merely. That it should come to this! But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two: so excellent a king; that was, to this, Hyperion to a Satyr: so loving to my mother, that he might not beteem the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth! must I remember? why, she would hang on him, as if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on: and yet, within a month,—let me not think on't!—Frailty, thy name is woman!—a little month: or ere those shoes were old with which she follow'd my poor father's body, like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—O Heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason, would have mourn'd longer,—married my uncle, my father's brother; but no more like my father, than I to Hercules!——within a month,—ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears had left the flushing in her gallèd eyes, she married;—O most wicked speed, to post with such dexterity to incestuous sheets! It is not, nor it cannot come to, good.—But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue!

XXII.—HAMLET ON THE EMOTION OF THE PLAYER.

SHAKSPEARE.

Oh! what a rogue and peasant slave am I! Is it not monstrous that this player here, but in a fiction, in a dream of passion, could force his soul

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Than fly to others that we know not of!
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

XXIV.—HAMLET TO THE PLAYERS.—SHAKSPEARE.

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand—thus; but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings: who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb show and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.——Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing; whose end both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. Now, this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. Oh! there be players that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christian, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, or man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

XXV.—ROMEO ON SEEING JULIET AT A WINDOW.

SHAKSPEARE.

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.—But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon, who is already sick and pale with grief, that thou, her maid, art far more fair then she. Be not her maid, since she is envious; her vestal livery is but sick and green, and none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—It is my lady! O, it is my love! O that she knew she were!—She speaks, yet she says nothing; what of that? Her eye discourses! I will answer it!—I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks: two of the fairest stars in all the heaven, having some business, do entreat her eyes to twinkle in their spheres till they return. What if her eyes were there, they in her head?—the brightness of her cheek would shame those stars, as daylight doth a lamp; her eye in heaven would through the airy region stream so bright, that birds would sing, and think it were not night. See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand! O that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!—She speaks:—O speak again, bright angel! for thou art as glorious to this night, being o'er my head, as is a winged messenger of heaven unto the white-upturned wondering eyes of mortals that fall back to gaze on him, when he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds, and sails upon the bosom of the air.

XXVI.—MACBETH BEFORE THE MURDER OF KING DUNCAN.—SHAKSPEARE.

If it were done, when 't is done, then 't were well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
With his surcease, success!—that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here!—
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,—
We'd jump the life to come.—But, in these cases,
We still have judgement here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He 's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed: then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides this, Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off:
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast; or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'er-leaps itself,
And falls!

XXVII.—MACBETH PLANNING THE MURDER OF BANQUO.—SHAKSPEARE.

To be thus is nothing; but to be safely thus:—Our fears in Banquo stick deep; and in his royalty of nature reigns that which would be fear'd: 't is much he dares; and, to that dauntless temper of his mind, he hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour to act in safety. There is none but he whose being I do fear; and under him my Genius is rebuked, as, it is said, Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the Sisters, when first they put the name of king upon me, and bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like, they hailed him father to a line of kings: upon my head they placed a fruitless crown, and put a barren sceptre in my gripe, thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand, no son of mine succeeding. If it be so, for Banquo's issue have I 'filed my mind; for them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd; put rancours in the vessel of my peace, only for them; and mine eternal jewel given to the common enemy of man to make them kings—the seed of Banquo kings! Rather than so, come, fate into the list, and champion me to the utterance!

XXVIII.—KING HENRY V. ON ROYAL CEREMONY.

SHAKSPEARE.

Upon the king! let us our lives, our souls, our debts, our careful wives, our children, and our sins, lay on the king?—we must bear all. O hard condition! twin-born with greatness, subjected to the breath of every fool, whose sense no more can feel but his own wringing! What infinite heart's ease must kings neglect, that private men enjoy? And what have kings, that privates have not too, save ceremony, save general ceremony? And

what art thou, thou idol Ceremony? what kind of god art thou, that sufferest more of mortal griefs than do thy worshippers? What are thy rents? what are thy comings-in? O Ceremony, show me but thy worth! What is the soul of adoration! Art thou aught else but place, degree, and form, creating awe and fear in other men?—wherein thou art less happy, being fear'd, than they in fearing. What drink'st thou oft, instead of homage sweet, but poisoned flattery? O, be sick, great Greatness, and bid thy Ceremony give thee cure! Think'st thou, the fiery fever will go out with titles blown from adulation? will it give place to flexure and low bending? Canst thou, when thou command'st the beggar's knee, command the health of it? No, thou proud dream, that play'st so subtly with a king's repose; I am a king that find thee; and I know 'tis not the balm, the sceptre, and the ball, the sword, the mace, the crown imperial, the inter-tissued robe of gold and pearl, the farcèd title running 'fore the king, the throne he sits on, nor the tide of pomp that beats upon the high shore of this world,—no, not all these, thrice-gorgeous Ceremony, not all these, laid in bed majestical, can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave, who, with a body filled, and vacant mind, gets him to rest, cramm'd with distressful bread; never sees horrid Night, the child of hell; but, like a lackey, from the rise to set, sweats in the eye of Phœbus, and all night sleeps in Elysium; next day, after dawn, doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse; and follows so the ever-running year with profitable labour, to his grave; and, but for Ceremony, such a wretch, winding up days with toil, and nights with sleep, had the fore-hand and vantage of a king. The slave, a member of the country's peace, enjoys it; but in gross brain little wots what watch the king keeps to maintain the peace, whose hours the peasant best advantages.

XXIX.—KING HENRY VI. ON THE ANXIETIES OF ROYALTY.—SHAKSPEARE.

This battle fares like to the morning's war,
When dying clouds contend with growing light;
What time the shepherd, blowing of his nails,
Can neither call it perfect day or night.
Now sways it this way, like a mighty sea,
Forced by the tide to combat with the wind;
Now sways it that way, like the self-same sea,
Forced to retire by fury of the wind:
Sometime the flood prevails, and then the wind;
Now, one the better; then, another best;
Both tugging to be victors, breast to breast,
Yet neither conqueror, nor conquered:
So is the equal poise of the fell war.
Here on this molehill will I sit me down.—
To whom God will, there be the victory!
For Margaret, my queen, and Clifford too,
Have chid me from the battle; swearing both,
They prosper best of all when I am thence.
Would I were dead! if God's good will were so
For what is in this world, but grief and woe?
O God! methinks, it were a happy life,
To be no better than a homely swain;
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,
Thereby to see the minutes how they run:
How many make the hour full complete,
How many hours bring about the day,
How many days will finish up the year,
How many years a mortal man may live.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XXXI.—MASTER WALTER TO JULIA.—Sheridan Knowles.

Listen to me—and silently, if not with patience.—How I watch'd thee from thy childhood, I'll not recall to thee. Thy father's wisdom—whose humble instrument I was—directed your non-age should be pass'd in privacy; from your apt mind, that far outstripp'd your years, fearing the taint of an infected world;—for, in the rich ground, weeds once taking root, grow strong as flowers. He might be right or wrong: I thought him right; and therefore did his bidding. Most certainly he loved you—so did I; ay! well as I had been myself your father! I need not say how fast you grew in knowledge and in goodness,—that hope could scarce enjoy its golden dreams, so soon fulfilment realized them all! Enough. You came to womanhood: your heart, pure as the leaf of the consummate bud, that's new unfolded by the smiling sun, and ne'er knew blight nor canker! When a good woman is fitly mated, she grows doubly good, how good soe'er before! I found the man I thought a match for thee; and, soon as found, proposed him to thee. 'Twas your father's will, occasion offering, you should be married, soon as you reach'd to womanhood.—You liked my choice—accepted him.—We came to town; where, by important matter summon'd thence, I left you an affianced bride!—Nay, check thy tears! Let judgement now, not passion be awake.—On my return, I found thee—what? I'll not describe the thing I found thee then! I'll not describe my pangs to see thee such a thing! The engineer who lays the last stone of his sea-built tower it cost him years and years of toil to raise,—and, smiling at it, tells the winds and waves to roar and whistle now—but, in a night, beholds the tempests sporting in its place—may look aghast, as I did!——Resume thy seat. I pity thee; perhaps not thee alone it fits to sue for pardon. But, to vindicate myself, I name thy lover's stern desertion of thee. What wast thou then with wounded pride? I saw thy madness—knew, to thwart it were to chafe it—and humour'd it to take that course, I thought, adopted, least 'twould rue! I did it for the best.——But know'st thou not what with these nuptials comes? Look back and think. I told thee of a thing. Hast thou forgot?——Fathers, make straws your children! Nature's nothing! blood nothing! Once in other veins it runs, it no more yearneth for the parent flood, than doth the stream that from the source disparts. Talk not of love instinctive—what you call so is but the brat of custom! Your own flesh by habit cleaves to you—without, hath no adhesion! So; you have forgot you have a father, and are here to meet him! Remember, Julia, thou and I, to-day, must to thy father of thy training render a strict account. While honour's left to us, we have something;—nothing, having all but that. Now for thy last act of obedience, Julia! Present thyself before thy bridegroom! Show him thy heart, and to his honour leave it, to set thee free or hold thee bound. Thy father will be by!

XXXII.—RIENZI TO THE ROMANS.—Miss Mitford.

Friends, I come not here to talk. Ye know too well
The story of our thraldom:—we are slaves!
The bright sun rises to his course, and lights
A race of slaves! He sets, and his last beam
Falls on a slave:—not such as, swept along
By the full tide of power, the conqueror leads
To crimson glory and undying fame;
But base, ignoble slaves—slaves to a horde
Of petty tyrants, feudal despots, lords,
Rich in some dozen paltry villages—
Strong in some hundred spearmen—only great
In that strange spell, a name. Each hour, dark fraud,
Or open rapine, or protected murder,
Cries out against them. But this very day.

An honest man, my neighbour—there he stands—
Was struck—struck like a dog, by one who wore
The badge of Ursini; because, forsooth,
He tossed not high his ready cap in air,
Nor lifted up his voice in servile shouts,
At sight of that great ruffian. Be we men,
And suffer such dishonour? men, and wash not
The stain away in blood? Such shames are common.
I have known deeper wrongs. I, that speak to you,—
I had a brother once, a gracious boy,
Full of all gentleness, of calmest hope,
Of sweet and quiet joy; there was the look
Of heaven upon his face, which limners give
To the belov'd disciple. How I loved
That gracious boy! Younger by fifteen years,
Brother at once and son! He left my side—
A summer bloom on his fair cheeks, a smile
Parting his innocent lips. In one short hour,
The pretty, harmless boy was slain! I saw
The corse,—the mangled corse, and then I cried
For vengeance! Rouse, ye Romans! rouse, ye slaves!
Have ye brave sons? Look, in the next fierce brawl,
To see them die. Have ye daughters fair? Look
To see them live, torn from your arms, distained,
Dishonoured: and, if ye dare call for justice,
Be answered by the lash. Yet this is Rome,
That sat on her Seven Hills, and from her throne
Of beauty, ruled the world! Yet we are Romans!
Why, in that elder day, to be a Roman
Was greater than a king! And once, again,—
Hear me, ye walls, that echoed to the tread
Of either Brutus!—once again, I swear,
The eternal city shall be free! her sons
Shall walk with princes!

XXXIII.—BOBADIL'S MODE OF WARFARE.—BEN JONSON.

I will tell you, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself: but were I known to his majesty, and the lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you? Why, thus:—I would select nineteen more to myself; gentlemen they should be, of a good spirit, strong, and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a character that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules; as your Punto, your Reverso, your Stoccata, your Imbrocata, your Passada, your Montonto; till they could all play very nearly, or altogether, as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong; we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not, in their honour, refuse us! Well, we would kill them;—challenge twenty more, kill them;—twenty more, kill them;—twenty more, kill them too;—and thus would we kill every man his twenty a-day! That's twenty score;—twenty score, that's two hundred;—two hundred a-day, five days a thousand:—forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty,...two hundred days kills them all up, by computation! And this I will venture my poor gentlemanlike carcass to perform,—provided there be no treason practised upon us,—by fair and discreet manhood; that is, civilly by the sword.

XXXIV.—LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS OVER THE BODY OF LUCRETIA.—J. H. PAYNE.

Would you know why I summoned you together? Ask ye what brings me here? Behold this dagger, clotted with gore! Behold that frozen corse! See where the lost Lucretia sleeps in death! She was the mark and model of the time, the mould in which each female face was formed, the very shrine and sacristy of virtue! Fairer than ever was a form created by youthful fancy when the blood strays wild, and never-resting thought is all on fire! The worthiest of the worthy! Not the nymph who met old Numa in his hallowed walks, and whispered in his ear her strains divine, can I conceive beyond her;—the young choir of vestal virgins bent to her. 'Tis wonderful amid the darnel, hemlock, and base weeds, which now spring rife from the luxurious compost spread o'er the realm, how this sweet lily grew,—how from the shade of those ill-neighbouring plants her father sheltered her, that not a leaf was blighted, but, arrayed in purest grace, she bloomed unsullied beauty. Such perfections might have called back the torpid breast of age to long-forgotten rapture; such a mind might have abashed the boldest libertine, and turned desire to reverential love and holiest affection! Oh, my countrymen! You all can witness when that she went forth it was a holiday in Rome: old age forgot its crutch, labour its task,—all ran; and mothers, turning to their daughters, cried, "There, there's Lucretia?" Now, look ye where she lies! That beauteous flower, that innocent sweet rose, torn up by ruthless violence --gone! gone!——Say, would you seek instruction? would you ask what ye should do? Ask ye yon conscious walls, which saw his poisoned brother;—ask yon deserted street, where Tullia drove o'er her dead father's corse, 'twill cry, Revenge! Ask yonder senate-house, whose stones are purple with human blood, and it will cry, Revenge! Go to the tomb where lie his murdered wife, and the poor queen who loved him as her son, their unappeasèd ghosts will shriek, Revenge! The temples of the gods, the all-viewing heavens, the gods themselves, will justify the cry, and swell the general sound, Revenge! Revenge! And we will be revenged, my countrymen! Brutus shall lead you on; Brutus, a name which will, when you're revenged, be dearer to him than all the noblest titles earth can boast....Brutus, your king?—No, fellow-citizens! If mad ambition in this guilty frame had strung one kingly fibre,—yea, but one—by all the gods, this dagger which I hold should rip it out, though it entwined my heart. Now take the body up. Bear it before us to Tarquin's palace; there we'll light our torches, and, in the blazing conflagration, rear a pile for these chaste relics, that shall send her soul amongst the stars. On! Brutus leads you!

XXXV.—CLAUDE MELNOTTE TO PAULINE.

BULWER-LYTTON.

Pauline, by pride angels have fallen ere thy time: by pride—
That sole alloy of thy most lovely mould—
The evil spirit of a bitter love
And a revengeful heart had power upon thee.
From my first years my soul was filled with thee;
I saw thee 'midst the flowers the lowly boy
Tended, unmarked by thee—a spirit of bloom,
And joy, and freshness, as if Spring itself
Were made a living thing, and wore thy shape!
I saw thee, and the passionate heart of man
Entered the breast of the wild-dreaming boy,
And from that hour I grew—what to the last
I shall be—thine adorer! Well; this love,
Vain, frantic,—guilty if thou wilt,—became

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

[The following passages from Shakspeare consist of portions of Dialogue adapted for Delivery by a Single Speaker.]

XXXVI.—MENENIUS TO THE TRIBUNES.—CORIOLANUS.

The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night: not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius—but as the wolf loves the lamb, to devour him! You two are old men; tell me one thing that I shall ask you. In what enormity is Marcius poor, that you two have not in abundance? Do you know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right hand file? Do you? You talk of pride!—Will you not be angry? Why 'tis no great matter: give your disposition the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud? You talk of pride: oh! that you could turn your eyes towards the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves! oh! that you could! for then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, (alias, fools) as any in Rome. You say,—I am known well enough too! I am known to be a humourous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't: what I think, I utter; and spend my malice in my breath: meeting two such wealsmen as you are, (I cannot call you Lycurguses) if the drink you gave me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it; and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you have good faces. What harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too? You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs; you wear out a good wholesome forenoon, in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejourn the controversy of threepence to a second day of audience.—All the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves: you are a pair of strange ones! When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion; though, peradventure, some of the best of them were hereditary hangmen. Good e'en to your worships; more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you.

XXXVII.—MARK ANTONY OVER THE BODY OF CÆSAR.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

O mighty Cæsar! Dost thou lie so low? Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils, shrunk to this little measure?—Fare thee well.—I know not, gentlemen, what you intend; who else must be let blood, who else is rank: if I myself, there is no hour so fit as Cæsar's death's hour; nor no instrument of half that worth, as those your swords, made rich with the most noble blood of all this world. I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard, now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke, fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years, I shall not find myself so apt to die: no place will please me so, no mean of death, as here by Cæsar,—and by you cut off, the choice and master spirits of this age....O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth, that I am meek and gentle with these butchers! Thou art the ruins of the noblest man that ever livèd in the tide of time. Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood! Over thy wounds now I do prophesy,—which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips, to beg the voice and utterance of my tongue:—A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;

domestic fury, and fierce civil strife, shall cumber all the parts of Italy; blood and destruction shall be so in use, and dreadful objects so familiar, that mothers shall but smile, when they behold their infants quarter'd with the hands of war; all pity choked with custom of fell deeds: and Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge, with Até by his side, come hot from hell, shall in these confines, with a monarch's voice, cry "Havoc!" and let slip the dogs of war; that this foul deed shall smell above the earth with carrion men, groaning for burial.

XXXVIII.—LAERTES TO HIS SISTER OPHELIA.—HAMLET.

My necessaries are embark'd; farewell! and, sister, as the winds give benefit, and convoy is assistant, do not sleep, but let me hear from you.—For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour, hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood; a violet in the youth of primy nature, forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting, the perfume and suppliance of a minute: think it no more; for nature, crescent, does not grow alone in thews and bulk; but, as this temple waxes, the inward service of the mind and soul grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now; and now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch the virtue of his will: but, you must fear, his greatness weighed, his will is not his own; for he himself is subject to his birth. He may not, as unvalued persons do, carve for himself; for on his choice depends the safety and the health of the whole state; and therefore must his choice be circumscribed unto the voice and yielding of that body, whereof he is the head: then if he says he loves you, it fits your wisdom so far to believe it, as he in his particular act and place may give his saying deed; which is no further than the main voice of Denmark goes withal. Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain, if with too credent ear you list his songs, or lose your heart: fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister; and keep you in the rear of your affection, out of the shot and danger of desire. The chariest maid is prodigal enough, if she unmask her beauty to the moon: virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes: the canker galls the infants of the spring, too oft before their buttons be disclosed; and in the morn and liquid dew of youth contagious blastments are most imminent. Be wary then: best safety lies in fear; youth to itself rebels, though none else near. I stay too long. Farewell, Ophelia: remember well what I have said to you. Farewell!

XXXIX.—POLONIUS TO HIS SON LAERTES.—HAMLET.

Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard,—for shame! The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail, and you are staid for.—There,—my blessings with you! And these few precepts in thy memory look thou character.——Give thy thoughts no tongue, nor any unproportion'd thought his act. Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar. The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel; but do not dull thy palm with entertainment of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware of entrance to a quarrel: but, being in, bear it that the opposer may beware of thee. Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice: Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement. Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, but not express'd in fancy: rich, not gaudy; for the apparel oft proclaims the man. Neither a borrower nor a lender be: for loan oft loses both itself and friend; and borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry. This above all,—to thine ownself be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man. Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

XL.—CASSIO ON HIS DISMISSAL BY OTHELLO.—OTHELLO.

Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial. What! Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?—O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—Devil! I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.—O that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts! And now it hath pleased the devil Drunkenness to give place to the devil Wrath: one imperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself. I will ask Othello for my place again; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by-and-bye a fool, and presently a beast! O strange!—Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil.

XLI.—KING LEAR ON HIS DAUGHTER GONERIL'S UNKINDNESS.—KING LEAR.

Hear Nature, hear; dear Goddess, hear! Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend to make this creature fruitful! into her womb convey sterility! Dry up in her the organs of increase; that from her derogate body never spring a babe to honour her! If she must teem, create her child of spleen; that it may live, and be a thwart disnatured torment to her! Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth! with cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks; turn all her mother's pains and benefits to laughter and contempt; that she may feel how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!...I am ashamed that thou hast power to shake my manhood thus: that these hot tears, which break from me perforce, should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs upon thee! The untented woundings of a father's curse pierce every sense about thee!—Old fond eyes, beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out; and cast you, with the waters that ye lose, to temper clay.—Ha! is it come to this? Let it be so.—Yet have I left a daughter, who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable; when she shall hear this of thee, with her nails she'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find that I'll resume the shape which thou dost think I have cast off for ever; thou shalt, I warrant thee.

XLII.—KING LEAR TO HIS DAUGHTERS GONERIL AND REGAN.—KING LEAR.

I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad; I will not trouble thee, my child: farewell: we'll no more meet, no more see one another;—but yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter: or, rather a disease that's in my flesh, which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil, a plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle, in my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee: let shame come when it will, I do not call it; I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot, nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove: mend, when thou canst; be better, at thy leisure: I can be patient; I can stay with Regan, I, and my hundred knights. ...I gave you all—made you my guardians, my depositories; but kept a reservation to retain an hundred knights. What, must I come to you with five-and-twenty, Regan? said you so? No more with you?—Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd, when others are more wicked; not being the worst, stands in some rank of praise:—Goneril!...I'll go with thee; thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty.—"What need I five-and-twenty? what need one?" Oh! reason not the need: our basest beggars are in the poorest thing superfluous;

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XLV.—LADY MACBETH MEDITATING THE MURDER OF KING DUNCAN.—MACBETH.

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be what thou art promised:—yet do I fear thy nature; it is too full o' the milk of human kindness, to catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great; art not without ambition, but without the illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly, that wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false, and yet wouldst wrongly win: thou'dst have, great Glamis, that which cries, "Thus thou must do, if thou have it:" and that which rather thou dost fear to do, than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither, that I may pour my spirits in thine ear, and chastise with the valour of my tongue all that impedes thee from the golden round, which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem to have thee crown'd withal.—The king comes here to-night!—Great news. The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements. Come, come, you spirits that tend on mortal thought, unsex me here; and fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood, stop up the access and passage to remorse; that no compunctious visitings of nature shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between the effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts, and take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers, wherever, in your sightless substances, you wait on Nature's mischief! Come, thick Night, and pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell! that my keen knife see not the wound it makes; nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, to cry, "Hold, hold!"

XLVI.—MACBETH INSTIGATING HIS HIRELINGS TO THE MURDER OF BANQUO.—MACBETH.

Well then, now have you consider'd of my speeches? Know, that it was he, in the times past, which held you so under fortune; which, you thought, had been our innocent self: this I made good to you in our last conference; pass'd in probation with you how you were borne in hand; how cross'd; the instruments; who wrought with them; and all things else, that might, to half a soul, and a notion craz'd, say, Thus did Banquo. I made this known to you. I did so; and went further, which is now our point of second meeting. Do you find your patience so predominant in your nature, that you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd, to pray for this good man and for his issue, whose heavy hand hath how'd you to the grave, and beggar'd yours for ever? You are men, you say? Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men; as hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs, shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are 'cleped all by the name of dogs: the valued file distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle, the housekeeper, the hunter—every one according to the gift which bounteous Nature hath in him closed; whereby he does receive particular addition, from the bill that writes them all alike: and so of men. Now, if you have a station in the file, and not in the worst rank of manhood, say it; and I will put that business in your bosoms, whose execution takes your enemy off; grapples you to the heart and love of us, who wear our health but sickly in his life, which in his death were perfect. Both of you know, Banquo was your enemy? So is he mine: and in such bloody distance, that every minute of his being thrusts against my nearest of life: and though I could, with bare-faced power, sweep him from my sight, and bid my will avouch it; yet I must not, for certain friends that are both his and mine, whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall whom I myself struck down: and thence it is, that I to your assistance do make love; masking the business from the common eye, for sundry weighty reasons.——Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour, at most, I will advise you where to plant yourselves. Acquaint you with the perfect spy o'the time, the moment on't: ... it must be done to-night, and

something from the palace; always thought, that *I* require a clearness. And with him, (to leave no rubs, nor botches, in the work,) Fleance his son, that keeps him company,—whose absence is no less material to me than is his father's,—must embrace the fate of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart; I'll come to you anon. Abide within....It is concluded: ——Banquo, thy soul's flight, if it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

XLVII.—MACBETH ON SEEING THE GHOST OF BANQUO.—MACBETH.

Pr'ythee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?——Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.—If charnel-houses and our graves must send those that we bury back, our monuments shall be the maws of kites.——If I stand here I saw him.——Blood hath been shed ere now i'the olden time, ere human statute purged the gentle weal; ay, and since too, murders have been performed too terrible for the ear: the times have been, that, when the brains were out, the man would die, and there an end: but now, they rise again, with twenty mortal murders on their crowns, and push us from our stools: this is more strange than such a murder is.——I do forget: do not muse at me, my most worthy friends I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing to those that know me. Come, love and health to all; then I'll sit down:——give me some wine, fill full:——I drink to the general joy of the whole table, and to our dear friend, Banquo, whom we miss; would he were here! to all and him we thirst, and all to all.——Avaunt! and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee! Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold; thou hast no speculation in those eyes which thou dost glare with! What man dare, I dare: approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, the arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger; take any shape, but that! and my firm nerves shall never tremble: or, be alive again, and dare me to the desert with thy sword; if trembling I inhibit thee, protest me the baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow! Unreal—mockery—hence!—Why, so;—being gone, I am a man again.

XLVIII.—CONSTANCE ON BEING INFORMED OF AN IGNOBLE PEACE.—KING JOHN.

A wicked day, and not a holyday!—What hath this day deserved, what hath it done, that it in golden letters should be set among the high tides, in the kalendar? Nay, rather turn this day out of the week; this day of shame, oppression, perjury. But on this day, let seamen fear no wreck; no bargains break, that are not this day made: this day, all things begun come to ill end; yea, faith itself to hollow falsehood change! You have beguiled me with a counterfeit, resembling majesty; which, being touch'd and tried, proves valueless: you are forsworn. forsworn; you came in arms to spill mine enemy's blood, but now in arms you strengthen it with yours. The grappling vigour and rough frown of war is cold in amity and painted peace, and our oppression hath made up this league: arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjured kings! a widow cries; be husband to me, heavens! Let not the hours of this ungodly day wear out the day in peace; but, ere sunset, set armèd discord 'twixt these perjur'd kings! War! war! no peace! peace is to me a war. O Lymoges! O Austria! thou dost shame that bloody spoil: thou slave, thou wretch, thou coward: thou little valiant, great in villany! thou ever strong upon the stronger side! thou Fortune's champion, that dost never fight but when her humourous ladyship is by to teach thee safety! thou art perjur'd too, and sooth'st up greatness. What a fool art thou! A ramping fool; to brag, and stamp, and swear, upon my party! Thou cold-blooded slave, hast thou not spoke like thunder on my side? being sworn my soldier? bidding

me depend upon thy stars, thy fortune, and thy strength? And dost thou now fall over to my foes? Thou wear a lion's hide! doff it for shame, and hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

XLIX.—KING JOHN INSTIGATING HUBERT TO THE MURDER OF ARTHUR.—KING JOHN.

Come hither, Hubert. O my gentle Hubert, we owe thee much; within this wall of flesh there is a soul counts thee her creditor, and with advantage means to pay thy love: and, my good friend, thy voluntary oath lives in this bosom, dearly cherished. Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say,—but I will fit it with some better time. By heaven, Hubert, I am almost ashamed to say what good respect I have of thee. Thou hast no cause to thank me, Hubert, yet: but thou shalt have; and creep time ne'er so slow, yet it shall come for me to do thee good. I had a thing to say,—but let it go: the sun is in the heaven, and the proud day, attended with the pleasures of the world, is all too wanton, and too full of gawds, to give me audience:—if the midnight bell did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth, sound "One" unto the drowsy race of night; if this same were a church-yard where we stand, and thou possessèd with a thousand wrongs; or if that surly spirit, melancholy, had baked thy blood, and made it heavy, thick; (which, else, runs tickling up and down the veins, making that idiot, Laughter, keep men's eyes, and strain their cheeks to idle merriment, a passion hateful to my purposes;) or if that thou couldst see me without eyes, hear me without thine ears, and make reply without a tongue, using conceit alone, without eyes, ears, and harmful sound of words; then, in despite of broad-eyed watchful day, I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts: but ah, I will not:—yet I love thee well; and by my troth, I think thou lov'st me well. Do not I know, thou dost? Good Hubert—Hubert!—Hubert—throw thine eye on yon young boy: I'll tell thee what, my friend, he is a very serpent in my way; and, wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread, he lies before me: dost thou understand me? Thou art his keeper.—Death!—A grave!—Enough. I could be merry now: Hubert, I love thee; well, I'll not say what I intend for thee: Remember!

L.—PRINCE ARTHUR TO HUBERT.—KING JOHN.

Good morrow, Hubert! You are sad to-day. Methinks, no body should be sad but I: yet, I remember, when I was in France, young gentlemen would be as sad as night, only for wantonness. By my christendom, so I were out of prison, and kept sheep, I should be as merry as the day is long; and so I would be here, but that I doubt my uncle practises more harm to me: he is afraid of me, and I of him. Is it my fault that I am Geoffrey's son? No, indeed, is't not: and I would to Heaven, I were your son, so you would love me, Hubert. Are you sick, Hubert? you look pale to-day: in sooth, I would you were a little sick, that I might sit all night and watch with you: I warrant, I love you more than you do me.——Oh, me, this paper! Gentle Hubert! What? must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes? Have you the heart? When your head did but ache, I knit my handkerchief about your brows, (the best I had, a princess wrought it me,) and I did never ask it you again: and with my hand at midnight held your head; and, like the watchful minutes to the hour, still and anon cheer'd up the heavy time; saying, What lack you? and, Where lies your grief? or, What good love may I perform for you? Many a poor man's son would have lain still, and ne'er have spoke a loving word to you; but you at your sick service had a prince. Nay, you may think my love was crafty love, and call it cunning; do so, if you will: if Heaven be pleas'd that you must use me ill, why, then you must.—Will you put out mine eyes? These eyes, that never did, nor never shall, so much as

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

from me, for the best hope I have! Oh do not wish one more: rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, throughout my host, that he who hath no stomach to this fight may straight depart: his passport shall be made, and crowns for convoy put into his purse: we would not die in that man's company, that fears his fellowship to die with us. This day is call'd the feast of Crispian: he that outlives this day, and comes safe home, will stand a tip-toe when this day is named, and rouse him at the name of Crispian: he that shall live this day, and see old age, will yearly on the vigil feast his friends, and say—"To-morrow is Saint Crispian:" then will he strip his sleeve, and show his scars, and say—"These wounds I had on Crispin's day." Old men forget; yet shall not all forget, but they'll remember, with advantages, what feats they did that day. Then shall our names, familiar in their mouths as household words Harry the king, Bedford, and Exeter, Warwick, and Talbot, Salisbury, and Gloster, be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd: this story shall the good man teach his son; and Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by from this day to the ending of the world, but we in it shall be remembered: we few, we happy few, we band of brothers; for he to-day that sheds his blood with me, shall be my brother! be he ne'er so vile, this day shall gentle his condition: and gentlemen in England, now a-bed, shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here! and hold their manhoods cheap, while any speaks that fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day. All things are ready if our minds be so. You know your places: God be with you all!

LIII.—THE DUKE OF GLOSTER MEDITATING CLARENCE'S DEATH.—RICHARD III.

Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by the sun of York; and all the clouds that lower'd upon our house, in the deep bosom of the ocean buried. Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths; our bruisèd arms hung up for monuments; our stern alarums changed to merry meetings; our dreadful marches to delightful measures. Grim-visaged war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front; and now,—instead of mounting barbèd steeds, to fright the souls of fearful adversaries,—he capers nimbly in a lady's chamber, to the lascivious pleasing of a lute. But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks, nor made to court an amorous looking-glass,—I that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty, to strut before a wanton ambling nymph,—I that am curtail'd of man's fair proportion, cheated of feature by dissembling Nature, deform'd, unfinished, sent before my time into this breathing world, scarce half made up, and that so lamely and unfashionable, that dogs bark at me, as I halt by them: why I, in this weak piping time of peace, have no delight to pass away the time, unless to spy my shadow in the sun, and descant on mine own deformity. And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover, to entertain these fair well-spoken days, I am determinèd to prove a villain, and hate the idle pleasures of these days. Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous, by drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams, to set my brother Clarence and the king in deadly hate the one against the other: and, if king Edward be as true and just, as I am subtle, false, and treacherous, this day should Clarence closely be mew'd up; about a prophecy, that says—that G of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be. The king is sickly, weak, and melancholy, and his physicians fear him mightily. He cannot live, I hope; and must not die, till George be pack'd with posthorse up to heaven. I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence, with lies well steel'd with weighty arguments; and, if I fail not in my deep intent, Clarence hath not another day to live; which done, Heaven take king Edward to his mercy, and leave the world for me to bustle in! for then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter. What though I kill'd her husband and her father? the readiest way to make the wench amends, is to become her husband, and her father: the which will I; not all so much for love, as for another secret close intent, by marrying her, which I must reach unto. But yet I

run before my horse to market: Clarence still breathes,—Edward still lives and reigns; when they are gone, then must I count my gains.

LIV.—KING RICHARD III. AWAKING FROM ILL-BODING DREAMS.—RICHARD III.

Give me another horse!—bind up my wounds!—Have mercy, Heaven! —Soft; I did but dream.—O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me! —The lights burn blue.—It is now dead midnight. Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh! What do I fear? myself? there's none else by; Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I. Is there a murderer here? No!—Yes; I am. Then fly.—What, from myself? Great reason. Why? Lest I revenge. What? myself on myself? I love myself. Wherefore? for any good that I myself have done unto myself? O no: alas, I rather hate myself, for hateful deeds committed by myself. I am a villain: yet I lie, I am not. Fool, of thyself speak well:—Fool, do not flatter. My conscience hath a thousand several tongues, and every tongue brings in a several tale, and every tale condemns me for a villain. Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree; murder, stern murder, in the direst degree; all several sins, all used in each degree, throng to the bar, crying all,—"Guilty! guilty!"—I shall despair. There is no creature loves me; and, if I die, no soul will pity me.—Nay, wherefore should they? since that I myself find in myself no pity to myself. Methought, the souls of all that I had murder'd came to my tent: and every one did threat to-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.——Who's there? [*starting.*] O Ratcliff, I have dream'd a fearful dream! What think'st thou? will all our friends prove true? Ratcliff, I fear, I fear,—By the apostle Paul, shadows to-night have struck more terror to the soul of Richard, than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers, armed all in proof, and led by shallow Richmond. It is not yet near day. Come, go with me; under our tents I'll play the eaves-dropper, to hear if any mean to shrink from me.

LV.—THE EARL OF RICHMOND AWAKING FROM FAIR-BODING DREAMS.—RICHARD III.

'Cry mercy, lords, and watchful gentlemen, that you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here. The sweetest sleep, and fairest-boding dreams that ever enter'd in a drowsy head, have I since your departure had, my lords. Methought, their souls, whose bodies Richard murder'd, came to my tent, and cried,—"On! victory!" I promise you, my heart is very jocund in the remembrance of so fair a dream. But now 'tis time to arm, and give direction.—More than I have said, loving countrymen, the leisure and enforcement of the time forbids to dwell on. Yet remember this,—God, and our good cause, fight upon our side; the prayers of holy saints, and wrongèd souls, like high-rear'd bulwarks, stand before our faces; Richard except, those whom we fight against had rather have us win, than him they follow. For what is he they follow? truly, gentlemen, a bloody tyrant, and a homicide; one raised in blood, and one in blood establish'd; one that made means to come by what he hath, and slaughter'd those that were the means to help him: one that hath ever been God's enemy: then, if you fight against God's enemy, God will, in justice, ward you as his soldiers; if you do sweat to put a tyrant down, you sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain; if you do fight against your country's foes, your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire; if you do fight in safeguard of your wives, your wives shall welcome home the conquerors; if you do free your children from the sword, your children's children guard it in your age. Then in the name of God, and all these rights, advance your standards, draw your willing swords!——For me, the ransom of my bold attempt shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold face; but, if I thrive, the gain of my attempt the least of you shall share his part thereof. Sound drums and trumpets, boldly and cheerfully; the words, Saint George! Richmond and victory!

LVI.—THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM BEFORE HIS EXECUTION.—HENRY VIII.

All good people, you that thus far have come to pity me, hear what I have to say, and then go home, and lose me. I have this day received a traitor's judgement, and by that name must die; yet, Heaven bear witness, and if I have a conscience, let it sink me, even as the axe falls, if I be not faithful! The law I bear no malice for my death,—it has done, upon the premisses, but justice; but those that sought it, I could wish more Christians: be what they will, I heartily forgive them: yet let them look they glory not in mischief, nor build their evils on the graves of great men; for then my guiltless blood must cry against them. For further life in this world I ne'er hope, nor will I sue, although the king have mercies more than I dare make faults. You few that loved me, and dare be bold to weep for Buckingham,—his noble friends and fellows, whom to leave is only bitter to him, only dying,—go with me, like good angels, to my end; and, as the long divorce of steel falls on me, make of your prayers one sweet sacrifice, and lift my soul to heaven.—Commend me to his grace; and, if he speak of Buckingham, pray, tell him, you met him half in heaven: my vows and prayers yet are the king's; and, till my soul forsake me, shall cry for blessings on him: may he live longer than I have time to tell his years! Ever belov'd, and loving, may his rule be; and, when old time shall lead him to his end, goodness and he fill up one monument! All good people, pray for me! I must now forsake you; the last hour of my long weary life is come upon me. Farewell! And when you would say something that is sad, speak how I fell.—I have done. Lead on! Farewell!

LVII.—QUEEN CATHERINE TO HENRY VIII. AND CARDINAL WOLSEY.—HENRY VIII.

Sir, I desire you do me right and justice; and to bestow your pity on me: for I am a most poor woman, and a stranger, born out of your dominions; having here no judge indifferent, nor no more assurance of equal friendship and proceeding. Alas, sir, in what have I offended you? what cause hath my behaviour given to your displeasure, that thus you should proceed to put me off, and take your good grace from me? Heaven witness, I have been to you a true and humble wife, at all times to your will conformable: ever in fear to kindle your dislike, yea, subject to your countenance; glad, or sorry, as I saw it inclin'd. When was the hour I ever contradicted your desire, or made it not mine too? Or which of your friends have I not strove to love, although I knew he were mine enemy? what friend of mine that had to him derived your anger, did I continue in my liking; nay, gave notice he was from thence discharged? Sir, call to mind that I have been your wife in this obedience, upward of twenty years: if, in the course and process of this time, you can report, and prove it too, against mine honour aught, my bond to wedlock, or my love and duty, turn me away; and let the foul'st contempt shut door upon me, and so give me up to the sharpest kind of justice.——Now to you, Lord Cardinal, I speak. I do believe, induced by potent circumstances, that you are mine enemy; and make my challenge—you shall not be my judge; for it is you have blown this coal betwixt my lord and me. You are meek, and humble-mouth'd; you sign your place and calling, in full seeming, with meekness and humility: but your heart is cramm'd with arrogancy, spleen, and pride. You have, by fortune and his highness' favours, gone slightly o'er low steps; and now are mounted where powers are your retainers, and your words, domestics to you, serve your will as't please yourself pronounce their office. I must tell you, you tender more your person's honour than your high profession spiritual: that again I do refuse you for my judge: and here, before you all, appeal unto the Pope,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies. But I have patience. Now, farewell the hopes of court! my hopes in heaven do dwell.

LX.—PORTIA'S DESCRIPTION OF HER SUITORS.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

I will describe my princely suitors: and, according to my description, level at my affection. First, there is the Neapolitan prince. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his good parts, that he can shoe him himself; I am much afraid his father must have been a smith. Then, there is the County Palatine. He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, An if you will not have me, choose: he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth, than to either of these. Then there is the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon. He was born human,—therefore let him pass for a man. As to Faulconbridge, the young baron of England, I say nothing to him; for he understands not me, nor I him; he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian. He is a proper man's picture; but, alas! who can converse with a dumb show? How oddly he is suited! I think, he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere. The Scottish lord, his neighbour, hath a neighbourly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again, when he was able; I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another. Then the young German, the duke of Saxony's nephew, —I like him very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk; when he is best, he is little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast; if the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge. There is not one among this parcel of wooers, Nerissa, but I dote on his very absence, and I pray Heaven grant them a fair departure.

LXI.—LORENZO ON THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank! Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night, become the touches of sweet harmony. Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of heaven is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold; there's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st, but in his motion like an angel sings, still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubims: such harmony is in immortal souls; but, whilst this muddy vesture of decay doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it. We are never merry when we hear sweet music. The reason is, our spirits are attentive: for do but note a wild and wanton herd, or race of youthful and unhandled colts, fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud, which is the hot condition of their blood; if they but hear perchance a trumpet sound, or any air of music touch their ears, you shall perceive them make a mutual stand, their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze, by the sweet power of music: therefore, the poet did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods; since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage, but music for the time doth change his nature. The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; the motions of his spirit are dull as night, and his affections dark as Erebus: let no such man be trusted!

LXII.—THE EXILED DUKE TO HIS COMPANIONS.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

Now, my co-mates, and brothers in exile, hath not old custom made this life more sweet than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods more free from peril than the envious court? Here feel we but the penalty of Adam, the seasons' difference; as, the icy fang and churlish chiding of the winter's wind; which, when it bites and blows upon my body, even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say,—this is no flattery: these are counsellors that feelingly persuade me what I am! Sweet are the uses of adversity; which, like the toad, ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in his head; and this our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing. I would not change it. Happy is content, that can translate the stubbornness of fortune into so quiet and so sweet a style.—— Come, shall we go and kill us venison?—And yet it irks me, the poor dappled fools,—being native burghers of this desert city,—should, in their own confines, with forked heads, have their round haunches gor'd. At this, indeed, the melancholy Jaques sorely grieves; and, in that kind, swears I do more usurp than doth my brother that hath banish'd me. To-day, my lord of Amiens and myself did steal behind him, as he lay along under an oak, whose antique root peeps out upon the brook that brawls along this wood; to the which place a poor sequester'd stag, that from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt, did come to languish; and, indeed, my lord, the wretched animal heav'd forth such groans that their discharge did stretch his leathern coat almost to bursting; and the big round tears coursed one another down his innocent nose in piteous chase: and thus the hairy fool, much marked of the melancholy Jaques, stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook, augmenting it with tears.—Jaques, of course, did promptly moralize this spectacle into a thousand biting similes. First, for his weeping in the needless stream: "Poor deer," quoth he, "thou mak'st a testament as worldings do, giving thy sum of more to that which had too much." Then, being alone, left and abandon'd of his velvet friends: "'Tis right," quoth he; "thus misery doth part the flux of company." Anon, a careless herd, full of the pasture, jumps along by him and never stays to greet him: "Ay," quoth Jaques, "sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens: 'tis just the fashion: wherefore do you look upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?"—Thus most invectively he pierceth through the body of the country, city, court, yea, and of this our life: swearing, that we are mere usurpers, tyrants, and what's worse, to fright the animals, and to kill them up in their assign'd and native dwelling place. And we did leave him in this contemplation, weeping, and commenting upon the sobbing deer.

LXIII.—JAQUES ON THE FOOL.—AS YOU LIKE IT.

A fool, a fool!——I met a fool i'tho forest, a motley fool:—a miserable world!—As I do live by food, I met a fool; who laid him down and bask'd him in the sun, and rail'd on lady Fortune in good terms, in good set terms,—and yet a motley fool. "Good-morrow, fool," quoth I. "No, sir," quoth he; "call me not fool, till heaven hath sent me fortune:" and then he drew a dial from his poke: and looking on it with lack-lustre eye, says, very wisely, "It is ten o'clock: thus may we see," quoth he, "how the world wags: 'tis but an hour ago, since it was nine: and after an hour more, 'twill be eleven; and so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe, and then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot, and thereby hangs a tale." When I did hear the motley fool thus moral on the time, my lungs began to crow like chanticleer, that fools should be so deep contemplative; and I did laugh, sans intermission, an hour by his dial.—O noble fool! a worthy fool! Motley's the only wear.—Oh, that I were a fool; I am ambitious for a motley

coat.—You'll give me one? It is my only suit; provided, that you weed your better judgements of all opinion that grows rank in them, that I am wise. I must have liberty withal, as large a charter as the wind, to blow on whom I please; for so fools have. Invest me in my motley; give me leave to speak my mind, and I will through and through cleanse the foul body of the infected world, if they will patiently receive my medicine.

LXIV.—PROSPERO'S ABJURATION OF MAGIC.—TEMPEST.

Our revels now are ended: these our actors, as I foretold you, were all spirits, and are melted into air, into thin air: And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself,—yea, all which it inherit,—shall dissolve; and, like this insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind. * * * Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves; and ye that, on the sands, with printless foot, do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him when he comes back; you demi-puppets, that, by moonshine, do the green-sour ringlets make, whereof the ewe not bites; and you, whose pastime is to make midnight mushrooms; that rejoice to hear the solemn curfew;—by whose aid, (weak masters though ye be,) I have bedimmed the noon-tide sun, called forth the mutinous winds, and, 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault, set roaring war; to the dread rattling thunder have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak with his own bolt; the strong-based promontory have I made shake, and, by the spurs, plucked up the pine and cedar; graves, at my command, have waked their sleepers, oped, and let them forth, by my so potent art:—But this rough magic I here abjure; and, when I have required some heavenly music, to work mine end upon their senses that this airy charm is for, I'll break my staff, bury it certain fathoms in the earth, and, deeper than did ever plummet sound, I'll drown my book.

LXV.—TOUCHSTONE ON QUARRELING.—AS YOU LIKE IT.

If any man doubt that I have been a courtier, let him put me to my purgation. I have trod a measure; I have flattered a lady; I have been politic with my friend, smooth with mine enemy; I have undone three tailors; I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one—but that was ta'en up. When we met, we found the quarrel was upon the seventh cause; that is, upon a lie seven times removed; as thus, sir. I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard; he sent me word, if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was: this is called the "retort courteous." If I sent him word again, it was not well cut, he would send me word, he cut it to please himself: this is called the "quip modest." If again, it was not well cut, he disabled my judgement: this is called the "reply churlish." If again, it was not well cut, he would answer, I spake not true: this is called the "reproof valiant." If again, it was not well cut, he would say, I lie: this is called the "countercheck quarrelsome:" and so to the "lie circumstantial," and the "lie direct." I durst go no further than the "lie circumstantial," nor he durst not give me the "lie direct;" and so we measured swords, and parted.——O sir, we quarrel, in print by the book, as you have books for good manners. I will nominate in order now the degrees of the lie. The first, the "retort courteous;" the second, the "quip modest;" the third, the "reply churlish;" the fourth, the "reproof valiant;" the fifth, the "countercheck quarrelsome;" the sixth, the "lie with circumstance;" the seventh, the "lie direct." All these you may avoid, but the "lie direct;" and you may avoid that too, with an "if." I knew when seven justices could not take up a quarrel; but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an "if," as, "If you said so, then I said so!"—"Oh!...did you so?" and they shook hands, and were sworn brothers. Your "if" is the only peace-maker; much virtue in "if."

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

KING. With you! what authority have you to——

MILLER. The king's authority; if I must give you an account, sir, I am John Cockle, the Miller of Mansfield, one of his majesty's keepers in this forest of Sherwood; and I will let no suspected fellow pass this way that cannot give a better account of himself than you have done, I promise you.

KING. I must submit—to my own authority—[*aside.*] Very well, sir, I am glad to hear the king has so good an officer; and since I find you have his authority, I will give you a better account of myself, if you will do me the favour to hear it.

MILLER. It's more than you deserve, I believe; but let's hear what you can say for yourself.

KING. I have the honour to belong to the king as well as you, and, perhaps, should be as unwilling to see any wrong done him. I came down with him to hunt in this forest; and the chace leading us to-day a great way from home, I am benighted in this wood, and have lost my way.

MILLER. This does not sound well. If you have been a-hunting, pray where is your horse?

KING. I have tired my horse so much that he lay down under me, and I was obliged to leave him.

MILLER. If I thought I might believe this now—

KING. I am not used to lie, honest man.

MILLER. What! do you live at court, and not lie? ha! ha! ha! that's a likely story indeed.

KING. Be that as it will, I speak truth now, I assure you; and, to convince you of it, if you will attend me to Nottingham, if I am near it, or give me a night's lodging in your own house, here is something to pay you for your trouble, [*giving a purse*] and, if that is not sufficient, I will satisfy you in the morning to your utmost desire.

MILLER. Ay, now I am convinced you are a courtier; here is a little bribe for to-day, and a large promise for to-morrow, both in a breath! here, take it again, and take this along with it,—John Cockle is no courtier; he can do what he ought—without a bribe.

KING. Thou art a very extraordinary man, I must own, and I should be glad, methinks, to be farther acquainted with thee.

MILLER. Thee! and thou! pr'ythee don't thee and thou me; I believe I am as good a man as yourself, at least.

KING. Sir, I beg your pardon.

MILLER. Nay, I am not angry, friend: only I don't love to be too familiar with anybody, before I know whether or not he deserves it.

KING. You are in the right. But what am I to do?

MILLER. You may do—what you please. You are twelve miles from Nottingham, and all the way through thick wood; but, if you are resolved upon going thither to-night, I will put you in the road, and direct you the best I can; or, if you will accept of such poor entertainment as a miller can give, you will be welcome to stay all night, and in the morning I shall go with you myself.

KING. And cannot you go with me to-night?

MILLER. I would not go with you to-night, if you were the king.

KING. Then I must go with you, I think.

II.—LOCHIEL'S WARNING.—CAMPBELL.

[Two Speakers: the Wizard and Lochiel.]

WIZARD. Lochiel! Lochiel! beware of the day when the Lowlands shall meet thee in battle array! For a field of the dead rushes red on my sight, and the clans of Culloden are scattered in flight: they rally, they bleed, for their kingdom and crown; woe, woe to the riders that trample them down! Proud Cumberland prances, insulting the slain, and their

hoof beaten bosoms are trod to the plain!—But hark! through the fast-flashing lightning of war, what steed to the desert flies frantic and far? 'Tis thine, oh, Glenullen! whose bride shall await, like a love-lighted watch-fire, all night at the gate. A steed comes at morning: no rider is there; but its bridle is red with the sign of despair. Weep, Albin! to death and captivity led! Oh, weep! but thy tears cannot number the dead: for a merciless sword on Culloden shall wave—Culloden! that reeks with the blood of the brave.

LOCHIEL. Go, preach to the coward, thou death-telling seer! or, if gory Culloden so dreadful appear, draw, dotard! around thy old wavering sight, this mantle, to cover the phantoms of fright.

WIZARD. Ha! laugh'st thou, Lochiel, my vision to scorn? Proud bird of the mountain, thy plume shall be torn! Say, rush'd the bold eagle exultingly forth from his home, in the dark-rolling clouds of the north? Lo! the death-shot of foemen outspeeding, he rode companionless, bearing destruction abroad; but down let him stoop from his havoc on high, ah! home let him speed,—for the spoiler is nigh. Why flames the far summit? Why shoot to the blast those embers, like stars from the firmament cast? 'Tis the fire shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven from his eyry, that beacons the darkness of heaven. Oh, crested Lochiel! the peerless in might, whose banners arise on the battlements' height, heaven's fire is around thee, to blast and to burn: return to thy dwelling—all lonely return! for the blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood, and a wild mother scream o'er her famishing brood.

LOCHIEL. False Wizard, avaunt! I have marshalled my clan, their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one; they are true, to the last of their blood and their breath: and like reapers descend to the harvest of death. Then welcome be Cumberland's steed to the shock; let him dash his proud foam, like a wave—on the rock! But woe to his kindred, and woe to his cause, when Albin her claymore indignantly draws; when her bonneted chieftains to victory crowd, Clanranald the dauntless, and Moray the proud, all plaided and plumed in their tartan array——

WIZARD. —— Lochiel, Lochiel! beware of the day! for, dark and despairing, my sight I may seal, but man cannot cover what God would reveal: 'tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore, and coming events cast their shadows before. I tell thee, Culloden's dread echoes shall ring with the blood-hounds that bark for thy fugitive king!—Lo! anointed by Heaven with the vials of wrath, behold, where he flies on his desolate path! Now, in darkness and billows, he sweeps from my sight: rise! rise, ye wild tempests, and cover his flight!——'Tis finished. Their thunders are hushed on the moors: Culloden is lost, and my country deplores! But where is the iron-bound prisoner? Where? For the red eye of battle is shut in despair. Say, mounts he the ocean-wave, banished, forlorn, like a limb from his country cast bleeding and torn?—Ah no! for a darker departure is near; the war-drum is muffled, and black is the bier—his death-bell is tolling! O mercy! dispel yon sight, that it freezes my spirit to tell! Life flutters convulsed in his quivering limbs, and his blood-streaming nostril in agony swims! Accurs'd be the fagots that blaze at his feet, where his heart shall be thrown ere it ceases to beat, with the smoke of its ashes to poison the gale——

LOCHIEL. —— Down, soothless insulter! I trust not the tale: for never shall Albin a destiny meet, so black with dishonour, so foul with retreat. Though my perishing ranks should be strewed in their gore, like ocean-weeds heaped on the surf-beaten shore, Lochiel, untainted by flight or by chains, while the kindling of life in his bosom remains, shall victor exult, or in death be laid low, with his back to the field, and his feet to the foe! And, leaving in battle no blot on his name, look proudly to Heaven from the death-bed of fame.

III.—FROM THE ILIAD OF HOMER.—Pope.

[Two Speakers: Hector and Andromache.]

And. Too daring prince!—Ah! whither dost thou run? Ah! too forgetful of thy wife and son! And think'st thou not how wretched we shall be? A widow I, a helpless orphan he! For sure such courage length of life denies; and thou must fall, thy virtue's sacrifice.

Hec. Andromache! my soul's far better part, why with untimely sorrow heaves thy heart? No hostile hand can antedate my doom, till Fate condemn me to the silent tomb.

And. Greece in her single heroes strove in vain: now hosts oppose thee—and thou must be slain. Oh! grant me, Gods! ere Hector meets his doom, all I can ask of Heaven—an early tomb! So shall my days in one sad tenor run, and end with sorrows as they first begun. No parent now remains my griefs to share, no father's aid, no mother's tender care; yet, while my Hector still survives, I see my father, mother, brethren, all in thee! Alas! my parents, brethren, kindred, all—once more will perish, if my Hector fall. Thy wife, thy infant, in thy dangers share—Oh! prove a husband's and a parent's care.

Hec. My early youth was bred to warlike pains; my soul impels me to the martial plains. Still foremost let me stand to guard the throne, to save my father's honours and my own.

And. That quarter most the skilful Greeks annoy, where yon wild figtrees join the walls of Troy: thou from this tower defend the important post; there Agamemnon points his dreadful host; thrice our bold foes the fierce attack have given, or led by hopes, or dictated from Heaven. Let others in the field their arms employ; but stay, my Hector, here, and guard his Troy.

Hec. How would the sons of Troy, in arms renowned, and Troy's proud dames, whose garments sweep the ground, attaint the lustre of my former name, should Hector basely quit the field of fame! No more—but hasten to thy tasks at home; there guide the spindle and direct the loom. Me glory summons to the martial scene; the field of combat is the sphere for men. [*Andromache retires.*]

Hec. [*alone.*] Yet come it will; the day decreed by fates! (how my heart trembles while my tongue relates!) the day, when thou, imperial Troy! must bend, must see thy warriors fall, thy glories end. And yet, no dire presage so wounds my mind, my mother's death, the ruin of my kind, nor Priam's hoary hairs defiled with gore, not all my brothers gasping on the shore, as thine, Andromache!—Thy griefs I dread! I see thee trembling, weeping, captive led!—may I lie cold before that dreadful day, pressed with a load of monumental clay; thy Hector, wrapt in everlasting sleep, shall neither hear thee sigh, nor see thee weep.

IV.—FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "CATILINE."—Croly.

[Four Speakers: Cicero, Catiline, Cethegus, and Consul; also Senators, Lictors, and Conspirators.]

Cicero. Fathers and Senators—no need for further proof of this rebellion.—Here I repeat the charge, to gods and men, of treasons manifold;—that Catiline this day received despatches from the rebels—that he has leagued with deputies from Gaul to seize the province; nay, has levied troops, and raised his rebel standard;—that but now a meeting of conspirators was held under his roof, with mystic rites and oaths, pledged round the body of a murdered slave.—To these he has no answer.

Catiline. Conscript Fathers! I do not rise to waste the night in words; let that plebeian talk, 'tis not my trade: but here I stand for right, for Roman right; though none it seems dare stand to take their share with me. Let him show proofs. Ay, cluster there, cling to your master; judges—Romans—slaves! His charge is false;—I dare him to his proofs. You have my answer now! I must be gone.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

your Senate! I've had wrongs to stir a fever in the blood of age, or make the infant's sinews strong as steel. This day's the birth of sorrows! This hour's work will breed prescriptions.——Look to your hearths, my lords! for there henceforth shall sit, for household gods, shapes hot from Tartarus —all shames and crimes;—wan Treachery, with his thirsty dagger drawn; Suspicion, poisoning his brother's cup; naked Rebellion, with the torch and axe, making his wild sport of your blazing thrones; till Anarchy come down on you like night, and Massacre seal Rome's eternal grave!

CONSUL. Go, enemy and parricide, from Rome!

CAT. It shall be so!——When Catiline comes again, your grandeur shall be base, and clowns shall sit in scorn upon those chairs;—your palaces shall see the soldier's revels, and your wealth shall go to deck his menial, or his horse. Then Cicero, and his tools, shall pay me blood—— and such of you as cannot find the grace to die with swords in your right hands, shall feel the life—life worse than death—of trampled slaves!

CIC. Expel him, lictors! Clear the senate house!

CAT. I go,—but not to leap the gulf alone: I go;—but when I come—'twill be the burst of ocean in the earthquake—rolling back in swift and mountainous ruin. Fare you well! You build my funeral pile; but your best blood shall quench its flame.—Back, slaves! *[to the lictors.]* I will return!

V.—FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "CATO."—ADDISON.

[Three Speakers: Cato, Sempronius, Lucius; also Senators.]

CATO. Fathers, we once again are met in council: Cæsar's approach has summoned us together, and Rome attends her fate from our resolves. How shall we treat this bold aspiring man? Success still follows him, and backs his crimes. 'Tis time we should decree what course to take. Fathers, pronounce your thoughts: are they still fixed to hold it out and fight it to the last? or are your hearts subdued at length, and wrought by time and ill success to a submission? Sempronius, speak.

SEMPRONIUS. My voice is still for war. Gods! can a Roman senate long debate which of the two to choose, slavery or death? No, let us rise at once, gird on our swords, and, at the head of our remaining troops, attack the foe, break through the thick array of his thronged legions, and charge home upon him. Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest, may reach his heart, and free the world from bondage. Rise, fathers, rise! 't is Rome demands your help; rise, and revenge her slaughtered citizens, or share their fate! The corpse of half her senate manure the fields of Thessaly, while we sit here deliberating in cold debates if we should sacrifice our lives to honour, or wear them out in servitude and chains. Rouse up, for shame! our brothers of Pharsalia point at their wounds, and cry aloud—"To battle!" Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow, and Scipio's ghost walks unrevenged amongst us.

CATO. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason: true fortitude is seen in great exploits that justice warrants, and that wisdom guides: all else is towering frenzy and distraction. Are not the lives of those who draw the sword in Rome's defence intrusted to our care? Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter, might not the impartial world with reason say,—we lavished at our death the blood of thousands, to grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious? Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

LUCIUS. My thoughts, I must confess, are turned on peace. Already have our quarrels filled the world with widows and with orphans: Scythia mourns our guilty wars, and earth's remotest regions lie half-unpeopled by the feuds of Rome: 't is time to sheathe the sword, and spare mankind. It is not Cæsar, but the gods, my fathers, the gods declare against us, and repel our vain attempts. To urge the foe to battle—prompted

by blind revenge and wild despair—were to refuse the award of Providence, and not to rest in Heaven's determination. Already have we shown our love to Rome; now let us show submission to the gods. We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves, but free the Commonwealth; when this end fails, arms have no further use: our country's cause, that drew our swords, now wrests them from our hands, and bids us not delight in Roman blood unprofitably shed: what men could do is done already: heaven and earth will witness, if Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

CATO. Let us appear nor rash nor diffident: immoderate valour swells into a fault; and fear, admitted into public councils, betrays like treason. Let us shun them both. Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs are grown thus desperate: we have bulwarks round us: within our walls are troops inured to toil in Afric's heats, and seasoned to the sun; Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us, ready to rise at its young prince's call. While there is hope, do not distrust the gods; but wait at least till Cæsar's near approach force us to yield. 'T will never be too late to sue for chains, and own a conqueror. Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time? No, let us draw her term of freedom out in its full length, and spin it to the last. So shall we gain still one day's liberty; and let me perish, but, in Cato's judgement, a day, an hour, of virtuous liberty, is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

VI.—FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "DOUGLAS."—HOME.

[Three Speakers: Norval, Glenalvon, and Lord Randolph.]

GLEN. His port I love: he's in a proper mood to chide the thunder, if at him it roared. [*aside.*] Has Norval seen the troops?

NORV. The setting sun with yellow radiance lighted all the vale; and, as the warriors moved, each polished helm, corslet, or spear, glanced back his gilded beams. The hill they climbed, and, halting at its top,—of more than mortal size, towering, they seemed a host angelic, clad in burning arms.

GLEN. Thou talk'st it well: no leader of our host in sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

NORV. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name, my speech will be less ardent. Novelty now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration vents itself freely; since no part is mine of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

GLEN. You wrong yourself, brave sir; your martial deeds have ranked you with the great. But mark me, Norval; Lord Randolph's favour now exalts your youth above his veterans of famous service. Let me, who know these soldiers, counsel you:—give them all honour; seem not to command; else they will hardly brook your late-sprung power, which nor alliance props nor birth adorns.

NORV. Sir!—I have been accustomed, all my days, to hear and speak the plain and simple truth; and though I have been told that there are men who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their scorn, yet in such language I am little skilled: therefore, I thank Glenalvon for his counsel, although it sounded harshly! Why remind me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power with such contemptuous terms?

GLEN. I did not mean to gall your pride, which now I see is great.

NORV. My pride!

GLEN. Suppress it, as you wish to prosper. Your pride's excessive. Yet, for Randolph's sake, I will not leave you to its rash direction. If thus you swell and frown at high-born men, will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?

NORV. A shepherd's scorn!

GLEN. Yes; if you presume to bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes as if you took the measure of their minds, and said in secret, "You're no match for me!" what will become of you?

NORV. Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?

GLEN. Ha! dost thou threaten me?

NORV. Didst thou not hear?

GLEN. Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe had not been questioned thus; but such as thou——

NORV. Whom dost thou think me?

GLEN. Norval.

NORV. So I am——and who is Norval in Glenalvon's eyes?

GLEN. A peasant's son, a wandering beggar boy; at best no more, even if he speaks the truth.

NORV. False as thou art, dost thou suspect my truth?

GLEN. Thy truth! thou'rt all a lie; and grossly false is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.

NORV. If I were chained, unarmed, or bed-rid old, perhaps I should revile; but, as I am, I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval is of a race—who strive not but with deeds! Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour, and make thee sink too soon beneath my sword, I'd tell thee—what thou art! I know thee well!

GLEN. Dost thou not know Glenalvon, born to command ten thousand slaves like thee?

NORV. Villain, no more! Draw and defend thy life. I did design to have defied thee in another cause; but Heaven accelerates its vengeance on thee. Now for my own and Lady Randolph's wrongs!

[*Both draw their swords. Lord Randolph advances.*]

LORD RAND. Hold! I command you both! The man that stirs makes me his foe.

NORV. Another voice than thine that threat had vainly sounded, noble Randolph.

GLEN. Hear him, my lord; he's wondrous condescending! Mark the humility of Shepherd Norval!

NORV. [*Sheathes his sword.*] Now you may scoff in safety.

LORD RAND. Speak not thus taunting each other, but unfold to me the cause of quarrel; then I judge betwixt you.

NORV. Nay, my good lord, though I revere you much, my cause I plead not, nor demand your judgement. I blush to speak—I will not, cannot speak—the opprobrious words that I from him have borne. To the liege lord of my dear native land I owe a subject's homage; but even him and his high arbitration I'd reject. Within my bosom reigns another lord—Honour! sole judge and umpire of itself. If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph, revoke your favours, and let Norval go hence as he came alone—but not dishonoured!

LORD RAND. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial voice; the ancient foe of Caledonia's land now waves his banner o'er her frighted fields: suspend your purpose till your country's arms repel the bold invader; then decide the private quarrel.

GLEN. I agree to this.

NORV. And I. [*Lord Randolph retires.*]

GLEN. Norval, let not our variance mar the social hour, nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate, shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy brow; nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.

NORV. Think not so lightly, sir, of my resentment; when we contend again, our strife is mortal.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

me but I might send her back to you with contumely, and court my fortune where she would be kinder?

PRI. You dare not do 't!

JAF. Indeed, my Lord, I dare not. My heart, that awes me, is too much my master. Three years are past since first our vows were plighted, during which time, the world must bear me witness, I've treated Belvidera as your daughter,—the daughter of a Senator of Venice;—distinction, place, attendance, and observance, due to her birth, she always has commanded. Out of my little fortune I've done this; because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature) the world might see I loved her for herself, not as the heiress of the great Priuli.

PRI. No more!

JAF. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever. There's not a wretch that lives on common charity but's happier than I; for I have known the luscious sweets of plenty—every night have slept with soft content about my head, and never waked but to a joyful morning; yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn whose blossom 'scaped, yet 's withered in the ripening!

PRI. Home, and be humble! Study to retrench; discharge the lazy vermin in thy hall, those pageants of thy folly; reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife to humble weeds, fit for thy little state; then to some suburb cottage both retire; drudge to feed loathsome life! Hence, hence, and starve! Home, home, I say!

III.—FROM THE PLAY OF THE "IRON CHEST."—COLMAN.

[Two Speakers: Sir Edward Mortimer and Wilford.]

SIR E. Wilford, approach me.—What am I to say for aiming at your life?—Do you not scorn me, despise me for it?

WILF. I! Oh, Sir!

SIR E. You must; for I am singled from the herd of men, a vile, heart-broken wretch!

WILF. Indeed, indeed, Sir, you deeply wrong yourself. Your equal's love, the poor man's prayer, the orphan's tear of gratitude, all follow you:—and I—I owe you all! I am most bound to bless you.

SIR E. Mark me, Wilford:——I know the value of the orphan's tear, the poor man's prayer, respect from the respected; I feel, to merit these and to obtain them, is to taste here below, that thrilling cordial which the remunerating Angel draws from the eternal fountain of delight, to pour on blessèd souls that enter Heaven. I feel this:—I!—How must my nature, then, revolt at him who seeks to stain his hand in human blood?—and yet, it seems, this day I sought your life.—Oh! I have suffered madness! None know my tortures,—pangs!—But I can end them; end them as far as appertains to thee.——I have resolved it.—Fearful struggles tear me: but I have pondered on't,—and I must trust thee.

WILF. Your confidence shall not be——

SIR E. You must swear.

WILF. Swear, Sir!—will nothing but an oath, then——

SIR E. Listen. May all the ills that wait on frail humanity be doubled on your head, if you disclose my fatal secret! May your body turn most lazar-like and loathsome; and your mind more loathsome than your body! May those fiends who strangle babes for very wantonness, shrink back and shudder at your monstrous crimes, and, shrinking, curse you! Palsies strike your youth! and the sharp terrors of a guilty mind poison your aged days! while all your nights, as on the earth you lay your houseless head, out-horror horror! May you quit the world abhorred, self-hated, hopeless for the next—your life a burden, and your death a fear!

WILF. For mercy's sake, forbear! you terrify me!

SIR E. Hope this may fall upon thee:——swear thou hop'st it, by

every attribute which heaven or earth can lend, to bind and strengthen conjuration, if thou betray'st me.

WILF. [*After a pause.*] I swear, by all the ties that bind a man, divine or human,——never to divulge!

SIR E. Remember, you have sought this secret:—yes, extorted it. I have not thrust it on you. 'Tis big with danger to you; and to me, while I prepare to speak, torment unutterable. Know, Wilford, that——O, torture!

WILF. Dearest sir! collect yourself. This shakes you horribly: you had this trembling, it is scarce a week, at Madam Helen's.

SIR E. There it is—her uncle—

WILF. Her uncle!

SIR E. Him. She knows it not;—none know it.—You are the first ordained to hear me say, I am—his murderer.

WILF. O horror!

SIR E. His assassin.

WILF. What! you that—mur—the murderer——I am choked!

SIR E. Honour, thou blood-stained god! at whose red altar sit war and homicide: O! to what madness will insult drive thy votaries! In truth, in the world's range, there does not breathe a man, whose brutal nature I more strove to soothe with long forbearance, kindness, courtesy, than his who fell by me. But he disgraced me, stained me—oh, death and shame!—the world looked on, and saw this sinewy savage strike me down, rain blows upon me, drag me to and fro, on the base earth, like carrion. Desperation, in every fibre of my frame, cried Vengeance! I left the room which he had quitted: chance, (curse on the chance!) while boiling with my wrongs, thrust me against him, darkling, in the street—I stabbed him to the heart—and my oppressor rolled lifeless, at my foot.

WILF. Oh! mercy on me! How could this deed be covered?

SIR E. Would you think it? E'en at the moment when I gave the blow, butchered a fellow creature in the dark, I had all good men's love. But my disgrace, and my opponent's death thus linked with it, demanded notice of the magistracy. They summoned me, as friend would summon friend, to acts of import and communication. We met—and 'twas resolved, to stifle rumour, to put me on my trial. No accuser, no evidence appeared, to urge it on—'twas meant to clear my fame.—How clear it then? How cover it?—you say.—Why, by a lie—guilt's offspring, and its guard. I taught this breast, which truth once made her throne, to forge a lie, this tongue to utter it;—rounded a tale, smooth as a seraph's song from Satan's mouth; so well compacted, that the o'erthronged court disturbed cool Justice in her judgement-seat, by shouting "Innocence!" ere I had finished. The court enlarged me; and the giddy rabble bore me, in triumph, home. Ay!—look upon me.—I know thy sight aches at me.

WILF. Heaven forgive you! It may be wrong—indeed I pity you.

SIR E. I disdain all pity.—I ask no consolation. Idle boy! think'st thou that this compulsive confidence was given to move thy pity?—Love of fame, (for still I cling to it) has urged me, thus to quash thy curious mischief in its birth. Hurt honour, in an evil, cursèd hour, drove me to murder—lying;—'twould again! My honesty,—sweet peace of mind,—all, all, are bartered for a name. I will maintain it!—Should Slander whisper o'er my sepulchre, and my soul's agency survive in death, I could embody it with heaven's lightning, and the hot shaft of my insulted spirit should strike the blaster of my memory dead, in the church-yard. Boy, I would not kill thee; thy rashness and discernment threatened danger! to check them there was no way left but this—save one—your death:—you shall not be my victim.

WILF. My death! What, take my life?—My life! to prop this empty honour?

SIR E. Empty? Grovelling fool!

WILF. I am your servant, sir, child of your bounty, and know my

obligation. I have been too curious, haply: 'tis the fault of youth—I ne'er meant injury: if it would serve you, I would lay down my life: I'd give it freely: could you then have the heart to rob me of it? You could not—should not.

SIR E. How?

WILF. You dare not.

SIR E. Dare not!

WILF. Some hours ago, you durst not. Passion moved you—reflection interposed, and held your arm. But, should reflection prompt you to attempt it, my innocence would give me strength to struggle, and wrest the murderous weapon from your hand. How would you look to find a peasant boy return the knife you levelled at his heart; and ask you which in heaven would show the best—a rich man's honour, or a poor man's honesty?

IX.—FROM THE PLAY OF "WILLIAM TELL."—KNOWLES.

[Four Speakers: Tell, Albert, (his son,) Gesler, and Sarnem; also an Attendant.]

SAR. [*To Tell.*] Behold the governor. Down, slave, upon thy knees, and beg for mercy.

GES. Does he hear?

SAR. He does, but braves thy power. Down, slave, and ask for life.

GES. [*To Tell.*] Why speak'st thou not?

TELL. For wonder! Yes, for wonder—that thou seem'st a man.

GES. What should I seem?

TELL. A monster.

GES. Ha! Beware!—think on thy chains.

TELL. Think on my chains! How came they on me?

GES. Dar'st thou question me? Beware my vengeance.

TELL. Can it more than kill?

GES. Enough; it may do that.

TELL. No, not enough:—it cannot take away the grace of life—the comeliness of look that virtue gives—its port erect, with consciousness of truth—its rich attire of honourable deeds—its fair report that's rife on good men's tongues:—it cannot lay its hand on these, no more than it can pluck his brightness from the sun, or with polluted finger tarnish it.

GES. But it may make thee writhe.

TELL. It may, and I may say, "Go on!" though it should make me groan again.

GES. Whence comest thou?

TELL. From the mountains; there they watch no more the avalanche.

GES. Why so?

TELL. Because they look for thee. The hurricane comes unawares upon them: from its bed the torrent breaks and finds them in its track—

GES. What then?

TELL. They thank kind Providence it is not thou!—Thou hast perverted nature in them. The earth presents her fruits to them, and is not thanked. There's not a blessing Heaven vouchsafes them, but the thought of thee doth wither to a curse—as something they must lose, and had far better lack.

GES. 'Tis well. I'd have them as their hills—that never smile, though wanton summer tempt them e'er so much.

TELL. But they do sometimes smile.

GES. Ah!—when is that?

TELL. When they do talk of vengeance! and the true hands are lifted up to Heaven on every hill for justice on thee!

GES. [*To Sarnem.*] Lead in his son. Now will I take exquisite ven-

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

A.—FROM THE COMEDY OF "THE ENGLISHMAN RETURNED FROM PARIS."—FOOTE.

[Two Speakers: Æsop and Frenchman.]

FRENCH. Monsieur, votre serviteur.—Pourquoi ne repondez-vous pas?—Je dis, que je suis votre serviteur.

ÆSOP. I don't understand you, sir.

FRENCH. Ah! le barbare!—il ne parle pas Français;—Vat, sir, you no speak de French tongue?

ÆSOP. No, really, sir, I am not so polite.

FRENCH. En verité, Monsieur Æsop, you have not much politesse, if one may judge by your figure and appearance.

ÆSOP. Nor you much wisdom, if one may judge of your head by the ornaments about it.

FRENCH. Qu'est cela donc?—Vat you mean to 'front a man, sir?

ÆSOP. No, sir,—'tis to you I'm speaking.

FRENCH. Vel, sir, vat is you take me for?—I, not a man? I beast? I horse? Parbleu! Upon my vord, sir, if you treat a gentilhomme comme ça,—depend upon it, I shall be a litel en cavalier vit you.

ÆSOP. Pray, sir, of what rank and quality are you?

FRENCH. Sir, I am a marquis Français;—j'entends les beaux arts, sir;—I have been an aventurier all over de vorld, and am at present in Angleterre—in England; vere I am more honoré and caress, dan ever I was in my own countrée; or indeed, any ver else.

ÆSOP. And pray, sir, what is your business in England?

FRENCH. I am arrive dere, sir,—pour polir la nation;—de Inglis have too much a lead in dere heels, and too much tought in their head; so, sir, if I can lighten bote, I shall make dem tout-a-fait Français, and quite another ting.

ÆSOP. And pray, sir, in what particular accomplishment do your merits consist?

FRENCH. Sir, I speak de French,—j'ai bonne addresse,—I dance un menuet,—I sing des litel chansons,—and I have—une tolérable assurance:—enfin, sir,—my merit consist in one vord,—I am a foreignere,—and, entre nous,—vile de Inglis be so great a fool to love de foreigneres better dan themselves,—de foreigneres would be still more great a fool, did dey not leave dere own countrée,—vere dey have noting at all,—and come to Inglande, vere dey vant for noting at all;—parbleu,—cela n'est-ce pas vrai, Monsieur Æsop?

ÆSOP. Well, sir, what is your business with me?

FRENCH. Attendez un peu;—you shall hear, sir;—I am in love vid de grande fortune of one Inglis lady;—and de lady, she be in love with my qualité and bagatelles. Now, sir, me want twenty or tirty douzains of your vaters,—for fear I be oblige to leave Inglande before I have fini dis grande affaire.

ÆSOP. Twenty or thirty dozen? For what?

FRENCH. For my creditors; to make dem forget de vay to my logement,—and no trouble me for de future.

ÆSOP. What, you have so many creditors?

FRENCH. So many? Begar, I have 'em dans tous les quartiers de la ville,—in all parts of the town, fait—

ÆSOP. Wonderful and surprising!

FRENCH. Vonderful?—Vat is vonderful? Dat I should borrow money?

ÆSOP. No, sir, that any body should lend it you.

FRENCH. En verite, vous vous trompez;—you do mistake it, mon ami; if fortune give me no money, nature give me des talents,—j'ai des talents, Monsieur Æsop,—vich are de same ting. Eh, bien donc!—sal I have dis twenty or tirty douzains of your vater?—oui ou non?

ÆSOP. 'Tis impossible, sir.

FRENCH. Impossible?—pourquoi donc? Vy not?

ÆSOP. Because, if every fine gentlemen who owes money should make the same demand, we should have no water left for our other customers.

FRENCH. Que voulez vous donc que je fasse? Vat must I do, den, sir?

ÆSOP. Marry the lady as soon as you can; pay your debts with part of her portion;—drink the water to forget your extravagances,—retire with her to your own country, and be a better economist for the future.

FRENCH. Go to my own country!—Je vous demande pardon, I had much rather stay vere I am; I cannot go dere, upon my vord.

ÆSOP. Why not, my friend?

FRENCH. Entre nous, I had much rather pass for one French marquis in Inglande, manger des delicatesses, and do noting at all, dan keep a shop en Provence,—couper et friser les cheveux, and live upon soupe and salade de rest of my life.

ÆSOP. I cannot blame you for your choice; and if other people are so blind as not to distinguish the barber from the fine gentlemen, their folly must be their punishment, and you shall take the benefit of the water with them.

FRENCH. Monsieur Æsop, sans flatterie ou compliments, I am your very humble serviteur, Jean Friperon, en Provence,—ou le Marquis Français, en Angleterre.

XI.—FROM THE COMEDY OF THE "POOR GENTLEMAN."

COLMAN.

[Three Speakers: Sir Robert Bramble, Humphrey Dobbin, and Frederic.]

SIR R. I'll tell you what, Humphrey Dobbin, there is not a syllable of sense in all you have been saying. But I suppose you will maintain there is?

HUM. Yes.

SIR R. Yes? is that the way you talk to me, you old boor? What's my name?

HUM. Robert Bramble.

SIR R. Am I not a baronet? Sir Robert Bramble of Blackberry Hall, in the county of Kent? 'Tis time you should know it, for you have been my clumsy, two-fisted valet these thirty years: can you deny that?

HUM. Hem!

SIR R. Hem? what do you mean by hem? Open that rusty door of your mouth, and make your ugly voice walk out of it. Why don't you answer my question?

HUM. Because, if I contradict you, I shall tell you a lie; and when I agree with you, you are sure to fall out.

SIR R. Humphrey Dobbin, I have been so long endeavouring to beat a few brains into your pate, that all your hair has tumbled off before my point is carried.

HUM. What then? Our parson says my head is an emblem of both our honours.

SIR R. Ay; because honours, like your head, are apt to be empty.

HUM. No; but if a servant has grown bald under his master's nose, it looks as if there was honesty on one side, and regard for it on the other.

SIR R. Why, to be sure, old Humphrey, you are as honest as a—pshaw! the parson means to palaver us; but, to return to my position, I tell you, I don't like your flat contradiction.

HUM. Yes, you do.

SIR R. I tell you I don't. I only love to hear men's arguments. I hate their flummery.

HUM. What do you call flummery?

SIR R. Flattery, blockhead! a dish too often served up by paltry poor men to paltry rich ones.

HUM. I never serve it up to you.

SIR. No, you give me a dish of a different description.

HUM. Hem! what is it?

SIR R. Sour-crout, you old crab.

HUM. I have held you a stout tug at argument this many a year.

SIR R. And yet I could never teach you a syllogism. Now mind, when a poor man assents to what a rich man says, I suspect he means to flatter him: now I am rich, and hate flattery. Ergo—when a poor man subscribes to my opinion, I hate him.

HUM. That's wrong.

SIR R. Very well; now prove it.

HUM. Put the case then—I am a poor man.

SIR R. You are not, you scoundrel. You know you shall never want, while I have a shilling.

HUM. Well,—but I must be a poor man now, or I never shall get on.

SIR R. Well, get on—be a poor man.

HUM. I am a poor man, and argue with you, and convince you that you're wrong; then you call yourself a blockhead, and I am of your opinion: now, that's no flattery.

SIR R. Why no; but when a man's of the same opinion with me, he puts an end to the argument, and that puts an end to the conversation, and so I hate him for that. But where's my nephew, Frederic?

HUM. Been out these two hours.

SIR. R. An undutiful cub! only arrived from Russia last night, and though I told him to stay at home till I rose, he's scampering over the fields like a Calmuc Tartar.

HUM. He's a fine fellow.

SIR R. He has a touch of our family. Don't you think he is a little like me, Humphrey?

HUM. No, not a bit; you are as ugly an old man as ever I clapped my eyes on.

SIR R. Now that's impudent, but there's no flattery in it, and it keeps up the independence of argument. His father, my brother Job, is of as tame a spirit,——Humphrey, you remember my brother Job?

HUM. Yes; you drove him to Russia five-and-twenty years ago.

SIR R. I did not drive him.

HUM. Yes, you did. You would never let him be at peace in the way of argument.

SIR R. At peace! Zounds, he would never go to war. He received my arguments with his mouth open, like a poor-box gaping for half-pence, and, good or bad, he swallowed them all without any resistance. We couldn't disagree, and so we parted. Poor Job! thirteen months ago he broke, and now this madcap, Frederic, is sent over to me for protection. Ah, poor Job! now he is in distress, I must not neglect his son.

HUM. Here comes his son; there's Mr Frederic.

[*Frederic enters.*]

FRED. Oh, my dear uncle, good morning! Your park is nothing but beauty.

SIR R. Who bid you caper over my beauty? I told you to stay in-doors till I got up.

FRED. So you did, but I entirely forgot it.

SIR R. And pray, what made you forget it?

FRED. The sun.

SIR R. The sun! He's mad! You mean the moon, I believe.

FRED. Oh, my dear uncle, you don't know the effect of a fine spring morning upon a fellow just arrived from Russia. The day looked bright, trees budding, birds singing; the park was so gay that I took a leap out of your old balcony, made your deer fly before me like the wind, and chased them all around the park,—to get an appetite for breakfast, while you were snoring in bed, uncle.

SIR R. Oh, ho! So the effect of English sunshine upon a Russian, is

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

any man for a shilling! There's his daughter, and his wife's aunt, and an old corporal that served in the wars with him—he keeps them all upon his half-pay.

SIR R. Starves them all, I'm afraid, Humphrey.

FRED. [*Going.*] Good morning, uncle.

SIR R. You rogue, where are you running, now?

FRED. To talk with Lieutenant Worthington.

SIR R. And what may you be going to say to him?

FRED. I can't tell till I encounter him; and then, uncle, when I have an old gentleman by the hand, who has been disabled in his country's service, and is struggling to support his motherless child, a poor relation, and a faithful servant, in honourable indigence—impulse will supply me with words to express my sentiments.

SIR R. Stop, you rogue; I must be before you in this business.

FRED. That depends on who can run the fastest; so, start fair, uncle, and here goes.—[*Runs out.*]

SIR R. Stop, stop; why, Frederic!—a jackanapes—to take my department out of my hands! I'll disinherit the dog for his assurance.

HUM. No you wont.

SIR R. Won't I? Hang me if I—but we'll argue that point as we go. So, come along, Humphrey.

XII.—FROM THE COMEDY OF "THE RIVALS."—SHERIDAN.

[Four Speakers: Sir Anthony Absolute, Captain Absolute, Fag, and Boy.]

FAG. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you.—Shall I show him into the parlour?

ABS. Ay—you may. But stay; who is it, Fag?

FAG. Your father, sir.

ABS. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly? [*Exit Fag.*] Now for a parental lecture.—[*Enter Sir Anthony Absolute.*]—Sir, I am delighted to see you here, looking so well! Your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

SIR ANTH. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, eh?

ABS. Yes, sir, I am on duty.

SIR ANTH. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it; for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

ABS. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty.

SIR ANTH. Well, then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time. Now, Jack, I am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

ABS. Sir, you are very good.

SIR ANTH. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world. I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

ABS. Sir, your kindness overpowers me;—I cannot express the sense I have of your munificence.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

SIR ANTH. Oh, that shall be as your wife chooses.

ABS. My wife, sir!

SIR ANTH. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

ABS. A wife, sir, did you say?

SIR ANTH. Ay, a wife—did I not mention her before?

ABS. Not a word of her, sir.

SIR ANTH. I mustn't forget her, though.—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by marriage;—the fortune is saddled with a wife—but I suppose that makes no difference.

ABS. Sir! you amaze me!

SIR ANTH. Why, what's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

ABS. I was, sir;—you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

SIR ANTH. Why, what difference does that make? Tut, tut, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

ABS. Pray, sir, who is the lady?

SIR ANTH. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love and to marry her directly.

ABS. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable, to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

SIR ANTH. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

ABS. Then, sir, I must tell you plainly, once for all, that on this point I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTH. Hark'ee, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself when I am not thwarted;—no one more easily led, when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

ABS. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

SIR ANTH. Now, hang me! if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

ABS. Nay, sir, but hear me.

SIR ANTH. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word! not one word!—so give me your promise by a nod—and I'll tell you what, Jack, if you don't—

ABS. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness!

SIR ANTH. Zounds! sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder; she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's museum; she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew—she shall be all this, sirrah!—yet I will make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.—None of your sneering, puppy! No grinning, jackanapes!

ABS. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

SIR ANTH. 'Tis false, sir! I know you are laughing in your sleeve: I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

ABS. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

SIR ANTH. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please!—It won't do with me, I promise you.

ABS. Indeed, sir, I never was cooler in my life.

SIR ANTH. I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

ABS. Nay, sir, upon my word—

SIR ANTH. So you will fly out! can't you be cool like me? What good can passion do?—Passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, overbearing reprobate!—There, you sneer again! don't provoke me!—but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog!—you play upon the meekness of my disposition!—Yet take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—But mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do everything that I choose, why—I may in time forgive you. If not, zounds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me! don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission! I'll disown you! I'll disinherit you! and, hang me! if ever I call you Jack again! [*Exit.*]

ABS. Mild, gentle, considerate father!—I dare not trust him with the truth, that I am already engaged.

FAG. [*Enters.*] Assuredly, sir, your father is wroth to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time—muttering, growling, and thumping the banisters all the way: I and the cook's boy stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane, bids me carry that to my master; then kicking the poor turnspit into the area, curses us all for a puppy triumvirate.

ABS. Cease your impertinence, sir.—Did you come in for nothing more?—Stand out of the way! [*Pushes him aside, and exit.*]

FAG. So! Sir Anthony trims my master; and he vents his spleen on poor Fag!—When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way, is the vilest injustice! Ah! it shows the worst temper—the basest—

BOY. [*Enters.*] Mr Fag! Mr Fag! your master calls you.

FAG. Well, you little dirty puppy, you need not bawl so!

BOY. Quick, Mr Fag!

FAG. Quick! you impudent jackanapes? Am I to be commanded by you, too? you little impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred—

[*Exit, kicking and beating him.*]

FROM THE COMEDY OF "THE CRITIC."—SHERIDAN.

[Three Speakers: Dangle, Sneer, and Sir Fretful Plagiary.]

DANG. The servant has announced Sir Fretful Plagiary.

SNEER. You have read the tragedy he has just finished, haven't you?

DAN. O yes; he sent it to me yesterday.

SNEER. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

DAN. Why, between ourselves, I must own—though he's my friend—that it is one of the most—admirable—He's here.

[*Enter Sir Fretful Plagiary.*]

Ah, my dear friend!—we were just speaking of your tragedy.——Admirable; Sir Fretful, admirable!

SNEER. You never did any thing beyond it, Sir Fretful—never in your life.

SIR F. You make me extremely happy; for, without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there isn't a man in the world whose judgement I value as I do yours—and Mr Dangle's.

DAN. But, Sir Fretful, have you sent your play to the managers yet?—or can I be of any service to you?

SIR F. No, no, I thank you; I believe the piece had sufficient recommendation with it. I thank you though. But, come now, there must be something that you think might be mended, eh?—Mr Dangle, has nothing struck you?

DAN. Why, it is but an ungracious thing for the most part to——

SIR F. With most authors it is just so indeed; they are in general strangely tenacious!—but, for my part, I am never so well pleased as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me; for what is the purpose of h wing a work to a friend, if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?s o

SNEER. Very true. Why, then, though I seriously admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one small objection; which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

SIR F. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

SNEER. I think it wants incident.

SIR F. Good gracious! you surprise me!—wants incident!—

SNEER. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

SIR F. Too few? believe me, Mr Sneer, there is no person for whose judgement I have a more implicit deference: but I protest to you, Mr Sneer, I am only apprehensive that the incidents are too crowded.——My dear Dangle, how does it strike you?

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

SNEER. Oh, but I wouldn't have told you,—only to divert you.

SIR F. I know it—I am diverted—ha, ha, ha!—Not the least invention! Ha, ha, ha! Very good!—very good!

SNEER. Yes—no genius! ha, ha, ha!

DAN. A severe rogue! ha, ha, ha! But you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read such nonsense.

SIR F. To be sure—for if there is any thing to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it; and if it is abuse,—why, one is always sure to hear of it—from one confounded good-natured friend or another!

XIV.—FROM THE COMEDY OF "THE HEIR AT LAW."

COLMAN.

[Three Speakers: Doctor Pangloss, Dick Dowlas, and Waiter.]

PAN. Let the chariot turn about. Doctor Pangloss in a lord's chariot! "Curru portatur eodem." Juvenal.—Hem! Waiter!

WAIT. Sir.

PAN. Have you any gentlemen here, who arrived this morning?

WAIT. There's one in the house now, sir.

PANG. Is he juvenile?

WAIT. No, sir; he's Derbyshire.

PAN. He! he! he! Of what appearance is the gentleman?

WAIT. Why, plaguy poor, sir.

PAN. "I hold him rich al had he not a sherte." Chaucer.—Hem! Denominated the Honourable Mr Dowlas?

WAIT. Honourable!—He left his name plain Dowlas at the bar, sir.

PAN. Plain Dowlas, did he? That will do. "For all the rest is leather and prunella." Pope.—Hem! Tell Mr Dowlas, a gentleman requests the honour of an interview.

WAIT. This is his room, sir. He has but just stepped into our parcel warehouse; he'll be with you directly. [*Exit.*]

PAN. Never before did honour and affluence let fall such a shower on the head of Doctor Pangloss! Fortune, I thank thee! Propitious Goddess, I am grateful! I, thy favoured child, who commenced his career in the loftiest apartment of a muffin-maker in Milk Alley! Little did I think—"good easy man!" Shakspere.—Hem!—of the riches and literary dignity which now——

DICK. [*Entering.*] Well, where is the man that wants——[*Seeing Pangloss.*] Oh! you are he, I suppose.

PAN. I am the man, young gentleman. "Homo sum." Terence.—Hem! Sir, the person who now presumes to address you is Peter Pangloss; to whose name, in the college of Aberdeen, is subjoined LL.D., signifying Doctor of Laws; to which has been recently added the distinction of A double S—the Roman initials for an Associate of the Society of Arts.

DICK. Sir, I am your most obedient, Richard Dowlas, to whose name, in his tailor's bill, is subjoined DR., signifying Debtor; to which are added L.S.D.,—the Roman initials for pounds, shillings, and pence! But what are your commands with me, doctor?

PAN. I have the honour, young gentleman, of being deputed an ambassador to you from your father.

DICK. Then you have the honour to be ambassador of as good-natured an old fellow as ever sold a ha'porth of cheese in a chandler's shop!

PAN. Pardon me, if, on the subject of your father's cheese, I advise you to be as mute as a mouse in one, for the future! 'Twere better to keep that "alta meute repostum." Virgil.—Hem!

DICK. Why, what's the matter?—Any misfortune?—Broke, I fear.

PAN. No, not broke; but his name, as 'tis customary in these cases, has appeared in the Gazette.

DICK. Not broke, but gazetted! Why, zounds——

PAN. Check your passions—learn philosophy. When the wife of the

great Socrates threw a—hem!—threw a tea-pot at his erudite head, he was as cool as a cucumber. When Plato——

DICK. Hang Plato!—what of my father?

PAN. Don't curse Plato: the bees swarmed round his mellifluous mouth as soon as he was swaddled. "Cum in cunis apes in labellis consedissent..."—Cicero.—Hem!

DICK. I wish you had a swarm round yours, with all my heart! Come to the point.

PAN. In due time. But calm your choler. "Ira furor brevis est..." Horace.—Hem! Read this. [*Producing a letter.*]

DICK. [*Reads.*] "Dear Dick,—This comes to inform you that I am in a perfect state of health, hoping you are the same."—Ah, that's the old beginning.—"It was my lot last week to be made"——Ay, a bankrupt, I suppose!——"To be made a"—What?—"To be made a [*spelling*] P, E, A, R."—A pear! to be made a pear! What does he mean by that?

PAN. A peer—a peer of the realm. His lordship's orthography is a little loose; but several of his equals countenance the custom. Lord Loggerhead always spells physician with an F.

DICK. A peer! what, my father? I'm electrified!—Old Daniel Dowlas made a peer! But let me see. [*Reading.*] "A pear of the realm.—Lawyer Ferret got me my tittle"—Titt—oh, title!—"and an estate of fifteen thousand per annum, by making me out next of kin to old Lord Duberly, because he died without——without hair."—'Tis an odd reason, by the bye, to be next of kin to a nobleman, because he died bald!

PAN. His lordship means heir—heir to his estate. We shall meliorate his style speedily. "Reform it altogether." Shakspere.—Hem!

DICK. [*Reading.*] "I send my carrot—" Carrot!

PAN. He! he! he! Chariot, his lordship means. "Chariot—a little coach." Johnson.—Hem!

DICK. "With Doctor Pangloss in it. Respect him, for he's an LL. D., and, moreover, an A double S,—[*They bow.*]—and I have made him your tutorer. Come with the Doctor to my house in Hanover Square."—Hanover Square!—"I remain, your affectionate father to command,—Duberly."

PAN. That's his lordship's title.

DICK. Waiter!—[*Enter Waiter.*]—Pop my clothes and linen into the carriage; they are in that bundle.

PAN. Waiter, put all the Honourable Mr Dowlas's clothes and linen into his father's Lord Duberly's chariot.

WAIT. Where are they all, sir?

PAN. All wrapped up in the Honourable Mr Dowlas's pocket-handkerchief.

DICK. Now let us be off.

PAN. I come, most worthy pupil.

XV.—FROM THE COMEDY OF "THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL."—SHERIDAN.

[Two Speakers: Sir Peter and Lady Teazle.]

SIR P. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now above six months since my Lady Teazle made me "the happiest of men," and I have been the most miserable dog ever since! We tifted a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells were done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon; and had lost every satisfaction in life, before my friends had done wishing me joy. And yet, I chose with caution a girl bred wholly in the country, who had never known luxury beyond one silk gown, or dissipation beyond the annual gala of a race-ball.

Yet now, she plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the town, with as good a grace as if she had never seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor-square. I am sneered at by all my acquaintance—paragraphed in the newspapers—she dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours. And yet, the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this—but I am determined never to let her know it.—No, no, no! Oh, here she comes. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I won't bear it.

Lady T. Very well, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, just as you please; but I know I ought to have my own way in every thing; and what's more, I will.

Sir P. What, madam! is there no respect due to the authority of a husband?

Lady T. Why, don't I know that no woman of fashion does as she is bid after her marriage? Though I was bred in the country, I'm no stranger to that. If you wanted me to be obedient, you should have adopted me, and not married me—I'm sure you are old enough.

Sir P. Ay, there it is!—Oons, madam, what right have you to run into all this extravagance?

Lady T. I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of quality ought to be.

Sir P. 'Slife, madam, I'll have no more sums squandered away upon such unmeaning luxuries: you have as many flowers in your dressing-room as would turn the Pantheon into a green-house, or make a fête champetre at a masquerade.

Lady T. O, Sir Peter, how can you be angry at my little elegant expenses?

Sir P. Had you any of those little elegant expenses when you married me?

Lady T. Very true, indeed; and, after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again.

Sir P. Very well, very well, madam! You have entirely forgot what your situation was when I first saw you.

Lady T. No, no; I have not; a very disagreeable situation it was, or I'm sure I never would have married you.

Sir P. You forget the humble state I took you from—the daughter of a poor country squire. When I came to your father's, I found you sitting at your tambour, in a linen gown, a bunch of keys at your side, and your hair combed smoothly over a roll.

Lady T. Yes, I remember very well;—my daily occupations were, to overlook the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lap-dog.

Sir P. Oh! I am glad to find you have so good a recollection.

Lady T. My evening employments were to draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; play at Pope Joan with the curate; read a sermon to my aunt Deborah, or perhaps be stuck up at an old spinet, and thrum my father to sleep after a fox-chace.

Sir P. Then you were glad to take a ride out behind the butler upon the old docked coach-horse.

Lady T. No, no; I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

Sir P. I say you did. This *was* your situation.—Now, madam, you must have your coach, viz-a-viz, and three powdered footmen to walk before your chair; and in summer, two white cats, to draw you to Kensington-gardens: and, instead of your living in that hole in the country, I have brought you home here, made a woman of fortune of you, a woman of quality—in short, I have made you my wife.

Lady T. Well! and there is but one thing more you can now add to the obligation, and that is——

Sir P. To make you my widow, I suppose.

Lady T. Hem!——

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

and may plagues light on me, if I ever try to be friends with you again —you shall have a separate maintenance!

LADY T. By all means, a separate maintenance.

SIR P. Very well, madam!—Oh, very well! Ay, madam, and I'll have a divorce, madam. I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors.

LADY T. Well, Sir Peter, I see you are going to be in a passion, so I'll leave you; and when you are come properly to your temper, we shall be the happiest couple in the world, and never—never—quarrel more. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit Lady Teazle.*

SIR P. So! I have got much by my intended expostulation.—What a charming air she has!—and how pleasingly she shows her contempt of my authority!—Well, though I can't make her love me, 'tis some pleasure to teaze her a little; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing every thing to vex and plague me.

XVI.—FROM THE COMEDY OF "THE HONEYMOON."

TOBIN.

[Three Speakers: Hostess, Lampedo, and Balthazar.]

LAMPEDO. 'Tis the first patient, save the miller's mare, and an old lady's cat that has the phthisic, that I have touch'd these six weeks.

[*Enter hostess.*]

Well, good hostess! how fares your guest?

HOSTESS. He must not go to-night!

LAMP. No—nor to-morrow—

HOSTESS. Nor the next day, neither!

LAMP. Leave that to me.—

HOSTESS. He has no hurt, I fear.

LAMP. None:—but, as you're his cook, and I'm his doctor, such things may happen.—You must make him ill, and I must keep him so.

HOSTESS. Well, well, another fortnight.

LAMP. That can't be. The man's as well as I am;—have some mercy!—he hath been here almost three weeks already.

HOSTESS. Well, then, a week!

LAMP. We may contrive a week!

[*Enter Balthazar behind, with a drawn sword.*]

You talk now like a reasonable hostess, that sometimes has a reck'ning—with her conscience.

HOSTESS. He still believes he has an inward bruise.

LAMP. I would he had, indeed! or that he'd slipt his shoulder-blade, or broke a leg or two, (not that I bear his person any malice), or lux'd an arm, or even sprain'd his ancle!

HOSTESS. Ay, broken any thing except his neck.

LAMP. However, for a week I'll manage him. Though he has the constitution of a horse—a farrier should prescribe for him!

BALTH. [*Aside.*] A farrier!

LAMP. To-morrow we phlebotomize again; next day my new-invented patent draught:—then I have some pills prepared. On Thursday we throw in the bark; on Friday—

BALTH. [*Coming forward.*] Well, sir, on Friday?—what on Friday? come, proceed—

LAMP. Discovered!

HOSTESS. Mercy, noble sir!

[*They fall on their knees.*]

LAMP. We crave your mercy!

BALTH. On your knees? 'tis well! Pray, for your time is short.

HOSTESS. Nay, do not kill us!

BALTH. You have been tried, condemn'd, and only wait for execution. Which shall I begin with?

LAMP. The lady, by all means, sir!

BALTH. Come, prepare. [*To the hostess.*]

HOSTESS. Have pity on the weakness of my sex!

BALTH. Tell me, thou quaking mountain of gross flesh, tell me, and in a breath, how many poisons——If you attempt it—

[*To Lampedo, who is endeavouring to make off.*]

how many poisons you have cook'd up for me?

HOSTESS. None, as I hope for mercy!

BALTH. Is not thy wine a poison?

HOSTESS. No, indeed, sir! 'Tis not, I own, of the first quality; but—

BALTH. What?

HOSTESS. I always give short measure, sir, and ease my conscience that way.

BALTH. Ease your conscience! I'll ease your conscience for you!

HOSTESS. Mercy, sir!

BALTH. Rise, if thou canst, and hear me.

HOSTESS. Your commands, sir?

BALTH. If in five minutes all things are prepar'd for my departure, you may yet survive.

HOSTESS. It shall be done in less.

BALTH. Away, thou lump-fish!

[*Exit hostess.*]

LAMP. So now comes my turn!—'tis all over with me!—There's dagger, rope, and ratsbane, in his looks!

BALTH. And now, thou sketch and outline of a man! Thou thing that hast no shadow in the sun! Thou eel in a consumption, eldest born of Death on Famine! thou anatomy of a starv'd pilchard!—

LAMP. I do confess my leanness.—I am spare! and therefore spare me!

BALTH. Why! wouldst thou have made me a thoroughfare for thy whole shop to pass through?

LAMP. Man, you know, must live!—

BALTH. Yes: he must die, too.

LAMP. For my patients' sakes!—

BALTH. I'll send you to the major part of them.—The window, sir, is open;—come, prepare—

LAMP. Pray consider! I may hurt some one in the street.

BALTH. Thou must sup with Pluto, so make ready!—whilst I, with this good small-sword for a lancet, let thy starv'd spirit out—for blood thou hast none—and nail thee to the wall, where thou shalt look like a dry'd beetle, with a pin stuck through him.

LAMP. Consider my poor wife!

BALTH. Thy wife!

LAMP. My wife, sir!

BALTH. Hast thou dar'd think of matrimony, too? No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife!

LAMP. I took a wife, because I wanted flesh. I have a wife and three angelic babes, who by those looks are well nigh fatherless!

BALTH. Well, well! your wife and children shall plead for you. Come, come! the pills! where are the pills? produce them!

LAMP. Here is the box.

BALTH. Were it Pandora's, and each single pill had ten diseases in it, you should take them.

LAMP. What, all?

BALTH. Ay, all; and quickly too:—Come, sir, begin!

LAMP. One's a dose!

BALTH. Proceed, sir!

LAMP. What will become of me?——Let me go home, and set my shop to rights, and, like immortal Cæsar, die with decency!

BALTH. Away! and thank thy lucky star I have not bray'd thee in thine own mortar, or exposed thee for a new specimen of the lizard genius.

LAMP. 'Would I were one—for they can feed on air!

BALTH. Home, sir! and be more honest!

LAMP. If I am not, I'll be more wise at least!

XVII.—FROM THE PLAY OF "MONEY."—BULWER.

[Two Speakers: Evelyn and Graves.]

EVELYN. Ah, Graves, my dear friend! what a world this is!

GRAVES. It is an atrocious world!

EVE. Graves, I am cordially glad to see you!

GRAVES. Ah! why should you be glad to see a man so miserable?

EVE. Because I am miserable myself!

GRAVES. You! Pshaw! you have not been condemned to lose a wife?

EVE. But, plague on it, man, I may be condemned to take one! Sit down and listen.—I want a confidant!——Left fatherless when yet a boy, my poor mother grudged herself food to give me education. Some one had told her that learning was better than house and land—that's a lie, Graves.

GRAVES. A scandalous lie, Evelyn!

EVE. On the strength of that lie I was put to school—sent to college, a sizar. Do you know what a sizar is? In pride he is a gentleman—in knowledge a scholar—and he crawls about, midst gentlemen and scholars, with the livery of a pauper on his back! I carried off the great prizes—I became distinguished—I looked to a high degree, leading to a fellowship; that is, an independence for myself—a home for my mother. One day a young lord insulted me—I retorted—he struck me—refused apology—refused redress. I was a sizar! a Pariah! a thing to be struck! Sir, I was at least a man, and I horse-whipped him in the hall before the eyes of the whole college! A few days, and the lord's chastisement was forgotten: the next day the sizar was expelled—the career of a life blasted. That is the difference between rich and poor: it takes a whirlwind to move the one—a breath may uproot the other!—I came to London. As long as my mother lived I had one to toil for; and I did toil—did hope—did struggle to be something yet. She died, and then, somehow, my spirit broke—I resigned myself to my fate—I ceased to care what became of me. At last I submitted to be the Poor Relation—the hanger-on and gentleman-lackey of Sir John Vesey. But I had an object in that; there was one in that house whom I had loved at the first sight!

GRAVES. And were you loved again?

EVE. I fancied it, and was deceived. Not an hour before I inherited this mighty wealth from Mordaunt, I confessed my love, and was rejected because I was poor. Now, mark; you remember the letter which Sharp gave me when the will was read?

GRAVES. Perfectly: what were the contents?

EVE. After hints, cautions, and admonitions—half in irony, half in earnest—ah, poor Mordaunt had known the world!—it proceeded—but I'll read it to you:——"Having selected you as my heir, because I think money a trust to be placed where it seems likely to be best employed, I now—not impose a condition, but ask a favour. If you have formed no other and insuperable attachment, I could wish to suggest your choice. My two nearest female relations are my niece Georgina, and my third cousin, Clara Douglas, the daughter of a once dear friend. If you could see in either of these one whom you could make your wife, such would be a marriage that, if I live long enough to return to England, I would seek to bring about before I die."——My friend, this is not a legal condition; the fortune does not rest on it; yet, need I say, that my gratitude

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

DIALOGUES
AND
DRAMATIC SCENES,
FROM THE WORKS OF SHAKSPEARE.

I.—FROM THE PLAY OF "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

[Three Speakers: Shylock, Bassanio, and Antonio.]

SHYLOCK. Three thousand ducats?—well!

BASSANIO. Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK. For three months?—well!

BASSANIO. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

SHYLOCK. Antonio shall become bound!—well!

BASSANIO. May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

SHYLOCK. Three thousand ducats—for three months—and Antonio bound!

BASSANIO. Your answer to that?

SHYLOCK. Antonio is a good man.

BASSANIO. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

SHYLOCK. O, no, no, no, no! my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have, you understand me, that he is sufficient: yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England,—and other ventures he hath squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land rats, and water rats, water thieves, and land thieves—I mean, pirates; and then, there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks: the man is, notwithstanding, sufficient.—Three thousand ducats! I think I may take his bond.

BASSANIO. Be assured you may.

SHYLOCK. I will be assured, I may; and that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

BASSANIO. If it please you to dine with us.

SHYLOCK. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into: I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.—What news on the Rialto?—Who is he comes here?

BASSANIO. This is signor Antonio. [*Bassanio goes out.*

SHYLOCK. How like a fawning publican he looks! I hate him, for he is a Christian; but more, for that, in low simplicity, he lends out money gratis, and brings down the rate of usance here with us in Venice. If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him! He hates our sacred nation; and he rails, even there where merchants most do congregate, on me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift, which he calls interest: cursèd be my tribe if I forgive him!

BASSANIO. Shylock, do you hear? [*Bassanio returns with Antonio.*

SHYLOCK. I am debating of my present store; and, by the near guess of my memory, I cannot instantly raise up the gross of full three thousand ducats: what of that? Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe, will furnish me. But soft; how many months do you desire?—Rest you fair, good signor; your worship was the last man in our mouths.

ANTONIO. Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow, by taking, or by giving of excess, yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend, I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd how much you would?

SHYLOCK. Ay, ay; three thousand ducats.

ANTONIO. And for three months.

SHYLOCK. I had forgot,—three months: you told me so. Well then, your bond;—and, let me see.—But hear you; methought you said, you neither lend nor borrow upon advantage.

ANTONIO. I do never use it.

SHYLOCK. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep,—this Jacob from our holy Abraham was (as his wise mother wrought in his behalf,) the third possessor; ay, he was the third.

ANTONIO. And what of him? did he take interest?

SHYLOCK. No, not take interest; not as you would say directly interest: mark what Jacob did. When Laban and himself were compromised, that all the yeanlings which were streaked and pied should fall as Jacob's hire, the skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands, and stuck them up before the fulsome ewes; who, then conceiving, did, in yeaning time, fall party-coloured lambs; and those were Jacob's. This was the way to thrive, and he was blest; and thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

ANTONIO. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for; a thing not in his power to bring to pass, but swayed and fashioned by the hand of Heaven. Was this inserted to make interest good? or is your gold and silver, ewes and rams?

SHYLOCK. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.

ANTONIO. *(Apart to Bassanio.)*—Mark you this, Bassanio; the devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. An evil soul, producing holy witness, is like a villain with a smiling cheek—a goodly apple rotten at the heart. O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

SHYLOCK. *(Musing)*—Three thousand ducats!—'Tis a good round sum. Three months from twelve—then let me see the rate.

ANTONIO. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholden to you?

SHYLOCK. Signor Antonio! many a time and oft, on the Rialto, you have rated me about my moneys, and my usances: still have I borne it with a patient shrug; for sufferance is the badge of all our tribe. You call me misbeliever! cut-throat! dog! and spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,—and all for use of that which is mine own! Well, then, it now appears you need my help; go to, then: You come to me, and you say, "Shylock, we would have moneys;" You say so! you, that did void your rheum upon my beard, and foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur over your threshold! Moneys is your suit! What should I say to you? Should I not say, "Hath a dog money? Is it possible a cur can lend three thousand ducats?"—or shall I bend low, and, in a bondman's key, with bated breath, and whispering humbleness, say this,—"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last; you spurned me such a day; another time you called me—dog; and for these courtesies I'll lend you thus much moneys."

ANTONIO. I am as like to call thee so again, to spit on thee again, to spurn thee too. If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not as to thy friend; (for when did friendship take a breed, for barren metal, of his friend?) but lend it rather to thine enemy; who, if he break, thou may'st with better face exact the penalty.

SHYLOCK. Why, look you, how you storm! I would be friends with you, and have your love—forget the shames that you have stained me with—supply your present wants, and take no doit of usance for my moneys: and you'll not hear me! This is kind I offer?

ANTONIO. This were kindness.

SHYLOCK. This kindness will I show;—go with me to a notary; seal me there your single bond; and, in a merry sport, if you repay me not on such a day, in such a place, such sum, or sums, as are expressed in the condition, let the forfeit be nominated for an equal pound of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken in what part of your body pleaseth me.

ANTONIO. Content, in faith: I'll seal to such a bond, and say there is much kindness in the Jew.

BASSANIO. You shall not seal to such a bond for me; I'd rather dwell in my necessity.

ANTONIO. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it; within these two months—that's a month before this bond expires,—I do expect return of thrice three times the value of this bond.

SHY. (*Aside*) O father Abraham, what these Christians are! whose own hard dealing teaches them to suspect the thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this;—if he should break his day, what should I gain by the exaction of the forfeiture? A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man, is not so estimable, profitable neither, as flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say, to buy his favour I extend this friendship; if he will take it, so; if not, adieu; and, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

ANTONIO. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

SHYLOCK. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's; give him direction for this merry bond:—and I will go and purse the ducats straight; see to my house, left in the fearful guard of an unthrifty knave; and presently I will be with you.

ANTONIO. Hie thee, gentle Jew. *(Exit Shylock.)* This Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

BASSANIO. I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind.

ANTONIO. Come on. In this there can be no dismay; my ships come home a month before the day.

II. FROM THE PLAY OF "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

[Six Speakers: The Duke of Venice, Antonio the Merchant, Shylock, Bassanio, Gratiano, and the Lady Portia.]

DUKE. What, is Antonio here?

ANTONIO. Ready, so please your grace.

DUKE. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer a stony adversary, an inhuman wretch uncapable of pity, void and empty from any dram of mercy.

ANTONIO. I have heard, your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify his rigorous course; but, since he stands obdurate, and that no lawful means can carry me out of his envy's reach, I do oppose my patience to his fury; and am armed to suffer, with a quietness of spirit, the very tyranny and rage of his.

DUKE. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

GRATIANO. He's ready at the door: he comes, my lord. [*Enter Shylock.*

DUKE. Make room, and let him stand before our face. Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too, that thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice to the last hour of act; and then, 'tis thought, thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange than is thy strange apparent cruelty: and, where thou now exact'st the penalty, (which is, a pound of this poor merchant's flesh) thou wilt not only lose the forfeiture, but, touched with human gentleness and love, forgive a moiety of the principal: glancing an eye of pity on his losses, that have of late so huddled on his back; enough to press a royal merchant down, and pluck commiseration of his state from brassy bosoms, and rough bears of flint, from stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained to offices of tender courtesy. We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

SHYLOCK. I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose; and, by our holy Sabbath, have I sworn to have the due and forfeit of my bond! If you deny it, let the danger light upon your charter, and your city's freedom. You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have a weight of carrion flesh, than to receive three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that; but say, it is my humour: is it answered? What if my house be

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

SHYLOCK. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond, thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud: repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall to cureless ruin.—I stand here for law.

DUKE. O here, I take it, is the doctor come.—(*Enter Portia, dressed like a Doctor of Laws.*)—You are welcome: take your place.—Are you acquainted with the difference that holds this present question in the court?

PORTIA. I am informèd throughly of the cause. Which is the Merchant here, and which the Jew?

DUKE. Antonio, and old Shylock, both stand forth.

PORTIA. Is your name Shylock?

SHYLOCK. Shylock is my name.

PORTIA. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow; yet, in such rule, that the Venetian law cannot impugn you, as you do proceed. You stand within his danger, do you not?

ANTONIO. Ay, so he says.

PORTIA. Do you confess the bond?

ANTONIO. I do.

PORTIA. Then must the Jew be merciful.

SHYLOCK. On what compulsion *must* I? tell me that.

PORTIA. The quality of mercy is not strain'd; it droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes: 'tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes the thronèd monarch better than his crown: his sceptre shews the force of temporal power, the attribute to awe and majesty, wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings; but Mercy is above this sceptred sway—it is enthronèd in the hearts of kings—it is an attribute to God himself; and earthly power doth then shew likest God's, when mercy seasons justice: therefore, Jew, though justice be thy plea, consider this,—that, in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation: we do pray for mercy: and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy.—I have spoke thus much, to mitigate the justice of thy plea; which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice must needs give sentence 'gainst the Merchant there.

SHYLOCK. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,—the penalty and forfeit of my bond.

PORTIA. Is he not able to discharge the money?

BASSANIO. Yes,—here I tender it for him in the court; yea, thrice the sum: if that will not suffice, I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er, on forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart; if this will not suffice, it must appear that malice bears down truth. And I beseech you, wrest once the law to your authority; to do a great right, do a little wrong; and curb this cruel devil of his will.

PORTIA. It must not be; there is no power in Venice can alter a decree establishèd: 'twill be recorded for a precedent, and many an error, by the same example, will rush into the State: it cannot be.

SHYLOCK. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!—O, wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

PORTIA. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

PORTIA. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

SHYLOCK. An oath, an oath; I have an oath in heaven. Shall I lay perjury upon my soul? no, not for Venice.

PORTIA. Why, this bond is forfeit, and lawfully by this the Jew may claim a pound of flesh, to be by him cut off nearest the Merchant's heart.—Be merciful; take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

SHYLOCK. When it is paid according to the tenour. It doth appear, you are a worthy judge; you know the law—your exposition hath been most sound: I charge you by the law, whereof you are a well-

deserving pillar, proceed to judgement. · By my truth I swear, there is no power in the tongue of man to alter me: I stay here on my bond.

ANTONIO. Most heartily I do beseech the court to give the judgement.

PORTIA. Why, then, thus it is. You must prepare your bosom for his knife:—

SHYLOCK. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

PORTIA. For the intent and purpose of the law hath full relation to the penalty, which here appeareth due upon the bond.

SHYLOCK. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge! how much more elder art thou than thy looks!

PORTIA. Therefore, lay bare your bosom.

SHYLOCK. Ay, his breast: so says the bond;—doth it not, noble judge?—"nearest his heart;" these are the very words.

PORTIA. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh the flesh?

SHYLOCK. I have them ready.

PORTIA. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge, to stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

SHYLOCK. Is it so nominated in the bond?

PORTIA. It is not so expressed; but what of that? 'twere good you do so much for charity.

SHYLOCK. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

PORTIA. Come, Merchant, have you anything to say?

ANTONIO. But little; I am armed, and well prepared.—Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well! Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you; for herein Fortune shows herself more kind than is her custom: It is still her use, to let the wretched man outlive his wealth; to view, with hollow eye and wrinkled brow, an age of poverty: from which lingering penance of such a misery doth she cut me off. Repent not you that you shall lose your friend, and he repents not that he pays your debt; for, if the Jew do cut but deep enough, I'll pay it instantly ...with all my heart.

SHYLOCK. We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.

PORTIA. A pound of that same Merchant's flesh is thine; the court awards it, and the law doth give it.

SHYLOCK. Most rightful judge!

PORTIA. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast; the law allows it, and the court awards it.

SHYLOCK. Most learned judge!—A sentence; come, prepare!

PORTIA. Tarry a little;—there is something else.—This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood; the words expressly are, "a pound of flesh;" take then thy bond,—take thou thy pound of flesh; but, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed one drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate unto the State of Venice.

GRATIANO. O upright judge!—Mark, Jew;—a learned judge!

SHYLOCK. Is that the law?

PORTIA. Thyself shalt see the act; for, as thou urgest justice, be assured thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st.

GRATIANO. O, learned judge!—Mark, Jew;—a learned judge!

SHYLOCK. I take this offer then:—pay the bond thrice and let the Christian go.

BASSANIO. Here is the money.

PORTIA. Soft; the Jew shall have all justice;—soft!—no haste;—he shall have nothing but the penalty.

GRATIANO. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

PORTIA. Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the flesh. Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less, nor more, but just "a pound" of flesh; if thou tak'st more or less than a just pound,—be it but so much as makes it light, or heavy, in the substance, or the division of the twentieth part

of one poor scruple! nay, if the scale do turn but in the estimation of a hair,—thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

GRATIANO. A second Daniel! a Daniel, Jew! Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

PORTIA. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

SHYLOCK. Give me my principal, and let me go.

BASSANIO. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

PORTIA. He hath refused it in the open court; he shall have merely justice, and his bond.

GRATIANO. A Daniel, still say I; a second Daniel!—I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

SHYLOCK. Shall I not barely have my principal?

PORTIA. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture, to be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

SHYLOCK. Why, then, the devil give him good of it! I'll stay no longer question.

PORTIA. Tarry, Jew: the law hath yet another hold on you. It is enacted in the laws of Venice,—If it be proved against an alien, that, by direct or indirect attempts, he seek the life of any citizen, the party 'gainst the which he doth contrive, shall seize one half his goods; the other half comes to the privy coffer of the State; and the offender's life lies in the mercy of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice. In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st; for it appears, by manifest proceeding, that, indirectly, and directly too, thou hast contrived against the very life of the defendant; and thou hast incurred the danger formerly by me rehearsed. Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

GRATIANO. Beg that thou may'st have leave to hang thyself!—and yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the State, thou hast not left the value of a cord; therefore, thou must be hanged at the State's charge.

DUKE. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit, I pardon thee thy life, before thou ask it. For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's; the other half comes to the general state, which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

SHYLOCK. Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that: You take my house, when you do take the prop that doth sustain my house: you take my life, when you do take the means whereby I live.

PORTIA. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

GRATIANO. A halter gratis: nothing else, I pray you.

ANTONIO. So please my lord the Duke and all the court, to quit the fine for one half of his goods; I am content—so he will let me have the other half in use;—to render it, upon his death, unto the gentleman that lately stole his daughter. Two things provided more, that, for this favour, he presently become a Christian; the other, that he do record a gift, here in the court, of all he dies possessed, unto his son Lorenzo, and his daughter.

DUKE. He shall do this; or else I do recant the pardon that I late pronounced here.

PORTIA. Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?

SHYLOCK. I am content. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence; I am not well; send the deed after me, and I will sign it.

DUKE. Get thee gone, but do it.

GRATIANO. In christening, thou shall have two godfathers; had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,—to bring thee to the gallows, not the font!

III. FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "HAMLET."

[Three speakers: The Queen, Hamlet, and the Ghost.]

HAMLET. Now, mother, what's the matter?

QUEEN. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET. Mother, you have my father much offended.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

HAMLET. How is it with you, lady?

QUEEN. Alas, how is't with you, that you do bend your eye on vacancy, and with the incorporeal air do hold discourse? O, gentle son! upon the heat and flame of thy distemper, sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

HAMLET. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he glares! His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones, would make them capable.—Do not look upon me: lest, with this piteous action, you convert my stern effects: then what I have to do will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

QUEEN. To whom do you speak this?

HAMLET. Do you see nothing there?

QUEEN. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

HAMLET. Nor did you nothing hear?

QUEEN. No, nothing, but ourselves.

HAMLET. Why, look you there! look how it steals away! My father, in his habit, as he lived! Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal! [*Exit Ghost.*

QUEEN. This is the very coinage of your brain: this bodiless creation, ecstasy is very cunning in.

HAMLET. Ecstasy! My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time, and makes as healthful music: It is not madness that I have utter'd: bring me to the test, and I the matter will re-word; which madness would gambol from. Mother! for love of grace, lay not that flattering unction to your soul, that not your trespass, but my madness, speaks: it will but skin and film the ulcerous place; whiles rank corruption, mining all within, infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven: repent what's past; avoid what is to come.

QUEEN. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

HAMLET. O, throw away the worser part of it, and live the purer with the other half. Good night! And, when you are desirous to be bless'd, I'll blessing beg of you. So again, good night!...I must be cruel, only to be kind! Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind!

IV.—FROM THE COMEDY OF "AS YOU LIKE IT."

[Two speakers: Orlando and Rosalind.]

ROSALIND. I will speak to him like a saucy lacquey, and under that habit play the knave with him. *(Aside)*—Hem! Do you hear, forester?

ORLANDO. Very well; what would you?

ROSALIND. I pray you...what is't o'clock?

ORLANDO. You should ask me what time o'day; there's no clock in the forest.

ROSALIND. Then there is no true lover in the forest; else sighing every minute, and groaning every hour, would detect the lazy foot of time, as well as a clock.

ORLANDO. And why not the swift foot of time? Had not that been as proper?

ROSALIND. By no means, sir: Time travels in divers paces with divers persons: I'll tell you who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal.

ORLANDO. I prithee, who doth he trot withal?

ROSALIND. Marry, he trots hard with a young maid, between the contract of her marriage and the day it is solemnized: if the interim be but a se'nnight, Time's pace is so hard that it seems the length of seven years.

ORLANDO. Who ambles Time withal?

ROSALIND. With a priest that lacks Latin, and a rich man that hath not the gout: for the one sleeps easily, because he cannot study; and the other lives merrily, because he feels no pain.

ORLANDO. Who doth he gallop withal?

ROSALIND. With a thief to the gallows: for, though he go as softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there.

ORLANDO. Who stays it still withal?

ROSALIND. With lawyers in the vacation: for they sleep between term and term, and then they perceive not how time moves.

ORLANDO. Where dwell you, pretty youth?

ROSALIND. With yon shepherdess, my sister; here, in the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat.

ORLANDO. Your accent is something finer than you could purchase in so removed a dwelling.

ROSALIND. I have been told so of many: but, indeed, an old religious uncle of mine taught me to speak, who was in his youth an inland man; one that knew courtship too well, for there he fell in love. I have heard him read many lectures against it; and I thank my stars I am not a woman, to be touched with so many giddy offences, as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal.

ORLANDO. Can you remember any of the principal evils that he laid to the charge of women?

ROSALIND. There were none principal; they were all like one another, as halfpence are: every one fault seeming monstrous, till its fellow fault came to match it.

ORLANDO. I prithee, recount some of them.

ROSALIND. No; I will not cast away my physic but on those that are sick. There is a man haunts the forest, that abuses our young plants with carving "Rosalind" on their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles; all, forsooth, deifying the name of "Rosalind." If I could meet that fancy-monger, I would give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the quotidian of love upon him.

ORLANDO. I am he that is so love-shaked; I pray you, tell me your remedy.

ROSALIND. There is none of my uncle's marks upon you: he taught me how to know a man in love; in which cage of rushes, I am sure you are not prisoner.

ORLANDO. What were his marks?

ROSALIND. A lean cheek; which you have not:—a blue eye, and sunken; which you have not:—an unquestionable spirit; which you have not:—a beard neglected; which you have not: (but I pardon you for that; for, simply, your having in beard is a younger brother's revenue:) then, your hose should be ungartered, your bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe untied, and everything about you demonstrating a careless desolation. But you are no such man; you are rather *point-device* in your accoutrements; as loving yourself, than seeming the lover of any other.

ORLANDO. Fair youth, I would I could make thee believe I love.

ROSALIND. Me believe it? you may as soon make her that you love believe it; which, I warrant, she is apter to do than to confess she does: that is one of the points in the which women still give the lie to their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein "Rosalind" is so admired?

ORLANDO. I swear to thee, youth, by the white hand of Rosalind, I am that he, that unfortunate he!

ROSALIND. But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?

ORLANDO. Neither rhyme nor reason can express how much.

ROSALIND. Love is merely a madness; and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do; and the reason why they are not so punished and cured is, that the lunacy is so ordinary, the whippers are in love too: yet I profess curing it by counsel.

ORLANDO. Did you ever cure any so?

ROSALIND. Yes, one; and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress; and I set him every day to woo me: at which time would I—being but a moonish youth—grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing, and liking; proud, fantastical; apish, shallow, inconstant; full of tears, full of smiles; for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything—as boys and women are for the most part cattle of this colour: would now like him,—now loathe him; then entertain him,—then forswear him; now weep for him,—then spit at him;...that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love, to a living humour of madness; which was, to forswear the full stream of the world, and to live in a nook merely monastic: And thus I cured him; and this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in't.

ORLANDO. I would not be cured, youth.

ROSALIND. I would cure you, if you would but call me Rosalind, and come every day to my cot, and woo me.

ORLANDO. Now, by the faith of my love, I will; tell me where it is.

ROSALIND. Go with me to it, and I'll show it you: and, by the way, you shall tell me where in the forest you live: Will you go?

ORLANDO. With all my heart, good youth.

ROSALIND. Nay, you must call me Rosalind.

V.—FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "JULIUS CÆSAR."

[Two Speakers: Brutus and Cassius.]

CAS. That you have wronged me doth appear in this—you have condemned and noted Lucius Pella, for taking bribes here of the Sardians; wherein my letters (praying on his side, because I knew the man) were slighted of.

BRU. You wronged yourself, to write in such a case.

CAS. In such a time as this, it is not meet that every nice offence should bear its comment.

BRU. Yet let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself are much condemned to have an itching palm; to sell and mart your offices for gold, to undeservers.

CAS. I an itching palm! You know that you are Brutus that speak this; or, by the gods, this speech were else your last!

BRU. The name of Cassius honours this corruption, and chastisement doth therefore hide its head.

CAS. Chastisement!

BRU. Remember March, the ides of March, remember! Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake? What villain touched his body, that did stab, and not for justice? What! shall one of us, that struck the foremost man of all this world, but for supporting robbers,—shall we now contaminate our fingers with base bribes, and sell the mighty space of our large honours, for so much trash as may be graspèd thus? I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon, than such a Roman.

CAS. Brutus, bay not me! I'll not endure it; you forget yourself to hedge me in; I am a soldier, I; older in practice, abler than yourself to make conditions.

BRU. Go to; you are not, Cassius.

CAS. I am!

BRU. I say, you are not.

CAS. Urge me no more, I shall forget myself—have mind upon your health—tempt me no farther!

BRU. Away, slight man!

CAS. Is't possible?

BRU. Hear me, for I will speak. Must I give way and room to your rash choler? Shall I be frighted when a madman stares?

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

BRU. When I spoke that, I was ill-tempered too.
CAS. Do you confess so much? Give me your hand.
BRU. And my heart too.
CAS. O Brutus!
BRU. What's the matter?
CAS. Have you not love enough to bear with me, when that rash humour, which my mother gave me, makes me forgetful?
BRU. Yes, Cassius; and, from henceforth, when you are over-earnest with your Brutus, he'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.

VI.—FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "CORIOLANUS."

[Two Speakers: Coriolanus and Aufidius.]

COR. I plainly, Tullus, by your looks, perceive you disapprove my conduct.
AUF. I mean not to assail thee with the clamour of loud reproaches, and the war of words; but—pride apart, and all that can pervert the light of steady reason—here, to make a candid, fair proposal.
COR. Speak, I hear thee.
AUF. I need not tell thee, that I have performed my utmost promise. Thou hast been protected; hast had thy amplest, most ambitious wish; thy wounded pride is healed, thy dear revenge completely sated; and, to crown thy fortune. at the same time, thy peace with Rome restored. Thou art no more a Volscian, but a Roman!—Return, return; thy duty calls upon thee still to protect the city thou hast saved; it still may be in danger from our arms! Retire: I will take care thou mayst with safety.
COR. With safety?—What!—and thinkest thou Coriolanus will stoop to thee for safety?—No! my safeguard is in myself, a bosom void of fear.——O, 'tis an act of cowardice and baseness, to seize the very time my hands are fettered by the strong chain of former obligation; the safe, sure moment to insult me!—Gods! were I now free, as on that day I was when at Corioli I tamed thy pride—this had not been!
AUF. Thou speak'st the truth: it had not. O, for that time again! propitious gods, if you will bless me, grant it! Know, for that—for that dear purpose—I have now proposed thou shouldst return: I pray thee, Marcius, do it! and we shall meet again on nobler terms.
COR. Till I have cleared my honour in your council, and proved before them all,—to thy confusion,—the falsehood of thy charge; as soon in battle I would before thee fly, and howl for mercy, as quit the station they've assigned me here.
AUF. Thou canst not hope acquittal from the Volscians?
COR. I do:—nay, more, expect their approbation,—their thanks. I will obtain them such a peace as thou durst never ask; a perfect union of their whole nation with imperial Rome, in all her privileges, all her rights: by the just gods, I will.—What wouldst thou more?
AUF. What would I more, proud Roman? This I would:—fire the curs'd forest, where these Roman wolves haunt and infest their nobler neighbours round them; extirpate, from the bosom of this land, a false, perfidious people, who, beneath the mask of freedom, are a combination against the liberty of human kind—the genuine seed of outlaws and of robbers.
COR. The seed of gods!—'Tis not for thee, vain boaster, 'tis not for such as thou,—so often spared by her victorious sword,—to speak of Rome, but with respect and awful veneration.—Whate'er her blots, whate'er her giddy factions, there is more virtue in one single year of Roman story, than your Volscian annals can boast through all their creeping, dark duration!
AUF. I thank thy rage:—This full displays the traitor.
COR. Traitor!—How now?

AUF. Ay, traitor, Marcius.
COR. Marcius!
AUF. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius! Dost thou think I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stolen name, Coriolanus, in Corioli? You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously he has betrayed your business, and given up, for certain drops of salt, your city Rome,—I say, your city,—to his wife and mother; breaking his oath and resolution, like a twist of rotten silk; never admitting counsel o' the war: but, at his nurse's tears, he whined and roared away your victory, that pages blushed at him, and men of heart looked wondering at each other.
COR. Hear'st thou, Mars?
AUF. Name not the god, thou boy of tears.
COR. Measureless liar! thou hast made my heart too great for what contains it.—Boy!—O slave!—Cut me to pieces, Volscians; men and lads, stain all your edges on me.—Boy!—False hound! If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there, that, like an eagle in a dove-cot, I fluttered your Volscians in Corioli; alone I did it:—Boy! . . . But let us part; lest my rash hand should do a hasty deed my cooler thought forbids.
AUF. I court the worst thy sword can do; while thou from me hast nothing to expect but sore destruction. Quit then this hostile camp; once more I tell thee, thou art not here one single hour in safety.
COR. O, that I had thee in the field, with six Aufidiuses, or more,—thy tribe,—to use my lawful sword!——

VII.—FROM THE TRAGEDY OF "MACBETH."

[Three Speakers: Macduff, Prince Malcolm, and Rosse.]

MACD. See, who comes here?
MAL. My countryman; but yet I know him not.
MACD. My ever-gentle cousin!—Welcome hither.
MAL. I know him now. Kind Powers! betimes remove the means which make us strangers!
ROSSE. Sir, amen.
MACD. Stands Scotland where it did?
ROSSE. Alas, poor country, almost afraid to know itself!—it cannot be called our mother, but our grave; where nothing,—but who knows nothing,—is once seen to smile; where sighs and groans, and shrieks that rend the air, are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems a modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell is there scarce asked, for whom; and good men's lives expire before the flowers in their caps—dying, or ere they sicken.
MACD. Oh, relation too nice, and yet too true!
MAL. What is the newest grief?
ROSSE. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker; each minute teems a new one.
MACD. How does my wife?
ROSSE. Why, well.
MACD. And all my children?
ROSSE. Well too.
MACD. The tyrant has not battered at their peace?
ROSSE. No; they were well at peace, when I did leave them.
MACD. Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes it?
ROSSE. When I came hither to transport the tidings, which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour of many worthy fellows that were out,—which was to my belief witnessed the rather, for that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:—now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland would create soldiers, and make women fight to doff their dire distresses.
MAL. Be't their comfort we're coming thither: gracious England

hath lent us good Siward and ten thousand men; an older and a better soldier, none that Christendom gives out.

Rosse. Would I could answer this comfort with the like! But I have words, that would be howled out in the desert air, where hearing should not catch them.

Macd. What concern they? the general cause? or is it a fee-grief, due to some single breast?

Rosse. No mind that's honest but in it shares some woe; though the main part pertains to you alone.

Macd. If it be mine, keep it not from me; quickly let me have it!

Rosse. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever, which shall possess them with the heaviest sound that ever yet they heard.

Macd. Ah! I guess at it!

Rosse. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes savagely slaughtered!—to relate the manner, were, on the quarry of these murdered deer, to add the death of you.

Mal. Merciful Powers! What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brow; give sorrow words;—the grief, that does not speak, whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.

Macd. My children too?——

Rosse. Wife, children, servants, all that could be found.

Macd. And I must be from thence!——My wife killed too?

Rosse. I have said.

Mal. Be comforted. Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge, to cure this deadly grief.

Macd. He has no children——All my pretty ones? Did you say all? what, all?—Oh, hell-kite!—all? What! all my pretty ones, at one fell swoop?

Mal. Dispute it like a man.

Macd. I shall do so! but I must also feel it as a man. I cannot but remember such things were, that were most precious to me! Did Heaven look on, and would not take their part? Sinful Macduff, they were all struck for thee! Naught that I am; not for their own demerits, but for mine, fell slaughter on their souls!

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword; let grief convert to wrath: blunt not the heart; enrage it.

Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes, and braggart with my tongue. But, gentle Heaven! cut short all intermission: front to front, bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself; within my sword's length set him!—if he 'scape, then Heaven forgive him too!

VIII.—FROM THE PLAY OF "HENRY THE FOURTH."

[Three Speakers: Henry IV., Northumberland, and Hotspur.]

King Henry. My blood hath been too cold and temperate, unapt to stir at these indignities; and you have found me; for, accordingly, you tread upon my patience! But be sure, I will, from henceforth, rather be myself, mighty, and to be feared; than my condition, which has been smooth as oil, soft as young down,—and, therefore, lost that title of respect which the proud soul ne'er pays, but to the proud!

North. My good lord, those prisoners, in your Highness' name demanded,—which Harry Percy here, at Holmedon, took,—were, as he says, not with such strength denied, as is delivered to your majesty.

Hotspur. My liege, I did deny no prisoners. But I remember, when the fight was done, when I was dry with rage and extreme toil, breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword, came there a certain lord; neat, trimly dressed, fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin, new-reaped, showed like a stubble-land at harvest-home: he was perfumèd like a milliner; and, 'twixt his finger and his thumb, he held a pouncet-box, which, ever and anon, he gave his nose, and took't away again;—and still he smiled

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

long, I'll sew nether stocks, and mend them, and foot them too. A plague of all cowards! Give me a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant?

PRINCE H. Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter? pitiful-hearted Titan, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun! If thou didst, then behold that compound.

FALSTAFF. You rogue, here's lime in this sack, too!—there is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man; yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it: a villainous coward! Go thy ways, old Jack; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not three good men unhanged in England, and one of them is fat and grows old. A bad world I say!—I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms, or any thing. A plague of all cowards, I say still!

PRINCE H. How now, woolsack! what mutter you?

FALSTAFF. A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects before me like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face more. You Prince of Wales!

PRINCE H. Why, what's the matter?

FALSTAFF. Are you not a coward? Answer me to that.

PRINCE H. Why, ye fat paunch, an' ye call me coward, I'll stab thee.

FALSTAFF. I call thee coward! I'll see thee hanged ere I call thee coward; but I would give a thousand pounds I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders; you care not who sees your back. Call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing! Give me them that will face me. Give me—a cup of sack;—I'm a rogue if I have drunk to-day.

PRINCE H. O villain! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drank'st last.

FALSTAFF. All's one for that. A plague of all cowards, still say I.

PRINCE H. What's the matter?

FALSTAFF. What's the matter! There be four of us have ta'en a thousand pounds this morning.

PRINCE H. Where is it, Jack? Where is it?

FALSTAFF. Where is it! Taken from us it is: a hundred upon four of us.

PRINCE H. What! a hundred, man?

FALSTAFF. I am a rogue if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them, two hours together. I have escaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose; my buckler cut through and through; my sword hacked like a hand-saw, *ecce signum*. I never dealt better since I was a man! All would not do. A plague of all cowards!

PRINCE H. Speak, Jack; how was it?

FALSTAFF. Four of us set upon some dozen, and bound them—every man of them; and as we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set upon us, and unbound the rest; and then came in the others.

PRINCE H. What! fought ye with them all?

FALSTAFF. All! I know not what you call all; but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish; if there were not two or three-and-fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-legged creature.

PRINCE H. I pray, you have not murdered some of them?

FALSTAFF. Nay, that's past praying for! I have peppered two of them;—two, I am sure I have paid—two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face—call me horse. Thou know'st my old ward:—here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me—

PRINCE H. What! four? Thou said'st but two, even now.

FALSTAFF. Four, Hal; I told thee, four. These four came all afront, and mainly thrust at me. I made no more ado, but took all their seven points in my target, thus.

PRINCE H. Seven? Why, there were but four, even now.

FALSTAFF. In buckram?

PRINCE H. Ay, four in buckram suits.

FALSTAFF. Seven, by these hilts, or I am a villain else. Dost thou hear me, Hal?

PRINCE H. Ay, and mark thee too.

FALSTAFF. Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of—

PRINCE H. So, two more already! *(aside.)*

FALSTAFF. Their points being broken, they began to give me ground; but I followed them close; came in, foot and hand; and, with a thought, seven of the eleven I paid.

PRINCE H. O monstrous! eleven buckram men grown out of two!

FALSTAFF. But, as bad luck would have it, three misbegotten knaves, in Kendal-green, came at my back, and let drive at me; for, it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

PRINCE H. These lies are like the father that begets them—gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou clay-brained and knotty-pated fool, thou obscene, greasy tallow-keech—

FALSTAFF. What! art thou mad? art thou mad? Is not the truth the truth?

PRINCE H. Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal-green, when "it was so dark, thou couldst not see thy hand?" Come, tell us your reason. What say'st thou to this? Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.

FALSTAFF. What! upon compulsion! No! were I at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you upon compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion! If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, I would give no man a reason on compulsion, I!

PRINCE H. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin. Thou sanguine coward, thou bed-presser, thou horse back-breaker, thou huge hill of flesh—

FALSTAFF. Away! you starveling—you eel-skin—you dried neat's tongue—you stock-fish!—O, for breath to utter what is like thee!—you tailor's yard—you sheath—you bow-case—you vile standing tuck—

PRINCE H. Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again; and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this: —Poins and I saw you four set on four: you bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark, now, how plain a tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four, and with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and have it; yea, and can show it you here in the house. And, Falstaff, you carried your mountain-sides away as nimbly, with as quick dexterity, and roared for mercy, and still ran and roared, as ever I heard bull-calf. What a slave art thou to hack thy sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight! What trick, what device, what starting-hole canst thou find out, to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?

FALSTAFF. Ha! ha! ha! I knew ye, as well as he that made you. Why, hear you, my master—was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest, I am as valiant as Hercules, but, beware instinct! the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter! I was a coward—on instinct! I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life: myself for a valiant lion, and thee for a true prince. But I am glad you have the money. Clap to the doors; watch to-night, pray to-morrow.—What, shall we be merry? Shall we have a play extempore?

PRINCE H. Content; and the argument shall be, thy running away.

FALSTAFF. Ah! no more of that, Hal, an' thou lovest me.

SELECTIONS

FROM

MILTON'S "PARADISE LOST."

I.—THE INTRODUCTION.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste brought death into the world, and all our woe, with loss of Eden,—till one greater Man restore us, and regain the blissful seat,—sing, heavenly Muse! that, on the secret top of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire that shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed, in the beginning how the heavens and earth rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed fast by the oracle of God; I thence invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,—that, with no middle flight, intends to soar above the Aonian mount, while it pursues things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme. And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer, before all temples, the upright heart and pure, instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread, dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss, and made'st it pregnant. What is in me dark, illumine; what is low, raise and support; that, to the height of this great argument, I may assert eternal Providence, and justify the ways of God to men.

II.—SPEECH OF SATAN IN HELL.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime—said then the lost Archangel,—this the seat that we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom, for that celestial light? Be it so, since He who now is Sovereign, can dispose and bid what shall be right: farthest from Him is best: whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme above his equals. Farewell, happy fields, where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail, infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell, receive thy new possessor;—one who brings a mind not to be changed by place or time. The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell—a hell of heaven! What matter where, if I be still the same, and what I should be—all but less than He whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least we shall be free; the Almighty hath not built here for his envy, will not drive us hence; here we may reign secure; and, in my choice, to reign is worth ambition, though in Hell: better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven. But wherefore let we then our faithful friends, the associates and co-partners of our loss, lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool? and call them not to share with us their part in this unhappy mansion; or, once more, with rallied arms, to try what may be yet regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?

III.—SPEECH OF SATAN TO HIS LEGIONS.

Princes, Potentates, Warriors! the flower of Heaven, once yours; now lost, if such astonishment as this can seize eternal Spirits: or, have ye chosen this place, after the toil of battle to repose your wearied virtue, for the ease you find to slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven? Or, in this abject posture, have ye sworn to adore the Conqueror?—who now beholds Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood, with scattered arms and ensigns; till, anon, his swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern the advantage, and, descending, tread us down thus drooping; or, with linkèd thunderbolts, transfix us to the bottom of this gulf. Awake! arise! or be for ever fallen!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

black fire and horror shot with equal rage among His angels; and His throne itself mixed with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,—His own invented torments! But, perhaps, the way seems difficult and steep, to scale with upright wing against a higher foe. Let such bethink them, (if the sleepy drench of that forgetful lake benumb not still,) that, in our proper motion, we ascend up to our native seat: descent and fall to us is adverse. Who but felt of late, when the fierce Foe hung on our broken rear insulting, and pursued us through the deep, with what compulsion and laborious flight we sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then; the event is feared;—should we again provoke our stronger, some worse way His wrath may find to our destruction!—if there be in hell fear to be worse destroyed. What can be worse than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned in this abhorrèd deep to utter woe; where pain of unextinguishable fire must exercise us without hope of end;—the vassals of His anger, when the scourge inexorable, and the torturing hour, calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus, we should be quite abolished, and expire. What fear we then? what doubt we, to incense His utmost ire? which, to the height enraged, will either quite consume us, and reduce to nothing this essential,—happier far than miserable to have eternal being!—Or, if our substance be indeed divine, and cannot cease to be, we are at worst on this side nothing; and, by proof, we feel our power sufficient to disturb His heaven, and, with perpetual inroads, to alarm, though inaccessible, His fatal throne:—which, if not victory, is yet revenge!

VII.—SPEECH OF BELIAL DISSUADING FROM WAR.

I should be much for open war, O Peers, as not behind in hate, if what was urged main reason to persuade immediate war, did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast ominous conjecture on the whole success:—when he, who most excels in fact of arms, in what he counsels and in what excels mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair and utter dissolution; as the scope of all his aim, after some dire revenge. First, what revenge? The towers of heaven are filled with armèd watch, that render all access impregnable; oft on the bordering deep encamp their legions, or, with obscure wing, scout far and wide into the realm of night, scorning surprise. Or, could we break our way by force, and at our heels all hell should rise with blackest insurrection, to confound heaven's purest light; yet, our Great Enemy, all incorruptible, would on his throne sit unpolluted; and the ethereal mould, incapable of stain, would soon expel her mischief, and purge off the baser fire victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope is flat despair. We must exasperate the Almighty Victor to spend all his rage—and that must end us! that must be our cure, to be no more: sad cure! for, who would lose, though full of pain, this intellectual being? those thoughts that wander through eternity, to perish rather,—swallowed up and lost in the wide womb of uncreated night, devoid of sense and motion! And who knows, (let this be good,) whether our angry Foe can give it? or will ever? How He can is doubtful; that He never will is sure. Will He, so wise, let loose at once his ire,—belike through impotence, or unaware,—to give his enemies their wish; and end them in his anger, whom his anger saves to punish endless? "Wherefore cease we then?" say they who counsel war; "we are decreed, reserved, and destined to eternal woe: whatever doing, what can we suffer more? what can we suffer worse?" Is this then worst, thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms? What! when we iled amain, pursued and struck with Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought the deep to shelter us? this Hell then seemed a refuge from those wounds; or when we lay chained on the burning lake? that sure was worse. What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage, and plunge us in the flames? or, from above, should intermitted vengeance arm again his red

right hand to plague us? What if all her stores were opened, and this firmament of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,—impendent horrors, threatening hideous, fall one day upon our heads! while we, perhaps, designing or exhorting glorious war, caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurled, each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey of racking whirlwinds; and for ever sunk under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains,—there to converse with everlasting groans, unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved, ages of hopeless end! This would be worse! War, therefore, open or concealed, alike my voice dissuades.

VIII.—MAMMON'S ORATION.

Either to disenthrone the King of Heaven we war, (if war be best,) or to regain our own right lost: Him to unthrone, we then may hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield to fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife: the former vain to hope, argues as vain the latter: for, what place can be for us within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord supreme we overpower? Suppose He should relent, and publish grace to all, on promise made of new subjection; with what eyes could we stand in His presence humble; and receive strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne with warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing forced hallelujahs?—while He lordly sits our envied Sovereign; and his altar breathes ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers, our servile offerings! This must be our task in Heaven, this our delight; how wearisome, eternity so spent, in worship paid to whom we hate! Let us not then pursue, by force impossible, by leave obtained unacceptable, (though in Heaven,) our state of splendid vassalage; but rather, seek our own good from ourselves, and from our own live to ourselves, though in this vast recess; free, and to none accountable, preferring hard liberty before the easy yoke of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear then most conspicuous, when great things of small, useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse, we can create; and, in what place soe'er, thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain through labour and endurance. This deep world of darkness do we dread? How oft, amidst thick clouds and dark, doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire choose to reside, his glory unobscured, and, with the majesty of darkness' round, covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar, mustering their rage, and heaven resembles hell? As He our darkness, cannot we His light imitate when we please? This desert soil wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold; nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise magnificence; and what can Heaven show more? Our torments also may, in length of time, become our elements; these piercing fires, as soft as now severe; our temper changed into their temper;—which must needs remove the sensible of pain. All things invite to peaceful counsels, and the settled state of order; how, in safety, best we may compose our present evils, with regard of what we are and were,—dismissing quite all thoughts of war: ye have what I advise.

IX.—INTERVIEW OF SATAN WITH DEATH AND SIN BEFORE HELL GATES.

Before the gates, there sat on either side a formidable shape; the one seemed woman to the waist, and fair; but ended foul, in many a scaly fold, voluminous and vast,—a serpent arm'd with mortal sting! About her middle round, a cry of hell-hounds never ceasing barked with wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung a hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep, if aught disturbed their noise, into her womb, and kennel there; yet there still barked and howled, within unseen. The other shape,—if shape it might be called that shape had none distinguishable in member, joint, or limb; or substance might be called that shadow seemed, for each seemed either:—black it stood as

Night, fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell, and shook a dreadful dart. What seemed his head, the likeness of a kingly crown had on. Satan was now at hand; and from his seat the monster moving, onward came as fast with horrid strides: Hell trembled as he strode! The undaunted Fiend what this might be admired,—admired, not feared; God and his Son except, created thing nought valued he nor shunned; and with disdainful look thus first began.

"Whence, and what art thou, execrable Shape, that dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance thy miscreated front athwart my way to yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass, that be assured, without leave asked of thee: retire, or taste thy folly! and learn by proof, hell-born, not to contend with spirits of heaven."

To whom the Goblin full of wrath replied:—"Art thou that traitor Angel? art thou he, who first broke peace in heaven and faith, till then unbroken; and, in proud rebellious arms, drew after him the third part of heaven's sons conjured against the Highest?—for which both thou and they, outcast from God, are here condemned to waste eternal days in woe and pain? and reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of heaven, hell doom'd! and breath'st defiance here and scorn where I reign king; and, to enrage thee more, thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment, false fugitive! and to thy speed add wings; lest, with a whip of scorpions, I pursue thy lingering; or with one stroke of this dart strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape, so speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold more dreadful and deform: on the other side, incensed with indignation, Satan stood unterrified,—and like a comet burned, that fires the length of Ophiuchus huge in the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head level'd his deadly aim: their fatal hands no second stroke intend, and such a frown each cast at the other, as when two black clouds, with heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on over the Caspian; then stand front to front, hovering a space, till Winds the signal blow to join their dark encounter in mid-air; so frowned the mighty combatants, that hell grew darker at their frown! so matched they stood! for never but once more was either like to meet so great a foe. And now great deeds had been achieved, whereof all hell had rung; had not the snaky Sorceress that sat fast by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key, risen, and, with hideous outcry, rushed between.

X.—APOSTROPHE TO LIGHT.

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first born! or of the Eternal, coeternal beam:—may I express thee unblam'd? since God is light, and never, but in unapproachèd light, dwelt from eternity; dwelt then in thee, bright effluence of bright essence increate! Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream, whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun, before the heavens, thou wert; and, at the voice of God, as with a mantle didst invest the rising world of waters dark and deep, won from the void and formless infinite. Thee I revisit now with bolder wing, escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained in that obscure sojourn; while, in my flight, through utter and through middle darkness borne, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre, I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;—taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down the dark descent, and up to re-ascend, though hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe, and feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain to find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn; so thick a drop-serene hath quenched their orbs, or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more cease I to wander where the Muses haunt,—clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,—smit with the love of sacred song; but chief thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath, that wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget those other two

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

numberless were poured Cherub and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones, and Virtues, wingèd Spirits, and chariots wing'd from the armoury of God; where stand of old myriads between two brazen mountains lodged against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,—celestial equipage!—and now came forth spontaneous, (for within them spirit lived,) attendant on their Lord: Heaven opened wide her ever-during gates, (harmonious sound,) on golden hinges moving, to let forth the King of Glory, in his powerful Word and Spirit, coming to create new worlds. On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore they viewed the vast immeasurable abyss—outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,—up from the bottom turned by furious winds, and surging waves as mountains, to assault Heaven's height, and with the centre mix the pole. "Silence! ye troubled Waves, and thou Deep, peace!" said then the omnific Word; "your discord end." Nor stayed, but, on the wings of Cherubim uplifted, in paternal glory rode far into Chaos, and the World unborn; for Chaos heard his voice: Him all his train followed in bright procession, to behold Creation, and the wonders of his might. Then stayed the fervid wheels; and in his hand He took the golden compasses, prepared in God's eternal store, to circumscribe this universe and all created things: one foot He centred, and the other turned round through the vast profundity obscure; and said, "Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds; this be thy just circumference, O world!"

XIII.—MORNING HYMN OF ADAM AND EVE.

These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good; Almighty! Thine this universal frame, thus wondrous fair; Thyself how wondrous then! Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these heavens, to us invisible; or dimly seen in these Thy lowest works: yet these declare Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine. Speak, ye, who best can tell,—ye sons of light,—Angels! for ye behold Him; and with songs and choral symphonies, day without night, circle his throne, rejoicing. Ye, in heaven; —on earth, join, all ye Creatures, to extol Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without end. Fairest of stars! last in the train of night,—if better thou belong'st not to the dawn,—sure pledge of day! that crown'st the smiling morn with thy bright circlet,—praise Him in thy sphere, while day arises, that sweet hour of prime. Thou sun! of this great world both eye and soul, acknowledge Him thy greater; sound His praise in thy eternal course; both when thou climb'st, and when high noon hast gained, and when thou fall'st. Moon! that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st with the fixed stars,—fixed in their orb, that flies,—and ye five other wandering fires, that move in mystic dance—not without song,—resound His praise, who, out of darkness, called up light. Air, and ye elements! the eldest birth of Nature's womb; that, in quaternion, run perpetual circle, multiform; and mix and nourish all things;—let your ceaseless change vary to our great Maker still new praise. Ye mists and exhalations! that now rise from hill or steaming lake, dusky, or grey, till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,—in honour to the world's Great Author rise! whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky, or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,—rising or falling, still advance His praise. His praise, ye winds! that from four quarters blow, breathe soft, or loud! and wave your tops, ye pines! with every plant, in sign of worship, wave! Fountains! and ye that warble, as ye flow, melodious murmurs, warbling, tune His praise. Join voices, all ye living souls! Ye birds, that singing up to heaven-gate ascend, bear on your wings, and in your notes, His praise. Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk the earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep! witness if I be silent, morn or even, to hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade, made vocal by my song, and taught His praise. Hail, universal Lord! be bounteous still to give us only good: and if the night have gathered aught of evil or concealed, disperse it,—as now light dispels the dark.

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS FOR RECITATION.

I.—GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT.—Robert Browning.

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;
I galloped ! Dirok galloped ! we galloped all three !
"Good speed !" cried the Watch, as the gate-bolts undrew ;
"Speed !" echoed the wall, to us galloping through.
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast !

Not a word to each other ! we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place ;
I turned in my saddle, and made its girth tight ;
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right ;
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,—
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit !

'Twas moonset at starting ; but, while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew, and twilight dawned clear ,
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be ;
And from Mechlin church-steeple we heard the half-chime,—
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there is time !"

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past ;
And I saw my stout galloper, Roland, at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray ;

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;
And one eye's black intelligence—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, "Stay spur !
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her !
We'll remember at Aix !"—for one heard the quick wheese
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Loos and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky :
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our foot broke the brittle bright stubble, like chaff ;
Till, over by Dalhem, a dome-tower sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight !

How they'll greet us !"—And, all in a moment, his roan,
Rolled neck and crop over, lay dead as a stone !
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat,—each holster let fall,—
Shook off both my jack-boots,—let go belt and all,—
Stood up in the stirrup,—leaned, patted his ear,—
Called my Roland his pet name, my horse without peer !
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or good,
Till, at length, into Aix, Roland galloped and stood !

And all I remember is friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due, who brought good news from Ghent.

II.—SHERIDAN'S RIDE.—Thomas Buchanan Read.

Up from the south at break of day, bringing to Winchester fresh dismay, the affrighted air with a shudder bore, like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door, the terrible grumble and rumble and roar, telling the battle was on once more—and Sheridan twenty miles away! And wilder still those billows of war thundered along the horizon's bar; and louder yet into Winchester rolled the roar of that red sea uncontrolled, making the blood of the listener cold—as he thought of the stake in that fiery fray, with Sheridan *twenty* miles away! But there is a road from Winchester town, a good, broad highway leading down; and there, through the flash of the morning light, a steed as black as the steeds of night, was seen to pass as with eagle flight;—as if he knew the terrible need, he stretched away with the utmost speed; hills rose and fell—but his heart was gay, with Sheridan *fifteen* miles away! Still sprung from these swift hoofs, thundering South, the dust, like the smoke from the cannon's mouth, or the trail of a comet sweeping faster and faster; foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster: the heart of the steed and the heart of the master were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls, impatient to be where the battle-field calls; every nerve of the charger was strained to full play, with Sheridan only *ten* miles away! Under his spurning feet, the road like an arrowy Alpine river flowed; and the landscape sped away behind like an ocean flying before the wind; and the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire, swept on with his wild eyes full of fire: but, lo! he is nearing his heart's desire—he is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray, with Sheridan only *five* miles away! The first that the General saw, were the groups of stragglers, and then, the retreating troops!—What was done—what to do—a glance told him both; and striking his spurs, with a terrible oath, he dashed down the line 'mid a storm of huzzahs, and the wave of retreat checked its course there, because the sight of the master compelled it to pause. With foam and with dust the black charger was grey: by the flash of his eye, and his red nostril's play, he seemed to the whole great army to say, "I have brought you Sheridan, all the way from Winchester down to save the day!" Hurrah, hurrah for Sheridan! hurrah, hurrah for horse and man! and when their statues are placed on high under the dome of the Union sky,—the American soldier's Temple of Fame,—there with the glorious general's name, be it said in letters both gold and bright: "Here is the steed that saved the day by carrying Sheridan into the fight, from Winchester—twenty miles away!"

III.—PAUL REVERE'S RIDE.—Longfellow.

Listen, my children, and you shall hear of the midnight ride of Paul Revere, on the eighteenth of April, in 'Seventy-five; hardly a man is now alive who remembers that famous day and year. . . . . He said to his friend, "If the British march by land or sea from the town to-night, hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch of the North Church tower, as a signal light,—*one*, if by land, and *two*, if by sea; and I on the opposite shore will be,—ready to ride and spread the alarm through every Middlesex village and farm, for the country-folk to be up and to arm!" Then he said, "Good night!" and, with muffled oar, silently rowed to the Charlestown shore; just as the moon rose over the bay, where,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

of fear; a volce in the darkness, a knock at the door, and a word that shall echo for evermore! For, borne on the night-wind of the past, through all our history, to the last, in the hour of darkness and peril and need, the people will waken and listen to hear the hurrying hoof-beats of that steed, and the midnight message of Paul Revere!

IV.—THE BURIAL OF MOSES.—Mrs C. F. Alexander.

By Nebo's lonely mountain, on this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale, in the land of Moab there lies a lonely grave;
And no man knows that sepulchre, and no man saw it e'er;
For, the angels of God upturned the sod, and laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral that ever passed on earth;
But no man heard the trampling, or saw the train go forth—
Noiselessly, as the Daylight comes back when Night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek grows into the great sun.

Noiselessly, as the spring-time her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills open their thousand leaves;
So, without sound of music, or voice of them that wept,
Silently down from the mountain's crown, the great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle, on grey Beth-Peor's height,
Out of his lonely eyrie, looked on the wondrous sight;
Perchance the lion stalking still shuns that hallowed spot,
For, beast and bird have seen and heard that which man knoweth not!

But when the Warrior dieth, his comrades in the war,
With arms reversed and muffled drum, follow his funeral car;
They show the banners taken, they tell his battles won,
And after him lead his masterless steed, while peals the minute-gun.

Amid the noblest of the land we lay the Sage to rest,
And give the Bard an honoured place, with costly marble drest,—
In the great minster transept, where lights like glories fall,
And the organ rings, and the sweet choir sings, along the emblazoned wall.

This was the truest warrior that ever buckled sword;
This the most gifted poet that ever breathed a word;
And never earth's philosopher traced with his golden pen,
On the deathless page, truths half so sage as he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honour,—the hill-side for a pall?
To lie in state, while Angels wait, with stars for tapers tall?
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes, over his bier to wave!
And God's own hand, in that lonely land, to lay him in the grave!

In that strange grave without a name,—whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again, O wondrous thought! before the Judgment day,
And stand, with glory wrapt around, on the hills he never trod,
And speak of the strife that won our life, with the Incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land! O dark Beth-Peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours, and teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace, ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep of him He loved so well!

V.—GOUGAUNE BARRA.—Callanan.

There is a green island in lone Gougaune Barra,
Where Allua of songs rushes forth as an arrow;
In deep-valleyed Desmond:—a thousand wild fountains
Come down to that lake, from their home in the mountains;

And brightly the fire-crested billows are gleaming,
And wildly from Mullagh the eagles are screaming :—
Oh! where is the dwelling, in valley or high land,
So meet for a bard as this lone little island?

High sons of the lyre, oh! how proud was the feeling,
To think, while alone through that solitude stealing,
Though loftier minstrels green Erin can number,
I only awoke your wild harp from its slumber,
And mingled once more with the voice of those fountains
The songs even Echo forgot on her mountains;
And gleaned each grey legend, that darkly was sleeping
Where the mist and the rain o'er their beauty were creeping.

Least bard of the hills! were it mine to inherit
The fire of thy harp, and the wing of thy spirit,
With the wrongs which like thee to our country has bound me,
Did your mantle of song fling its radiance round me,
Still, still in those wilds might young Liberty rally,
And send her strong shout over mountain and valley:
The Star of the West might yet rise in its glory,
And the land that was darkest, be brightest in story.
I too shall be gone;—but my name shall be spoken
When Erin awakes, and her fetters are broken;
Some Minstrel will come, in the summer eve's gleaming,
When Freedom's young light on his spirit is beaming,
And bend o'er my grave with a tear of emotion,
Where calm Avon-Buee seeks the kisses of ocean;
Or plant a wild wreath, from the banks of that river,
O'er the heart, and the harp, that are sleeping for ever.

VI.—THE BATTLE OF MORGARTEN.—Mrs Hemans.

The wine-month shone in its golden prime, and the red grapes clustering hung; but a deeper sound, through the Switzer's clime, than the vintage music rung;—a sound, through vaulted cave,—a sound, through echoing glen, like the hollow swell of a rushing wave:—'twas the tread of steel-girt men! And a trumpet, pealing wild and far, 'mid the ancient rocks was blown, till the Alps replied to that voice of war with a thousand of their own. And, through the forest glooms, flashed helmets to the day; and the winds were tossing knightly plumes, like pine boughs in their play. In Hasli's wilds there was gleaming steel, as the host of the Austrian passed; and the Schreckhorn's rocks, with a savage peal, made mirth at the clarion's blast. Up 'midst the Righi snows, the stormy march was heard; with the charger's tramp, whence fire-sparks rose, and the leader's gathering word.

But a band,—the noblest band of all,—through the rude Morgarten strait, with blazoned streamers and lances tall, moved onwards in princely state. They came with heavy chains for the race despised so long—but, amidst his Alp domains, the herdsman's arm is strong! The sun was reddening the clouds of morn, when they entered the rock defile, and shrill, as a joyous hunter's horn, their bugles rung the while:—but, on the misty height, where the mountain people stood, there was stillness, as of night, when storms at distance brood. There was stillness, as of deep dead night, and a pause—but not of fear, while the Switzers gazed on the gathering might of the hostile shield and spear. On wound these columns bright, between the lake and wood; but they looked not to the misty height, where the mountain people stood. The pass was filled with their serried power, all helmed and mail-arrayed; and their steps had sounds like a thunder shower in the

rustling forest shade. There were prince and crested knight hemmed in by cliff and flood, ... when a shout arose from the misty height, where the mountain people stood! And the mighty rocks come bounding down, their startled foes among, with a joyous whirl from the summit thrown—oh! the herdsman's arm is strong! Like hunters of the deer, they stormed the narrow dell; and first in the shock, with Uri's spear, was the arm of William Tell! Oh! the sun in heaven fierce havoc viewed, when the Austrian turned to fly; and the brave, in the trampling multitude, had a fearful death to die! And the leader of the war at eve unhelmed was seen, with a hurrying step on the wilds afar, and a pale and troubled mien. But the sons of the land which the freeman tills, went back from the battle toil, to their cabin homes, 'mid the deep green hills, all burthened with royal spoil. There were songs and festal fires, on the soaring Alps that night, when children sprang to meet their sires, from the wild Morgarten fight!

VII.—KILLED AT THE FORD.—Longfellow.

He is dead!—the beautiful youth, the heart of honour, the tongue of truth,—he, the life and light of us all, whose voice was blithe as a bugle call; whom all eyes followed with one consent; the cheer of whose laugh, and whose pleasant word, hushed all murmurs of discontent. Only last night, as we rode along, down the dark of the mountain gap, to visit the picket-guard at the ford,—little dreaming of any mishap,—he was humming the words of some old song: "Two red roses he had on his cap, and another he bore at the point of his sword." Sudden and swift a whistling ball came out of a wood, ... and the voice was still! Something I heard in the darkness fall, and, for a moment, my blood grew chill; I spake in a whisper, as he who speaks in a room where some one is lying dead; but he made no answer to what I said! We lifted him up on his saddle again, and, through the mire, and the mist, and the rain, carried him back to the silent camp, and laid him, as if asleep, on his bed;—and I saw, by the light of the surgeon's lamp, two white roses upon his cheeks, and one just over his heart, blood-red! And I saw in a vision how far and fleet that fatal bullet went speeding forth, till it reached a town in the distant North,—till it reached a house in a sunny street,—till it reached a heart, that ceased to beat without a murmur, without a cry!—And a bell was tolled in that far-off town, for one who had passed from Cross to Crown!—— and the neighbours wondered that *she* should die!

VIII.—CURSE OF 'KEHAMA.—Southey.

I charm thy life from the weapons of strife, from stone and from wood, from fire and from flood, from the serpent's tooth, and the beasts of blood; from sickness I charm thee, and time shall not harm thee. but earth, which is mine, its fruits shall deny thee; and water shall hear me, and know thee, and fly thee; and the winds shall not touch thee when they pass by thee; and the dews shall not wet thee when they fall nigh thee: and thou shalt seek death to release thee, in vain; thou shalt live in thy pain! while Kehama shall reign with a fire in thy heart, and a fire in thy brain; and sleep shall obey me, and visit thee—never! and the curse shall be on thee for ever and ever!

IX.—THE DIRGE OF WALLACE.—Campbell.

They lighted a taper at dead of night, and chanted their holiest hymn; but her brow and her bosom were damp with affright, her eye was all sleepless and dim! and the Lady of Elderslie wept for her lord,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

"See yonder poor o'er-laboured wight, so abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth to give him . . . leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow-worm the poor petition spurn!
Unmindful though a weeping wife and helpless offspring mourn.

"If I'm designed yon Lordling's slave—by Nature's law designed—
Why was an independent wish e'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to his cruelty or scorn?
Or why has Man the will and power to make his fellow mourn?

"Yet let not this too much, my Son, disturb thy youthful breast;—
This partial view of human-kind is surely not the last!
The poor, oppressèd, honest man, had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense, to comfort those that mourn.

"O Death! the poor man's dearest friend, the kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my agèd limbs are laid with thee at rest!
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow, from pomp and pleasure torn!
But, oh! a bless'd relief to those that, weary-laden, mourn!"

XI.—FAREWELL TO CALEDONIA.—Robert Burns.

The gloomy night is gathering fast; loud roars the wild inconstant blast; yon murky cloud is foul with rain, I see it driving o'er the plain: the hunter now has left the moor, the scattered coveys meet secure,—while here I wander, pressed with care, along the lonely banks of Ayr! The Autumn mourns her ripening corn by early winter's ravage torn: across her placid, azure sky, she sees the scowling tempest fly: chill runs my blood to hear it rave; I think upon the stormy wave,—where many a danger I must dare, far from the bonnie banks of Ayr! 'Tis not the surging billow's roar, 'tis not that fatal, deadly shore; though Death in every shape appear, the wretched have no more to fear: but round my heart the ties are bound,—that heart transpierced with many a wound! These bleed afresh, those ties I tear, to leave the bonnie banks of Ayr! . . . Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales, her heathy moors and winding vales; the scenes where wretched fancy roves, pursuing past, unhappy loves! Farewell, my friends! Farewell, my foes! My peace with these, my love with those! The bursting tears my heart declare; farewell, the bonnie banks of Ayr!

XII.—ROB ROY'S GRAVE.—Wordsworth.

A famous man is Robin Hood, the English ballad-singer's joy! and Scotland has a thief as good, an outlaw of as daring mood; she has her brave Rob Roy! Then clear the weeds from off his grave, and let us chant a passing stave, in honour of that hero brave! Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart, and wondrous length and strength of arm; nor craved he more to quell his foes, or keep his friends from harm. Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave; as wise in thought, as bold in deed; for, in the principles of things, *he* sought his moral creed. Said generous Rob,—"What need of books? burn all the statutes and their shelves: they stir us up against our kind; and worse—against ourselves. And puzzled, blinded thus, we lose distinctions that are plain and few; these find I graven on my heart—*that* tells me what to do. The creatures see, of flood and field, and those that travel on the wind! with them no strife can last; they live in peace, and peace of mind. For why? because the good old rule sufficeth them, the simple plan,—that they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can! All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall by strength of prowess, or of wit; 'tis God's appointment who must sway, and who is to submit.

Since, then, the rule of right is plain, and longest life is but a day; to have my ends, maintain my rights, I'll take the shortest way." And thus among these rocks he lived, through summer's heat and winter's snow; the eagle, he was lord above, and Rob was lord below.

XIII.—THE SONG OF THE SWORD.—ANONYMOUS.

Weary, and wounded, and worn, wounded and ready to die,
A Soldier they left, all alone and forlorn, on the field of the battle to lie.
The dead and the dying alone could their presence and pity afford,
Whilst, with a sad and terrible tone, he sang . . . the Song of the Sword.

"Fight—fight—fight! though a thousand fathers die;
Fight—fight—fight! though a thousand children cry!
Fight—fight—fight! while mothers and wives lament;
And fight—fight—fight, while millions of money are spent.

"Fight—fight—fight! should the cause be foul or fair,
Though all that 's gained is an empty name, and a tax too great to bear:
An empty name, and a paltry fame, and thousands lying dead;
Whilst every glorious victory must raise the price of bread.

"War—war—war! fire, and famine, and sword;
Desolate fields and desolate towns, and thousands scattered abroad,
With never a home, and never a shed, whilst kingdoms perish and fall;
And hundreds of thousands are lying dead, . . . and all for nothing at all!

"War—war—war! musket, and powder, and ball—
Ah! what do we fight so for? ah! why have we battles at all?
'Tis Justice must be done, they say, the nation's honour to keep:
Alas! that Justice should be so dear, and human life so cheap!

"War—war—war! misery, murder, and crime
Are all the blessing I've seen in thee, from my youth to the present time.
Misery, murder, and crime—crime, misery, murder, and woe;
Ah! would I had known in my younger days half the horrors which now I know!"

Weary, and wounded, and worn, wounded and ready to die,
A soldier they left, all alone and forlorn, on the field of the battle to lie.
The dead and the dying alone could their presence and pity afford,
And thus with a sad and a terrible tone (oh would that these truths were more perfectly known!) he sang the Song of the Sword.

XIV.—THE BENDED BOW.—MRS HEMANS.

There was heard the sound of the coming foe, there was sent through the land a Bended Bow, and a Voice was poured on the free winds far, as the land rose up at the sign of war.

"Heard ye not the battle horn? Reaper! leave thy golden corn! leave it for the birds of heaven,—swords must flash, and shields be riven! leave it for the winds to shed—arm! ere stone and turf grow red!" and the Reaper armed like a foeman's son,—and the Bended Bow and the Voice passed on!

"Hunter! leave the mountain chase! take the falchion from its place; let the wolf go free to-day, leave him for a nobler prey! let the deer ungalled sweep by—arm thee! freedom's foes are nigh!" And the Hunter armed ere his chase was done,—and the Bended Bow and the Voice passed on!

"Chieftain! quit the joyous feast,—stay not till the song hath ceased! though the mead be foaming bright, though the fires give ruddy light, leave the hearth and leave the hall—arm thee! freedom's foes must fall." And the Chieftain armed, and the horn was blown,—and the Bended Bow and the Voice passed on!

"Prince! thy father's deeds are told in the bower, and in the hold! where the goatherd's lay is sung, where the minstrel's harp is strung! foes are on thy native sea—give our bards a tale of thee!" And the Prince came armed like a leader's son,—and the Bended Bow and the Voice passed on!

"Mother! stay thou not thy boy! he must learn the battle's joy; Sister! bring the sword and spear, give thy brother words of cheer; Maiden! bid thy lover part, freedom calls the strong in heart!" And the Bended Bow and the Voice passed on,—and the bards made song for a battle won!

XV.—THE SHIP ON FIRE.—Dr C. Mackay.

There was joy in the ship as she furrowed the foam,
For, fond hearts within her were dreaming of home.
The young mother pressed fondly her babe to her breast,
And sang a sweet song as she rocked it to rest;
"Oh, happy!" said she, "when our roaming is o'er,
We 'll dwell in a cottage, that stands by the shore!"

Hark! hark! what was that? Hark! hark to the shout!—
"Fire! fire!"—then a tramp, and a rush, and a rout;
And an uproar of voices arose in the air,
And the mother knelt down, and the half-spoken prayer
That she offered to God, in her agony wild,
Was, "Father, have mercy! look down on my child!"

Fire! fire! it is raging above and below;
And the smoke and hot cinders all blindingly blow:
The cheek of the sailor grew pale at the sight,
And his eyes glistened wild in the glare of the light.
The flames in thick wreaths mounted higher and higher!—
O God, it is fearful to perish by fire!

They prayed for the light, and, at noontide about,
The sun o'er the waters shone joyously out.
"A sail, ho! a sail!" cried the man on the lee;
"A sail!" and they turned their glad eyes o'er the sea.
"They see us! they see us! the signal is waved!
They bear down upon us!—thank God! we are saved!"

XVI.—THE PAUPER'S DRIVE.—Thomas Noel.

There 's a grim one-horse hearse in a jolly round trot!
To the churchyard a Pauper is going, I wot;
The road it is rough, and the hearse has no springs;
And hark to the dirge which the sad driver sings:

Rattle his bones over the stones!
He's only a pauper, whom nobody owns!

Oh, where are the mourners? Alas! there are none—
He has left not a gap in the world, now he 's gone—
Not a tear in the eye of child, woman, or man;
To the grave with his carcass as fast as you can!

What a jolting and creaking, and splashing and din!
The whip how it cracks, and the wheels how they spin!
How the dirt, right and left, o'er the hedges is hurled!
The pauper at length makes a noise in the world!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Soon hears his listening son the welcome sounds,
With open arms and sparkling eyes he bounds:—
"Speak low," he cries, and gives his little hand,
"Mamma's asleep upon the dew-cold sand.
Alas! we both with cold and hunger quake—
Why do you weep?—Mamma will soon awake."
"She'll wake no more!" the hopeless mourner cried,
Upturned his eyes, and clasped his hands, and sighed;
Stretched on the ground a while entranced he lay,
And pressed warm kisses on the lifeless clay;
And then upsprung with wild convulsive start,
And all the father kindled in his heart.
"O Heaven!" he cried, "my first rash vow forgive!
These bind to earth, for these I pray to live!"
Round his chill babes he wrapped his crimson vest,
And clasped them, sobbing, to his aching breast.

XVIII.—THE LESSONS OF THE BIRDS.—G. W. Doane.

What is that, mother?
The lark, my child!
The morn has but just looked out and smiled,
When he starts from his humble grassy nest;
And is up and away, with the dew on his breast
And a hymn in his heart, to yon pure bright sphere,
To warble it out in his Maker's ear.
Ever, my child, be thy morn's first lays
Tuned, like the lark's, to thy Maker's praise.

What is that, mother?
The dove, my son!
And that low, sweet voice, like a widow's moan,
Is flowing out from her gentle breast,
Constant and pure by that lonely nest,—
As the wave is poured from some crystal urn,—
For her constant dear one's quick return.
Ever, my son, be thou like the dove—
In friendship as faithful, as constant in love.

What is that, mother?
The eagle, boy!
Proudly careering his course of joy.
Firm on his own mountain-vigour relying,
Breasting the dark storm, the red bolt defying;
His wing on the wind, and his eye on the sun;
He swerves not a hair, but bears onward, right on.
Boy, may the eagle's flight ever be thine—
Onward and upward, true to the line.

What is that, mother?
The swan, my love!
He is floating down from his native grove:
No loved one now, no nestling nigh,—
He is floating down, by himself, to die!
Death darkens his eye, and unplumes his wings,
Yet the sweetest song is the last he sings.
Live so, my son, that when death shall come,
Swan-like and sweet, it may waft thee home.

XIX.—DEATH OF KING CONOR MAC NESSA.—T. D. Sullivan.

'Twas a day full of sorrow for Ulster when Conor Mac Nessa went forth
To punish the clansmen of Connaught, who dared to take spoil from the North;
For, his men brought him back from the battle, scarce better than one that was dead,
With the brain ball of Mesgedra* buried two-thirds of its depth in his head.
His royal physician bent o'er him, great Fingen, who, often before
Staunched the war-battered bodies of heroes, and built them for battle once more,
And he looked on the wound of the monarch, and heark'd to his low-breathèd sighs,
And he said, "In the day when that missile is loosed from his forehead, he dies.
"Yet long midst the people who love him King Conor Mac Nessa may reign,
If always the high pulse of passion be kept from his heart and his brain;
And for this I lay down his restrictions:—no more from this day shall his place
Be with armies, in battles, or hostings, or leading the van of the chase;
For if heart-thrilling joyance, or anger, awhile o'er his being have power,
The ball will start forth from his forehead, and surely he dies in that hour."
Oh! woe for the valiant King Conor, struck down from the summit of life
While glory unclouded shone round him, and regal enjoyment was rife—
Shut out from his toils and his duties, condemned to ignoble repose,
No longer to friends a true helper, no longer a scourge to his foes!
He, the strong-handed smiter of champions, the piercer of armour and shields,
The foremost in earth-shaking onsets, the last out of blood-sodden fields—
The mildest, the kindest, the gayest, when revels ran high in his hall—
Oh, well might his people, who loved him, feel gloomy and sad for his fall!
So years had passed over, when, sitting 'midst silence like that of the tomb,
A terror crept through, him as sudden the noonlight was blackened with gloom.
One red flare of lightning blazed brightly, illuming the landscape around!
One thunder-peal roared through the mountains, and rumbled and crashed underground!
He heard the rocks bursting asunder! the trees tearing up by the roots!
And loud, through the horrid confusion, the howling of terrified brutes.
From the walls of his tottering palace came screamings of terror and pain,
And he saw crowding thickly around him the ghosts of the foes he had slain!
And as soon as the sudden commotion that shuddered through nature had ceased,
The king sent for Barach, his druid, and said: "Tell me truly, O priest,

* The pagan Irish warriors sometimes took the brains out of champions whom they had slain, mixed them up with lime, and rolled them into balls, which they preserved as trophies. It was with one of these balls, which had been abstracted from his armoury, that Conor Mac Nessa was wounded.

What magical arts have created this scene of wild horror and dread?
What has blotted the blue sky above us, and shaken the earth that we
tread?
Are the gods that we worship offended? what crime or what wrong has
been done?
Has the fault been committed in Erin, and how may their favour be won?
What rites may avail to appease them? what gifts on their altars should
smoke?
Only say, and the offering demanded we lay by your consecrate oak."

"O King," said the white-bearded druid, "the truth unto me has been
shown,
There lives but *one* God, the Eternal; far up in high heaven is His throne.
He looked upon men with compassion, and sent from His kingdom of
light
His Son, in the shape of a mortal, to teach them and guide them aright.
Near the time of your birth, O King Conor, the Saviour of mankind
was born,
And since then in the kingdoms far eastward, He taught, toiled, and
prayed, till this morn,
When wicked men seized Him, fast bound Him with nails to a cross,
lanced His side,
And that moment of gloom and confusion was earth's cry of dread when
He died!

"O King, He was gracious and gentle, His heart was all pity and love,
And for men He was ever beseeching the grace of His Father above;
He helped them, He healed them, He blessed them; He laboured that
all might attain
To the true God's high kingdom of glory, where never comes sorrow
or pain;
But they rose in their pride and their folly, their hearts filled with
merciless rage,
That only the sight of His lifeblood fast poured from His heart could
assuage:
Yet while on the cross-beams uplifted, His body racked, tortured, and
riven,
He prayed—not for justice or vengeance, but asked that His foes be
forgiven."

With a bound from his seat rose King Conor, the red flush of rage on
his face;
Fast he ran through the hall for his weapons, and snatching his sword
from its place,
He rushed to the woods, striking wildly at boughs that dropped down
with each blow,
And he cried: "Were I midst the vile rabble, I'd cleave them to
earth, even so!
With the strokes of a high King of Erin, the whirls of my keen-
tempered sword,
I would save from their horrible fury that mild and that merciful Lord."
His frame shook and heaved with emotion; the brain-ball leaped forth
from his head,
And commending his soul to that Saviour, King Conor Mac Nessa fell dead.

XX.—THE DIVER.—SCHILLER. (*Translated by J. C. Mangan.*)

"Baron or vassal, is any so bold
As to plunge in yon gulf, and follow,
Through chamber and cave, this beaker of gold—
Which already the waters whirlingly swallow?

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

And lengthened and deep is the breath he draws,
  As he hails the bright face of the sun;
And a murmur goes round of delight and applause.
  He lives!—he is safe!—he has conquered and won!
He has mastered Charybdis's perilous wave!
He has rescued his life and his prize from the grave!

Now, bearing the booty triumphantly,
  At the foot of the throne he falls,
And he proffers his trophy on bended knee;
  And the king to his beautiful daughter calls,
Who fills with red wine the golden cup,
While the gallant stripling again stands up.

"All bail to the King! Rejoice, ye who breathe
  Wheresoever Earth's gales are driven!
For ghastly and drear is the region beneath;
  And let man beware how he tempts high Heaven!
Let him never essay to uncurtain to light
What destiny shrouds in horror and night.

"The maelstrom dragged me down in its course;
  When, forth from the cleft of a rock,
A torrent outrushed with tremendous force,
  And met me anew with deadening shock;
And I felt my brain swim and my senses reel,
As the double-flood whirled round me like a wheel.

"But the GOD I had cried to answered me
  When my destiny darkliest frowned,
And He showed me a reef of rocks in the sea,
  Whereunto I clung, and there I found
On a coral jag the goblet of gold,
Which else to the lowermost crypt had rolled. ——

"And the gloom through measureless toises under
  Was all in a purple haze;
And though sound was none in these realms of wonder,
  I shuddered when under my shrinking gaze
That wilderness lay developed, where wander
The dragon, the dog-fish, and sea-salamander.

"And there I hung, aghast and dismayed,
  Among skeleton larvæ; the only
Soul conscious of life—despairing of aid
  In that vastness untrodden and lonely.
Not a human voice—not an earthly sound—
But silence, and water, and monsters around!

"Soon one of these monsters approached me, and plied
  His hundred feelers to drag
Me down through the darkness; when, springing aside,
  I abandoned my hold of the coral crag,
And the maelstrom grasped me with arms of strength,
And upwhirled and upbore me to daylight at length."

Then spake to the page the marvelling king—
  "The golden-cup is thine own,
But—I promise thee further this jewelled ring,
  That beams with a priceless hyacinth stone,
Should'st thou dive once more, and discover for me
The mysteries shrined in the cells of the sea."

Now, the king's fair daughter was touched and grieved,
And she fell at her father's feet—
"O father! enough what the youth has achieved!
Expose not his life anew, I entreat!
If this your heart's longing you cannot well tame,
There are surely knights here who will rival his fame."

But the king hurled downwards the golden cup;
And he spake, as it sank in the wave—
"Now, should'st thou a second time bring it me up,
As my knight, and the bravest of all my brave,
Thou shalt sit at my nuptial banquet, and she
Who pleads for thee thus thy wedded shall be!"

Then the blood to the youth's hot temples rushes,
And his eyes on the maiden are cast,
And he sees her at first overspread with blushes,
And then growing pale and sinking aghast;
So, vowing to win so glorious a crown,
For life, or for death, he again plunges down!

The far-sounding din returns amain,
And the foam is alive as before,
And all eyes are bent downward. In vain! in vain!
The billows indeed re-dash and re-roar;
But, while ages shall roll, and those billows shall thunder
That youth shall sleep under!

XXI.—THE PILLAR TOWERS OF IRELAND.—D. F. McCarthy.

The pillar towers of Ireland, how wondrously they stand
By the lakes and rushing rivers, through the valleys of our land!
In mystic file, through the isle, they lift their heads sublime,
These grey old pillar temples—these conquerors of time!

Beside these grey old pillars, how perishing and weak
The Roman's arch of triumph, and the temple of the Greek,
And the gold domes of Byzantium, and the pointed Gothic spires:
All are gone, one by one, but the temples of our sires!

The column, with its capital, is level with the dust,
And the proud halls of the mighty, and the calm homes of the just;
For the proudest works of man, as certainly, but slower,
Pass like the grass at the sharp scythe of the mower!

But the grass grows again, when, in majesty and mirth,
On the wing of the Spring comes the Goddess of the Earth;
But for man, in this world, no spring-tide e'er returns
To the labours of his hands or the ashes of his urns!

How many different rites have these grey old temples known!
To the mind, what dreams are written in these chronicles of stone
What terror, and what error! what gleams of love and truth,
Have flashed from these walls since the world was in its youth!

Here blazed the sacred fire, and, when the sun was gone,
As a star from afar to the traveller it shone;
And the warm blood of the victim have these grey old temples drunk,
And the death-song of the Druid, and the matin of the Monk.

Here was placed the holy chalice that held the sacred wine,
And the gold cross from the altar, and the relics from the shrine,
And the mitre shining brighter with its diamonds than the East,
And the crozier of the Pontiff, and the vestments of the Priest!

Where blazed the sacred fire, rung out the vesper bell,—
Where the fugitive found shelter, became the hermit's cell;
And hope hung out its symbol to the innocent and good,
For the Cross o'er the moss of the pointed summit stood!

There may it stand for ever, while this symbol doth impart
To the mind one glorious vision, or one good throb to the heart;
While the breast needeth rest may these grey old temples last,
Bright prophets of the future, as preachers of the past!

XXII.—BARBARA FRITCHIE.—J. G. WHITTIER.

Up from the meadows rich with corn, clear in the cool September morn, the clustered spires of Frederick stand, green-walled by the hills of Maryland. Round about them orchards sweep,—apple and peach-tree fruited deep,—fair as a garden of the Lord to the eyes of the famished rebel horde; on that pleasant morn of the early fall, when Lee marched over the mountain-wall,—over the mountains winding down, horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars, forty flags with their crimson bars, flapped in the morning wind: the sun of noon looked down, and saw not one.—Up rose old Barbara Fritchie then, bowed with her fourscore years and ten; bravest of all in Frederick town, she took up the flag the men hauled down: in her attic window the staff she set, to show that one heart was loyal yet. . . . Up the street came the rebel tread, Stonewall Jackson riding ahead. Under his slouched hat, left and right, he glanced: the old flag met his sight. "Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast. "Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast. It shivered the window, pane and sash; it rent the banner with seam and gash. Quick as it fell from the broken staff, Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf; she leaned far out on the window-sill, and shook it forth with a royal will. "Shoot, if you must, this old grey head,—but spare your country's flag!" she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame, over the face of the leader came; the nobler nature within him stirred to life at that woman's deed and word. "Who touches a hair of yon gray head, dies like a dog! March on!" he said. . . . All day long through Frederick street sounded the tread of marching feet; all day long that free flag tossed over the heads of the rebel host. Ever its torn folds rose and fell on the loyal winds that loved it well; and, through the hill-gaps, sunset light shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Fritchie's work is o'er, and the Rebel rides on his raids no more. Honour to her!—and let a tear fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier. Over Barbara Fritchie's grave, flag of Freedom and Union wave! Peace, and order, and beauty, draw round thy symbol of light and law; and ever the stars above look down on thy stars below in Frederick town!

XXIII.—BEAUTIFUL SNOW.—SIGOURNEY.

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow! filling the sky and the earth below; over the housetops, over the street, over the heads of the people you meet, dancing, flirting, skimming along,—beautiful snow! it can do nothing wrong; flying to kiss a fair lady's cheek, clinging to lips in

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

now! My hand feels skilful, and the shadows lift from my waked spirit, airily and swift; and I could paint the bow upon the bended heavens—around me play colours of such divinity to-day! . . . . Ha! bind him on his back! Look!—as Prometheus in my picture here! Quick—or he faints!—stand with the cordial near! Now bend him to the rack! Press down the poisoned links into his flesh! and tear agape that healing wound afresh! . . . . So—let him writhe! How long will he live thus? Quick, my good pencil, now! What a fine agony works on his brow! Ha! grey-haired, and so strong! How fearfully he stifles that short moan! Gods! if I could but paint a dying groan! . . . . 'Pity' thee! So I do! I pity the dumb victim at the altar; but does the robed priest for his *pity* falter? I 'd rack thee, though I knew a thousand lives were perishing in thine! . . . . What were ten thousand to a fame like mine? . . . . 'Hereafter!' Ay, *hereafter!* A whip to keep a coward to his track! What gave Death ever from his kingdom back, to check the sceptic's laughter? Come from the grave to-morrow with that story, and I may take some softer path to glory. . . . . No, no, old man; we die e'en as the flowers, and we shall breathe away our life upon the chance wind, e'en as they. . . . . Strain well thy fainting eye; for when that blood-shot quivering is o'er, the light of heaven will never reach thee more. . . . . Yet there 's a deathless name—a spirit that the smothering vault shall spurn, and, like a stead-fast planet, mount and burn; and though its crown of flame consumed my brain to ashes as it won me, by all the fiery stars! I 'd pluck it on me. . . . . All, I would do it all, sooner than die, like a dull worm, to rot; thrust foully in the earth to be forgot. O heavens! but I appal your heart, old man! forgive—ha! on your lives let him not faint!—rack him till he revives! . . . Vain, vain, give o'er! His eye glazes apace. He does not feel you now. Stand back! I 'll paint the death dew on his brow. Gods! if he do not die but for one moment—one—till I eclipse conception with the scorn of those calm lips! Shivering! Hark! he mutters brokenly now—that was a difficult breath—another! Wilt thou never come, O Death? Look! how his temple flutters! Is his heart still? Aha! lift up his head! He shudders—gasps—Jove help him—so—HE 'S DEAD."

XXV.—THE FATE OF MACGREGOR.—JAMES HOGG.

"Macgregor! Macgregor! remember our foemen;
The moon rises broad from the brow of Ben-Lomond;
The clans are impatient, and chide thy delay;
Arise! let us bound to Glen-Lyon—away!"—
Stern scowled the Macgregor; then, silent and sullen,
He turned his red eye to the braes of Strathfillan:
"Go, Malcolm! to sleep let the clans be dismissed;
The Campbells this night for Macgregor must rest."—
"Macgregor, Macgregor, our scouts have been flying,
Three days, round the hills of M'Nab and Glen-Lyon;
Of riding and running such tidings they bear,
We must meet them at home, else they 'll quickly be here."—
"The Campbell may come, as his promises bind him,
And haughty M'Nab, with his giants behind him;
This night I am bound to relinquish the fray,
And do what it freezes my vitals to say.
Forgive me, dear brother, this horror of mind;
Thou know'st in the strife I was never behind,
Nor ever receded a foot from the van,
Or blenched at the ire or the prowess of man:

But I've sworn by the Cross, by my God, and my all!—
An oath which I cannot, and dare not recall—
Ere the shadows of midnight fall east from the pile,
To meet with a Spirit this night in Glen-Gyle.
"Last night, in my chamber, all thoughtful and lone,
I called to remembrance some deeds I had done,
When entered a Lady, with visage so wan,
And looks, such as never were fastened on man!
I knew her, O brother! I knew her full well!
Of that once fair dame such a tale I could tell
As would thrill thy bold heart; but how long she remained,
So racked was my spirit, my bosom so pained,
I knew not—but ages seemed short to the while!
Though, proffer the Highlands, nay, all the Green Isle,
With length of existence no man can enjoy,
The same to endure, the dread proffer I'd fly!
The thrice-threatened pangs of last night to forego,
Macgregor would dive to the mansions below! . . .
Despairing and mad, to futurity blind,
The present to shun and some respite to find,
I swore, ere the shadow fell east from the pile,
To meet her alone by the brook of Glen-Gyle.
"She told me, and turned my chilled heart to a stone,
The glory and name of Macgregor were gone;
That the pine, which for ages had shed a bright halo
Afar on the mountains of Highland Glen-Falo,
Should wither and fall, ere the turn of yon moon,
Smit through by the canker of hated Colquhoun:
That a feast on Macgregors each day should be common,
For years, to the eagles of Lennox and Lomond.
"A parting embrace, in one moment she gave;
Her breath was a furnace, her bosom the grave!
Then flitting illusive, she said, with a frown,
'The mighty Macgregor shall yet be my own!'"
"Macgregor, thy fancies are wild as the wind;
The dreams of the night have disordered thy mind,
Come, buckle thy panoply—march to the field!—
See, brother, how hacked are thy helmet and shield!
Ay, that was M'Nab, in the height of his pride,
When the lions of Dochart stood firm by his side.
This night the proud chief his presumption shall rue;
Rise, brother, these chinks in his heart-blood will glue;
Thy fantasies frightful shall flit on the wing,
When loud with thy bugle Glen-Lyon shall ring."
Like glimpse of the moon through the storm of the night,
Macgregor's red eye shed one sparkle of light:
It faded—it darkened—he shuddered—he sighed—
"No! not for the universe!" low he replied.
Away went Macgregor, but went not alone:
To watch the dread rendezvous, Malcolm has gone.
They oared the broad Lomond, so still and serene,
And deep in her bosom, how awful the scene!
O'er mountains inverted the blue waters curled,
And rocked them on skies of a far nether world.
All silent they went, for the time was approaching;
The moon the blue zenith already was touching;
No foot was abroad on the forest or hill,
No sound but the lullaby sung by the rill:
Young Malcolm, at distance couched, trembling the while—
Macgregor stood lone by the brook of Glen-Gyle.

Few minutes had passed, ere they spied on the stream
A skiff sailing light, where a Lady did seem;
Her sail was the web of the gossamer's loom,
The glowworm her wakelight, the rainbow her boom;
A dim rayless beam was her prow and her mast,
Like wold-fire at midnight, that glares on the waste.
Though rough was the river with rock and cascade,
No torrent, no rock, her velocity stayed;
She wimpled the water to weather and lee,
And heaved as if borne on the waves of the sea!
Mute Nature was roused in the bounds of the glen;
The wild deer of Gairtney abandoned his den,
Fled panting away, over river and isle,
Nor once turned his eye to the brook of Glen-Gyle!
The fox fled in terror; the eagle awoke
As slumbering he dozed on the shelve of the rock;
Astonished, to hide in the moonbeam he flew
And screwed the night-heaven, till lost in the blue!
Young Malcolm beheld the pale Lady approach—
The chieftain salute her, and shrink from her touch.—
He saw the Macgregor kneel down on the plain,
As begging for something he could not obtain;
She raised him indignant, derided his stay,
Then bore him on board, set her sail, and away!
Though fast the red bark down the river did glide,
Yet faster ran Malcolm adown by its side;
"Macgregor! Macgregor!" he bitterly cried;
"Macgregor! Macgregor!" the echoes replied.
He struck at the Lady, but strange though it seem,
His sword only fell on the rocks and the stream;
But the groans from the boat, that ascended amain,
Were groans from a bosom in horror and pain.
They reached the dark lake, and bore lightly away—
Macgregor is vanished for ever and aye!

XXVI.—COWPER'S GRAVE.—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

It is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's decaying—
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid their praying:
Yet let the grief and humbleness, as low as silence, languish!
Earth surely now may give her calm, to whom she gave her anguish.

O poets! from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing!
O Christians! at your Cross of Hope, a hopeless bard was clinging!
O men! this man, in brotherhood your weary paths beguiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while ye were smiling!

And now, what time ye all may read through dimming tears his story,
How discord on the music fell, and darkness on the glory,
And how when, one by one, sweet sounds and wandering lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face, because so broken-hearted:

He shall be strong to sanctify the poet's high vocation;
And bow the meekest Christian down in meeker adoration;
Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good forsaken,—
Named softly, as the household name of one whom God hath taken!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Being above all beings! Mighty One!
Whom none can comprehend and none explore;
Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone:
Embracing all—supporting—ruling o'er—
Being whom we call God—and know no more!

In its sublime research, philosophy
May measure out the ocean deep—may count
The sands, or the sun's rays; but, God! for Thee
There is no weight nor measure; none can mount
Up to thy mysteries. Reason's brightest spark,
Though kindled by Thy light, in vain would try
To trace Thy councils, infinite and dark;
And Thought is lost, ere Thought can mount so high,—
E'en like past moments in eternity.

Thou, from primeval nothingness, didst call
First chaos, then existence. Lord! on Thee
Eternity had its foundation; all
Spring forth from Thee; of light, joy, harmony,
Sole origin:—all life, all beauty Thine.
Thy word created all, and doth create;
Thy splendour fills all space with rays divine;
Thou art, and wert, and shalt be! Glorious! great!
Life-giving! life-sustaining Potentate.

Thy chains the unmeasured universe surround;
Upheld by Thee, by Thee inspired with breath!
Thou the beginning with the end hast bound,
And beautifully mingled life and death!
As sparks mount upwards from the fiery blaze,
So suns are born, so worlds spring forth, from Thee!
And, as the spangles, in the sunny rays,
Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry
Of heaven's bright army glitters in Thy praise.

A million torches, lighted by Thy hand,
Wander unwearied through the blue abyss;
They own Thy power, accomplish Thy command,
All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss.
What shall we call them? Piles of crystal light?
A glorious company of golden streams?
Lamps of celestial ether, burning bright?
Suns, lighting systems with their joyous beams?
But Thou to those art as the noon to night!

Yes! as a drop of water in the sea,
All this magnificence in Thee is lost;—
What are a thousand worlds compared to Thee?
And what am I, then? Heaven's unnumbered host,
Though multiplied by myriads, and arrayed
In all the glory of sublimest thought,
Is but an atom in the balance, weighed
Against Thy greatness—is a cypher, brought
Against infinity! What am I, then?—Nought.

Thou art! directing, guiding all, Thou art!
Direct my understanding, then, to Thee;
Control my spirit—guide my wandering heart;
Though but an atom 'midst immensity,
Still I am something fashioned by Thy hand.

I hold a middle rank, 'twixt heaven and earth;
On the last verge of mortal being stand,—
Close to the realm where angels have their birth,
Just on the boundary of the Spirit Land!

The chain of being is complete in me;
In me is matter's last gradation lost,
And the next step is Spirit—Deity!
I can command the lightning, and am dust!
A monarch, and a slave; a worm, a god:
Whence came I here? and how? so marvellously
Constructed and conceived!—Unknown! This clod
Lives surely through some higher energy;
From out itself alone, it could not be.

Creator, yes! Thy wisdom and Thy word
Created me. Thou source of life and good!
Thou Spirit of my spirit, and my Lord!
Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude,
Filled me with an immortal soul, to spring
Over the abyss of death; and bade it wear
The garments of eternal day; and wing
Its heavenly flight beyond the little sphere,
Even to its source, to Thee!—its Author, there!

O thoughts ineffable! O visions blest!
Though worthless our conception all of Thee,
Yet shall Thy shadowed image fill our breast,
And waft its homage to Thy Deity.
God! thus alone my lowly thoughts can soar;
Thus seek Thy presence. Being wise and good!
'Midst Thy vast works, admire, obey, adore;
And when the tongue is eloquent no more;
The soul shall speak, in tears of gratitude.

XXIX.—KING ROBERT OF SICILY.—LONGFELLOW.

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane, and Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine, apparelled in magnificent attire, with retinue of many a knight and squire, on St John's eve, at vespers, proudly sat, and heard the priests chant the Magnificat. And as he listened, o'er and o'er again repeated, like a burden or refrain, he caught the words, "*Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles;*" and slowly lifting up his kingly head, he to a learned clerk beside him said, "What mean these words?" The clerk made answer meet, "He has put down the mighty from their seat, and has exalted them of low degree." Thereat King Robert muttered scornfully, "'Tis well that such seditious words are sung only by priests, and in the Latin tongue; for unto priests and people be it known, there is no power can push me from my throne!" And leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep, lulled by the chant monotonous and deep.

When he awoke, it was already night; the church was empty, and there was no light, save where the lamps, that glimmered few and faint, lighted a little space before some saint. He started from his seat and gazed around, but saw no living thing and heard no sound. He groped towards the door, but it was locked; he cried aloud, and listened, and then knocked, and uttered awful threatenings and complaints, and imprecations upon men and saints. The sounds re-echoed from the roof and walls as if dead priests were laughing in their stalls!

At length the sexton, hearing from without the tumult of the knocking and the shout, and thinking thieves were in the house of prayer,

came with his lantern, asking, "Who is there?" Half choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said, "Open: 'tis I, the King! Art thou afraid?" The frightened sexton, muttering, with a curse, "This is some drunken vagabond, or worse!" turned the great key and flung the portal wide; a man rushed by him at a single stride, haggard, half-naked, without hat or cloak, who neither turned, nor looked at him, nor spoke, but leaped into the blackness of the night, and vanished like a spectre from his sight.

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane, and Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine, despoiled of his magnificent attire, bare-headed, breathless, and besprent with mire, with sense of wrong and outrage desperate, strode on and thundered at the palace gate; rushed through the court-yard, thrusting, in his rage, to right and left each seneschal and page, and hurried up the broad and sounding stair, his white face ghastly in the torches' glare. From hall to hall he passed with breathless speed; voices and cries he heard, but did not heed; until at last he reached the banquet-room, blazing with light, and breathing with perfume.

There, on the dais, sat another king! wearing his robes, his crown, his signet-ring, King Robert's self in features, form, and height, but all transfigured with angelic light! It was an Angel; and his presence there with a divine effulgence filled the air; an exaltation, piercing the disguise, though none the hidden Angel recognise.

A moment, speechless, motionless, amazed, the throneless monarch on the Angel gazed, who met his looks of anger and surprise with the divine compassion of his eyes; then said, "Who art thou? and why com'st thou here?" To which King Robert answered, with a sneer, "I am the King, and come to claim my own from an impostor, who usurps my throne!" And suddenly, at these audacious words, up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords; the Angel answered, with unruffled brow, "Nay, not the King, but the King's Jester! thou henceforth shalt wear the bells and scalloped cape, and for thy counsellor shalt lead an ape; thou shalt obey my servants when they call, and wait upon my henchmen in the hall!"

Deaf to King Robert's threats and cries and prayers, they thrust him from the hall and down the stairs; a group of tittering pages ran before, and as they opened wide the folding-door, his heart failed, for he heard, with strange alarms, the boisterous laughter of the men-at-arms, and all the vaulted chamber roar and ring with the mock plaudits of "Long live the King!"

Next morning, waking with the day's first beam, he said within himself, "It was a dream!" but the straw rustled as he turned his head; there were the cap and bells beside his bed; around him rose the bare discoloured walls; close by, the steeds were champing in their stalls; and in the corner, a revolting shape, shivering and chattering sat the wretched ape. It was no dream: the world he loved so much had turned to dust and ashes at his touch!

Days came and went; and now returned again to Sicily the old Saturnian reign; under the Angel's governance benign, the happy island danced with corn and wine; and deep within the mountain's burning breast, Enceladus, the giant, was at rest.

Meanwhile, King Robert yielded to his fate, sullen and silent and disconsolate. Dressed in the motley garb that Jesters wear, with looks bewildered and a vacant stare; close shaven above the ears, as monks are shorn; by courtiers mocked, by pages laughed to scorn; his only friend the ape, his only food what others left,—he still was unsubdued. And when the Angel met him on his way, and half in earnest, half in jest, would say, sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel the velvet scabbard held a sword of steel, "Art thou the King?" the passion of his woe burst from him in resistless overflow, and, lifting high his forehead, he would fling the haughty answer back, "I am, I am the King!"

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XXX.—THE BATTLE OF FONTENOY.—Thomas Davis.

Thrice, at the heights of Fontenoy, the English column failed,
And, twice, the lines of Saint Antoine, the Dutch in vain assailed:
For town and slope were filled with fort and flanking battery,
And well they swept the English ranks, and Dutch auxiliary.
As vainly, through De Barri's wood, the British soldiers burst,
The French artillery drove them back, diminished, and dispersed.
The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with anxious eye,
And ordered up his last reserve, his latest chance to try.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his generals ride!
And mustering come his chosen troops, like clouds at eventide.

Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread,
Their cannon blaze in front and flank, Lord Hay is at their head;
Steady they step a-down the slope—steady they climb the hill;
Steady they load—steady they fire, moving right onward still,
Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through a furnace blast,
Through rampart, trench, and palisade, and bullets showering fast;
And, on the open plain above, they rose, and kept their course,
With ready fire and grim resolve, that mocked at hostile force:
Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks—
They break, as broke the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean banks!

More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush around;
As stubble to the lava tide, French squadrons strew the ground;
Bomb-shell, and grape, and round-shot tore, still on they marched and fired—
Fast, from each volley, grenadier and voltigeur retired.
"Push on, my household cavalry!" King Louis madly cried:
To death they rush, but rude their shock—not unavenged they died.
On through the camp the column trod—King Louis turns his rein:
"Not yet, my liege," Saxe interposed, "the Irish troops remain;"
And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo,
Were not these exiles ready then, fresh, vehement, and true.

"Lord Clare," he says, "you have your wish, there are your Saxon foes!"
The Marshal almost smiles to see, so furiously he goes!
How fierce the look these exiles wear, who're wont to be so gay,
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in their hearts to-day—
The treaty broken, ere the ink wherewith 'twas writ could dry,
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines, their women's parting cry,
Their priesthood hunted down like wolves, their country overthrown,—
Each looks, as if revenge for all were staked on him alone.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet elsewhere,
Rushed on to fight a nobler band than these proud exiles were.

O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as, halting, he commands,
"Fix bayonets!—Charge!"—Like mountain storm, rush on these fiery bands!
Thin is the English column now, and faint their volleys grow,
Yet, must'ring all the strength they have, they make a gallant show.
They dress their ranks upon the hill to face that battle-wind—
Their bayonets the breakers' foam; like rocks, the men behind!
One volley crashes from their line, when, through the surging smoke,
With empty guns clutched in their hands, the headlong Irish broke.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that fierce huzza!
"Revenge! remember Limerick! dash down the Sassanach!"

Like lions leaping at a fold, when mad with hunger's pang,
Right up against the English line the Irish exiles sprang:
Bright was their steel—'tis bloody now! their guns are filled with gore,
Through shattered ranks, and severed files, and trampled flags they tore;

The English strove with desperate strength, paused, rallied, staggered, fled—
The green hill side is matted close with dying and with dead.
Across the plain, and far away, passed on that hideous wrack,
While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon their track.
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,
With bloody plumes the Irish stand—the field is fought and won!

XXXI.—THE BUILDING OF THE HOUSE.—Dr C. Mackay.

I have a wondrous house to build, a dwelling humble, yet divine; a lowly cottage to be filled with all the jewels of the mine. How shall I build it strong and fair, this noble house, this lodging rare,—so small and modest, yet so great? how shall I fill its chambers bare, with use, with ornament, with state? My God hath given the stone and clay; —'tis I must fashion them aright: 'tis I must mould them day by day, and make my labour my delight; this cot, this palace, this fair home, this pleasure house, this holy dome, must be in all proportions fit, that Heavenly Messengers may come to lodge with him who tenants it. No fairy bower this house must be, to totter at each gale that starts; but, of substantial masonry, symmetrical in all its parts; fit in its strength to stand sublime for seventy years of mortal time, defiant of the storm and rain; and well attempered to the clime, in every cranny, nook, and pane. I'll build it so, that if the blast around it whistle loud and long, the tempest, when its rage has passed, shall leave its rafters doubly strong. I'll build it so, that travellers-by shall view it with admiring eye, for its commodiousness and grace: firm on the ground—straight to the sky,—a meek but goodly dwelling-place!

Thus noble in its outward form, within I'll build it clean and white; not cheerless cold, but happy warm, and ever open to the light. No tortuous passages or stair, no chamber foul, or dungeon lair, no gloomy attic shall there be; but wide apartments ordered fair, and redolent of purity. With three compartments furnished well, the house shall be a home complete, wherein, should circumstance rebel, the humble tenant may retreat. The first, a room wherein to deal with men for human nature's weal;—a room where he may work or play, and all his social life reveal, in its pure texture day by day. The second, for his wisdom sought; where, with his chosen book or friend, he may employ his active thought to virtuous and exalted end. A chamber lofty and serene, with a door-window to the green smooth-shaven sward, and arching bowers, where lore or talk, or song between, may gild his intellectual hours. The third, an oratory, dim, but beautiful; where he may raise, unheard of men, his daily hymn of love, and gratitude, and praise;—where he may revel in the light of things unseen and infinite, and learn how little he may be—and yet, how awful—in thy sight, ineffable Eternity!

Such is the house that I must build: this is the cottage—this the dome—and this the palace, treasure filled for an immortal's earthly home. Oh! noble work of toil and care! oh! task most difficult and rare! oh! simple but most arduous plan, to raise a dwelling-place so fair—the sanctuary of man.

XXXII.—ENGLAND'S MESSAGE TO AMERICA.—M. F. Tupper

Ho! brother, I'm a Britisher, a chip of heart of oak,
That wouldn't warp, or swerve, or stir, from what I thought or spoke;
And you—a blunt and honest man, straightforward, kind, and true—
I tell you, Brother Jonathan, that you're a Briton too.

I know your heart—an open heart—I read your mind and will—
A greyhound ever on the start, to run for honour still;
And shrewd to scheme a likely plan, and stout to see it done—
I tell you, Brother Jonathan, that you and I are one!

There may be jealousies and strife—for men have selfish ends—
But petty quarrels ginger life, and help to season friends;
And pundits who, with solemn scan, judge humans most aright,
Decide it, testy Jonathan, that brothers always fight.

Two fledgeling sparrows in one nest will chirp about a worm;
Then how should eaglets meekly rest, the children of the storm?
No! while their rustled pinions fan the eyrie's dizzy side,
Like you and me, my Jonathan, it 's all for Love and Pride!

"God save the Queen" delights you still, and "British Grenadiers!"
The good old strains your heart-strings thrill, and catch you by both ears;
And we—oh, hate us if you can, for we are proud of you;
We like you, Brother Jonathan,—and "Yankee Doodle" too!

There 's nothing foreign in your face, nor strange upon your tongue;
You come not of another race, from baser lineage sprung;
No, brother! though away you ran, as truant boys will do,
Still true it is, young Jonathan, my fathers fathered you.

Time was—it wasn't long ago—your grandsire went with mine,
To battle traitors, blow for blow, for England's royal line;
Or tripped to court to kiss Queen Anne, or worship mighty Bess!
And you and I, good Jonathan, went with them then, I guess.

Together both—'twas long ago—among the Roses fought;
Or charging fierce the Paynim foe, did all knight-errants ought;
As Cavalier or Puritan together prayed or swore;
For John's own brother Jonathan, was only John of yore!

There lived a man, a man of men, a king on fancy's throne,
We ne'er shall see his like again, the globe is all his own;
And if we claim him of our clan, he half belongs to you—
For Shakespeare, happy Jonathan, is yours and Britain's too!

There was another glorious name, a poet for all time,
Who gained the double-first of fame, the beautiful sublime;
And let us hide him if we can, more miserly than pelf;
Our Yankee brother Jonathan cries "halves" in Milton's self.

O brother, could we both be *one*, in nation and in name,
How gladly would the very sun lie basking in our fame!
In either world to lead the van, and "go-ahead" for good,
While earth to John and Jonathan yields tribute gratitude!

Join but your stripes and golden stars to brave St George's cross,
And never dream of mutual wars, two dunces' mutual loss;
Let us two bless when others ban, and love when others hate,
And so, my cordial Jonathan, we 'll fit, I calculate!

What more? I touch not holier strings, a holier strain to win;
Nor glance at prophets, priests, and kings, or heavenly kith or kin;
As friend with friend, and man with man, O, let our hearts be thus—
As David's love to Jonathan, be Jonathan's to us!

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

XXXIV.—THE BRIDAL OF MALAHIDE.—GERALD GRIFFIN.

The joy-bells are ringing in gay Malahide,
The fresh wind is singing along the sea-side;
The maids are assembling with garlands of flowers,
And the harp-strings are trembling in all the glad bowers.

Swell, swell the gay measure! roll trumpet and drum!
'Mid greetings of pleasure in splendour they come!
The chancel is ready, the portal stands wide,
For the lord and the lady, the bridegroom and bride.

What years, ere the latter, of earthly delight,
The future shall scatter o'er them in its flight!
What blissful caresses shall fortune bestow,
Ere those dark flowing tresses fall white as the snow!

Before the high altar young Maud stands arrayed:
With accents that falter her promise is made—
From father and mother for ever to part,
For him and no other to treasure her heart.

The words are repeated, the bridal is done,
The rite is completed—the two, they are one;
The vow, it is spoken all pure from the heart,
That must not be broken till life shall depart.

Hark! 'Mid the gay clangour that compassed their car,
Loud accents in anger come mingling afar!
The foe 's on the border! his weapons resound
Where the lines in disorder unguarded are found!

As wakes the good shepherd, the watchful and bold,
When the ounce or the leopard is seen in the fold,
So rises already the Chief in his mail,
While the new-married Lady looks fainting and pale.

"Son, husband, and brother, arise to the strife,
For sister and mother, for children and wife!
O'er hill and o'er hollow, o'er mountain and plain,
Up, true men, and follow! let dastards remain!"

Farrah! to the battle!—They form into line—
The shields, how they rattle! the spears, how they shine!
Soon, soon shall the foeman his treachery rue—
On, burgher and yeoman! to die or to do!

The eve is declining in lone Malahide;
The maidens are twining gay wreaths for the bride;
She marks them unheeding—her heart is afar,
Where the clansmen are bleeding for her in the war.

Hark! loud from the mountain—'tis victory's cry!
O'er woodland and fountain it rings to the sky!
The foe has retreated! he flees to the shore;
The spoiler 's defeated—the combat is o'er!

With foreheads unruffled the conquerors come—
But why have they muffled the lance and the drum?
What form do they carry aloft on his shield?
And where does he tarry, the lord of the field?

Ye saw him at morning, how gallant and gay!
In bridal adorning, the star of the day;
Now, weep for the lover—his triumph is sped,
His hope it is over! the chieftain is dead!

But, O! for the maiden who mourns for that chief,
With heart overladen and rending with grief!
She sinks on the meadow:—in one morning-tide,
A wife and a widow, a maid and a bride!

Ye maidens attending, forbear to condole!
Your comfort is rending the depths of her soul!
True—true, 'twas a story for ages of pride;
He died in his glory—but, oh, he *has* died!

The war-cloak she raises all mournfully now,
And steadfastly gazes upon the cold brow;
That glance may for ever unaltered remain,
But the bridegroom will never return it again.

The dead-bells are tolling in sad Malahide,
The death-wail is rolling along the sea-side;
The crowds, heavy hearted, withdraw from the green,
For the sun has departed that brightened the scene!

How scant was the warning, how briefly revealed,
Before on that morning, death's chalice was filled!
Thus passes each pleasure that earth can supply—
Thus joy has its measure—we live but to die!

XXXV.—O'CONNOR'S CHILD.—CAMPBELL.

At bleating of the wild watch-fold, thus sang my love—"Oh, come with me: our bark is on the lake; behold, our steeds are fastened to the tree. Come far from Castle-Connor's clans: come with thy belted forester, and I, beside the lake of swans, shall hunt for thee the fallow-deer; and build thy hut, and bring thee home the wild-fowl and the honey-comb; and berries from the wood provide, and play my clarshech by thy side. Then come, my love!—How could I stay? our nimble stag-hounds tracked the way; and I pursued, by moonless skies, the light of Connocht Moran's eyes.

And fast and far, before the star of day-spring, rushed we through the glade, and saw, at dawn, the lofty bawn of Castle-Connor fade. Sweet was to us the hermitage of this unploughed, untrodden shore; like birds all joyous from the cage, for man's neglect we loved it more. And well he knew, my huntsman dear, to search the game with hawk and spear; while I, his evening food to dress, would sing to him in happiness. But, oh! that midnight of despair, when I was doomed to rend my hair: the night, to me, of shrieking sorrow! the night, to him, that had no morrow!

When all was hushed at even-tide, I heard the baying of their beagle: "Be hushed!" my Connocht Moran cried, "'tis but the screaming of the eagle." Alas! 'twas not the eyry's sound; their bloody bands had tracked us out; up-listening starts our couchant hound—and, hark! again, that nearer shout brings faster on the murderers! Spare—spare him! —Brazil!—Desmond fierce!—In vain—no voice the adder charms; their weapons crossed my sheltering arms: another sword has laid him low—another's and another's; and every hand that dealt the blow—ah me! it was a brother's! Yes, when his moanings died away, their iron hands had dug the clay, and o'er his burial-turf they trod, and I beheld—O God!—O God!—his life-blood oozing through the sod.

Dragged to their hated mansion back, how long in thraldom's grasp

I lay I knew not, for my soul was black, and knew no change of night or day. But heaven, at last, my soul's eclipse did with a vision bright inspire; I woke, and felt upon my lips a prophetess's fire. The standard of O'Connor's sway was in the turret where I lay; that standard, with so dire a look, as ghastly shone the moon and pale, I gave,—that every bosom shook beneath its iron mail. "And go!" I cried, "the combat seek; ye hearts, that, unappallèd, bore the anguish of a Sister's shriek, go!—and return no more! for sooner Guilt the ordeal-brand shall grasp unhurt, than ye shall hold the banner with victorious hand, beneath a Sister's Curse unrolled!—O stranger! by my country's loss! and by my love! and by the Cross! I swear I never could have spoke the curse that severed nature's yoke; but that a spirit o'er me stood, and fired me with the wrathful mood; and frenzy to my heart was given, to speak the malison of heaven!" They would have crossed themselves, all mute; they would have prayed to burst the spell; but, at the stamping of my foot, each hand down powerless fell! "And go to Athunree," I cried, "high lift the banner of your pride! but know, that, where its sheet unrolls, the weight of blood is on your souls! Go, where the havoc of your kern shall float as high as mountain-fern! Men shall no more your mansion know; the nettles on your hearth shall grow! Dead, as the green oblivious flood that mantles by your walls, shall be the glory of O'Connor's blood! Away! away to Athunree! where, downward when the sun shall fall, the raven's wing shall be your pall! and not a vassal shall unlace the vizor from your dying face!"

A bolt that overhung our dome, suspended till my curse was given, soon as it passed these lips of foam, pealed in the blood-red heaven. Dire was the look, that o'er their backs the angry parting brothers threw; but now, behold! like cataracts, come down the hills in view O'Connor's plumèd partisans—thrice ten Kilnagorvian clans were marching to their doom: a sudden storm their plumage tossed, a flash of lightning o'er them crossed—and all again was gloom!

XXXVI.—THE UNCLE.—H. G. Bell.

I had an Uncle once—a man of threescore years and three;—
And, when my reason's dawn began, he'd take me on his knee;
And often talk, whole winter nights, things that seemed strange to me.

He was a man of gloomy mood, and few his converse sought;
But, it was said, in solitude his conscience with him wrought;
And there, before his mental eye, some hideous vision brought.

There was not one in all the house who did not fear his frown,
Save I,—a little careless child,—who gambolled up and down;
And often peeped into his room, and plucked him by the gown.

I was an orphan and alone,—my father was his brother;
And all their lives I knew that they had fondly loved each other;
And in my Uncle's room there hung the picture of my Mother.

There was a curtain over it,—'twas in a darkened place,
And few or none had ever looked upon my Mother's face,
Or seen her pale expressive smile of melancholy grace.

One night—I do remember well,—the wind was howling high,
And through the ancient corridors it sounded drearily—
I sat and read in that old hall; my Uncle sat close by.

I read—but little understood the words upon the book;
For, with a sidelong glance, I marked my Uncle's fearful look,
And saw how all his quivering frame in strong convulsions shook.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

And mournful was their vigil on the beleaguered wall,
And dark their slumber,—dark with dreams of slow defeat and fall.
Yet a few hearts of chivalry rose high to breast the storm,
And one—of all the loftiest there—thrilled in a woman's form!

A woman, meekly bending o'er the slumber of her child,
With her soft, sad eyes of weeping love,—as the Virgin Mother's mild!
Oh! roughly cradled was thy babe, midst the clash of spear and lance,
And a strange wild bower was thine, young queen! fair Marguerite of France!

A dark and vaulted chamber, like a scene for wizard-spell,
Deep in the Saracenic gloom of the warrior citadel;
And there, 'midst arms, the couch was spread, and with banners curtained o'er,
For the daughter of the minstrel-land, the gay Provençal shore.

For the bright queen of St Lewis, the star of court and hall!
But the deep strength of the gentle heart wakes to the tempest's call.
Her lord was in the Paynim's hold, his soul with grief oppressed;
Yet calmly lay she, desolate, with her young babe on her breast!

There were voices in the city, voices of wrath and fear—
"The walls grow weak, the strife is vain—we will not perish here!
Yield! yield! and let the Crescent gleam o'er tower and bastion high!
Our distant homes are beautiful—we stay not here to die."

They bore those fearful tidings to the sad queen where she lay—
They told a tale of wavering hearts, of treason and dismay:
The blood rushed through her pearly cheek, the sparkle to her eye—
"Now call me hither those recreant knights from the bands of Italy!"

Then through the vaulted chamber stern iron footsteps rang;
And heavily the sounding floor gave back the sabre's clang.
They stood around her—steel-clad men, moulded for storm and fight;
But they quailed before the loftier soul in that pale aspect bright.

Yes! as before the falcon shrinks the bird of meaner wing,
So shrank they from the imperial glance of her—that fragile thing!
And her flute-like voice rose clear and high, through the din of arms around—
Sweet, and yet stirring to the soul, as a silver clarion's sound.

"The honour of the Lily is in your hands to keep,
And the banner of the Cross, for Him who died on Calvary's steep;
And the city which, for Christian prayer, hath heard the holy bell:—
And is it these your hearts would yield to the godless infidel?

"Then bring me here a breast-plate, and a helm, before ye fly,
And I will gird my woman's form, and on the ramparts die!
And the boy—whom I have borne for woe, but never for disgrace,—
Shall go within mine arms to death—meet for his royal race!

"Look on him as he slumbers in the shadow of the lance!
Then go, and, with the Cross, forsake the princely babe of France!
But tell your homes, you left one heart to perish undefiled;
A woman, and a queen, to guard her honour and her child!"

Before her words they thrilled, like hares when winds are in the wood;
And a deepening murmur told of men roused to a loftier mood.
And her babe awoke to flashing swords, unsheathed in many a hand,
As they gathered round the helpless one, again a noble band!

"We are thy warriors, Lady! true to the Cross and thee;
The spirit of thy kindling words on every sword shall be.
Rest, with the fair child on thy breast; rest—we will guard thee well.
St Denis for the Lily-flower and the Christian citadel!"

XXXVIII.—THE SHIPWRECK.—Lord Byron.

'Twas twilight! and the sunless day went down
  Over the waste of waters; like a veil
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown
  Of one whose hate is masked, but to assail.
Then to their hopeless eyes the Night was shown,
  And grimly darkled o'er their faces pale,
And the dim desolate deep: twelve days had Fear
Been their Familiar,—and now Death was here!

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—
  Then shrieked the timid, and stood still the brave—
Then some leaped overboard with dreadful yell,
  As eager to anticipate their grave;
And the sea yawned around her like a hell!
  And down she sucked with her the whirling wave;—
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
And strives to strangle him before he die!

And first one universal shriek there rushed,
  Louder than the loud ocean—like a crash
Of echoing thunder! and then . . . all was hushed,
  Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
Of billows: but, at intervals, there gushed,
  Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek—the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony!

XXXIX.—THERMOPYLÆ.—Lord Byron.

Clime of the unforgotten brave! whose land, from plain to mountain-cave, was Freedom's home, or Glory's grave! Shrine of the mighty! can it be that this is all remains of thee? Approach, thou craven crouching slave; say, is not this Thermopylæ? these waters blue that round you lave? Oh servile offspring of the free—pronounce what sea, what shore is this!—the gulf, the rock of Salamis! . . . These scenes, their story not unknown, arise, and make again your own; snatch from the ashes of your sires the embers of their former fires; and he who in the strife expires, will add to theirs a name of fear that Tyranny shall quake to hear; and leave his sons a hope, a fame, they too will rather die than shame! for, Freedom's battle once begun, bequeathed by bleeding Sire to Son, though baffled oft is ever won. Bear witness, Greece, thy living page: attest it, many a deathless age! While kings, in dusty darkness hid, have left a nameless pyramid, thy heroes—though the general doom hath swept the column from their tomb,—a mightier monument command, the mountains of their native land! There points thy muse to stranger's eye the graves of those that cannot die!

'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace, each step from splendour to disgrace; enough—no foreign foe could quell thy soul, till from itself it fell; yes! Self-abasement paved the way to villain bonds, and despot sway.

XL.—SONG OF OLD TIME.—Eliza Cook.

I wear not the purple of earth-born kings,
Nor the stately ermine of lordly things;
But monarch and courtier, though great they be,
Must fall from their glory, and bend to me.

My sceptre is gemless; yet who can say
They will not come under its mighty sway?
Ye may learn who I am;—there's the passing chime,
And the dial to herald me—Old King Time!

Softly I creep like a thief in the night,
After cheeks all blooming, and eyes all bright;
My steps are seen on the patriarch's brow,
In the deep-worn furrows, and locks of snow.
Who laugh at my power? The young and the gay:—
But they dream not how closely I track their way.
Wait till their first bright sands have run,
And they will not *smile* at what Time hath done.

I eat through treasures, with moth and rust:
I lay the gorgeous palace in dust;
I make the shell-proof tower my own,
And break the battlement, stone from stone.
Work on at your cities and temples, proud Man!
Build high as ye may, and strong as ye can;
But the marble shall crumble, the pillar shall fall,
And Time,—Old Time,—will be King, after all!

XLI.—JESSIE BROWN AT LUCKNOW.—G. VANDENHOFF.

O'er Lucknow's wall bursts war's red thunder-storm,
Round Lucknow's wall infuriate demons swarm;
Lucknow, with men where tender women share
The siege's horrors, battling 'gainst despair;
Where a brave few 'gainst baffled myriads strive,
Sworn not to yield, while but one man survive!
Fell hunger wastes their strength; nearer, each day,
The deadly mine works its insidious way;—
On all sides Death stares in their doomèd eyes,
Still each with each in patient courage vies:—
A few hours more must end their agonies!

A Scottish lassie, sair wi' toil oppressed,
Wrapt in her plaid, sinks down, worn out, to rest,
And says, with mind half-crazed, "Pray call me now,
As soon as Father comes home from the plough."
By night and day, with rare, unwearied zeal,
She 's cheered the soldiers, brought their scanty meal,
Borne orders to the walls, the wounded nursed,
With words of comfort slaked their dying thirst:—
Now, lies she hushed amid the battle's din,
And sleeps, as if on earth there were no sin!
In dreams she wanders o'er her native hills,
Lured by the strain that Scotia's children thrills;
And, as the much-loved notes all faintly rise,
They seem an angel-whisper from the skies!
Sudden, she starts from sleep, throws up her arms,
And listens, eager, through the war's alarms!
What new-born transport lights her sunken eye,
Flushing her pallid cheek with ecstasy?
Entranced awhile she stands, like one inspired,
Then, wild, as if by sudden frenzy fired,
"We 're saved!" she cries; "we 're saved! It is nae dream;
The Highland slogan! listen to it's scream!"
Then to the batteries with swift step she ran,
And, in a tone that thrills each drooping man,

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

brother should sail a painted boat. I'd dress my mother so grand and gay! and the baby should have a new toy each day. And I'd feed the hungry, and clothe the poor, and all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill, and saw Maud Müller standing still. "A form more fair, a face more sweet, ne'er hath it been my lot to meet. And her modest answer and graceful air, show her wise and good as she is fair. Would she were mine! and I to-day, like her a harvester of hay: no doubtful balance of rights and wrongs, and weary lawyers with endless tongues; but low of cattle, and song of birds, and health of quiet and loving words." Then he thought of his sisters, proud and cold; and his mother, vain of her rank and gold. So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on, and Maud was left in the field alone. But the lawyers smiled that afternoon, when he hummed in court an old love tune;—and the young girl mused beside the well, till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower, who lived for fashion, as he for power. Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow, be watched a picture come and go: and sweet Maud Müller's hazel eyes looked out in their innocent surprise. Oft when the wine in his glass was red, he longed for the wayside-well instead; and closed his eyes on his garnished rooms, to dream of meadows and clover blooms. And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain: "Ah, that I were free again! free as when I rode that day, where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor, and many children played round her door. But care and sorrow, and household pain, left their traces on heart and brain. And oft, when the summer-sun shone hot on the new-mown hay in the meadow lot, in the shade of the apple-tree, again she saw a Rider draw his rein; and, gazing down with timid grace, she felt his pleased eyes read her face. Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls stretched away into stately halls; the weary wheel to a spinnet turned, the tallow candle an astral burned; and, for him who sat by the chimney lug, dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug, a manly form at her side she saw,—and joy was duty, and love was law! . . . Then, she took up her burden of life again, saying only, "It might have been!"

Alas! for Maiden, alas! for Judge; for rich repiner and household drudge! God pity them both! and pity us all, who vainly the dreams of youth recall. For, of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: "It might have been!" Ah, well for us all some sweet hope lies deeply buried from human eyes; and, in the Hereafter, angels may roll the stone from its grave away!

XLIII.—AN OLD MAN'S IDYL.—RICHARD REALF.

By the Waters of Life we sat together, hand in hand, in the golden days
Of the beautiful early summer weather, when skies were purple and breath was praise;
When the heart kept tune to the carol of birds, and the birds kept tune to the songs, which ran
Through shimmer of flowers on grassy swards, and trees with voices Æolian.

By the Rivers of Life we walked together, I and my darling, unafraid;
And lighter than any linnet's feather the burdens of Being on us weighed.
And love's sweet miracles o'er us threw mantles of joy, outlasting Time;
And up from the rosy morrows grew a sound that seemed like a marriage-chime.

In the Gardens of Life we strayed together, and the luscious apples
were ripe and red ;
And the languid lilac and honeyed heather swooned with the fragrance
which they shed.
And under the trees the Angels walked ; and, up in the air, a sense of
wings
Awed us tenderly, while we talked softly in sacred communings.

In the Meadows of Life we strayed together, watching the waving
harvest grow ;
And, under the benison of the Father, our hearts, like the lambs, skipped
to and fro.
And the cowslips, hearing our low replies, broidered fairer the emerald
banks :
And glad tears shone in the daisies' eyes, and the timid violet glistened
thanks.

Who was with us, and what was round us, neither myself nor my
darling guessed ;
Only we knew that something crowned us, out from the heavens, with
crowns of rest ;
Only we knew that something bright lingered lovingly where we stood ;
Clothed with the incandescent light of something higher than human-
hood !

O the riches love doth inherit ! Ah ! the alchemy which doth change
Dross of body and dregs of spirit, into sanctities rare and strange !
My flesh is feeble and dry and old—my darling's beautiful hair is grey ;
But our elixir and precious gold laugh at the footsteps of decay.

Harms of the world have come unto us, cups of sorrow we yet shall
drain ;
But we have a secret, which doth show us wonderful rainbows in the
rain.
And we hear the tread of the years move by, and the sun is setting
behind the hills ;
But my darling does not fear to die, and I am happy in what God wills !

So we sit by our household fires together, dreaming the dreams of long
ago ;—
Then, it was balmy summer weather ; and now, the valleys are laid in
snow :
Icicles hang from the slippery eaves, the wind blows cold, 'tis growing
late ; . . .
Well, well ! we have garnered all our sheaves, I and my darling—and
we wait !

XLIV.—THE BLACK REGIMENT.—GEORGE H. BOKER.

Dark as the clouds of even, ranked in the western heaven, waiting the breath that lifts all the dread mass, and drifts tempest and falling brand over a ruined land; so, still and orderly, arm to arm, knee to knee, waiting the great event, stands the Black Regiment. Down the long dusky line, teeth gleam, and eyeballs shine; and the bright bayonet, bristling and firmly set, flashed with a purpose grand; long ere the sharp command of the fierce rolling drum told them their time had come,—told them that work was sent for the Black Regiment. "Now," the flag-sergeant cried, "though death and doom betide, let the whole nation see if we are fit to be free in this land; or bound down, like the whining hound,—bound, with red stripes of pain, in our old chains again!" Oh, what a shout there went from the Black Regiment.—
"Charge!" Trump and drum awoke, onward the bondmen broke;

bayonet and sabre-stroke vainly opposed their rush. Through the wild battle's crush, with but one thought aflush, driving their lords like chaff, in the guns' mouths they laugh; or at the slippery brands leaping with open hands, down they tear man and horse, down in their awful course; trampling, with bloody heel, over the crashing steel; all their eyes forward bent, rushed the Black Regiment.

"Freedom!" their battle-cry,—"Freedom! or leave to die!" . . . Ah! and they meant the word, not as with us 'tis heard,—not a mere party shout: they gave their spirits out; trusting the end to God! and on the gory sod, rolled in triumphant blood: glad to strike one free blow, whether for weal or woe; glad to breathe one free breath, though on the lips of death. Praying—alas! in vain!—that they might fall again, so they could once more see that burst to liberty! This was what "freedom" lent to the Black Regiment. . . . Hundreds on hundreds fell; but they are resting well; scourges and shackles strong never shall do them wrong. Oh, to the living few, soldiers, be just and true! hail them as comrades tried; fight with them side by side; never, in field or tent, scorn the Black Regiment!

XLV.—OUR FOLKS.—ETHEL LYNN.

"Hi! Harry! halt a breath, and tell a comrade just a thing or two;
You 've been on furlough? been to see how all the folks in Jersey do?—
It 's long ago since I was there,—I, and a bullet from Fair Oaks:—
When you were home, old comrade, say, did you see any of 'our folks?'

"You did? Shake hands. That warms my heart; for, if I do look grim
and rough,
I 've got a feeling! People think a soldier's heart is nought but
toughsome
But, Harry, when the bullets fly, and hot saltpetre flames and smokes,
While whole battalions lie a-field, one 's apt to think about his 'folks.'

"And so you saw them—when? and where? The Old Man—is he hearty
yet?
And Mother—does she fade at all? or does she seem to pine and fret
For me? And Sis—has she grown tall? And did you see her friend—
you know
That Annie Moss— How this pipe chokes!—Where did you see her?
Tell me, Hal, a lot of news about 'our folks.'

"You saw them in the church, you say; it 's likely, for they 're always
there.
Not Sunday? No?—A funeral? Who? Who, Harry?—How you
shake and stare!
All well, you say, and all were out—What ails you, Hal? Is this a
hoax?
Why don't you tell me, like a man, what is the matter with 'our
folks?'"

"I said all well, old comrade—true; I say all well; for He knows best
Who takes the young ones in His arms before the sun goes to the west.
Death deals at random, right and left, and flowers fall as well as oaks;
And so—fair Annie blooms no more! and that 's the matter with your
'folks.'

"But see, this curl was kept for you; and this white blossom from her
breast;
And look, your sister Bessie wrote this letter, telling all the rest.
Bear up, old friend!" . . . Nobody speaks; only the old camp-raven
croaks,
And soldiers whisper:—"Boys, be still; there 's some bad news from
Granger's 'folks.'

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

sung when the wine went round, you wouldn't have guessed that ever I, sir, should be straying from door to door, with fiddle and dog, ragged and penniless,—and playing to you to-night for a glass of grog! . . . She's married since,—a parson's wife: 'twas better for her that we should part,—better the soberest, prosiest life than a blasted home and a broken heart. I have seen her? Once: I was weak and spent, on a dusty road: a carriage stopped: but little she dreamed, as on she went, who kissed the coin that her fingers dropped!

You 've set me talking, sir; I 'm sorry!—it makes me wild to think of the change! What do you care for a beggar's story? Is it amusing? you find it strange? I had a mother so proud of me! 'Twas well she died before—— do you know if the happy spirits in heaven can see the ruin and wretchedness here below? Another glass, and strong! to deaden this pain; then Roger and I will start. I wonder, has he such a lumpish, leaden, aching thing in place of a heart? He is sad sometimes, and would weep, if he could; no doubt, remembering things that were—a virtuous kennel, with plenty of food, and himself a sober, respectable cur. . . . I 'm better now; that glass was warming,—You rascal! limber your lazy feet! we must be fiddling and performing for supper and bed, or starve in the street.—Not a very gay life to lead, you think? But soon we shall go where lodgings are free, and the sleepers need neither victuals nor drink;—the sooner, the better—for Roger and me!

XLVII.—ANNABEL LEE.—EDGAR ALLAN POE.

It was many and many a year ago, in a kingdom by the Sea, that a Maiden there lived, whom you may know by the name of Annabel Lee; and this Maiden she lived with no other thought, than to love, and be loved, by me! *I* was a child, and *she* was a child, in this kingdom by the Sea; but we loved with a love that was more than love,—I and my Annabel Lee; with a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven coveted her and me! And this was the reason that, long ago, in this kingdom by the Sea, a wind blew out of a cloud, chilling my beautiful Annabel Lee; so that her high-born kinsmen came, and bore her away from me, to shut her up in a sepulchre—in this kingdom by the Sea. The Angels, not half so happy in heaven, went envying her and me; yes! that was the reason (as all men know, in this kingdom by the Sea) that the Wind came out of the cloud by night, chilling and killing my Annabel Lee. But our love it was stronger by far than the love of those who are older than we—of many far wiser than we; and neither the Angels, in heaven above,—nor the Demons, down under the sea,—can ever dissever my soul, from the soul of the beautiful Annabel Lee! For, the moon never beams without bringing me dreams of the beautiful Annabel Lee; and the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes of the beautiful Annabel Lee; and so, all the night tide, I lie down by the side of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride; in her sepulchre there by the Sea,—in her tomb by the sounding Sea!

XLVIII.—THE BURIAL OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.—FELICIA HEMANS.

Lowly upon his bier the royal Conqueror lay;
Baron and chief stood near,—silent, in war array.
Down the long minster's aisle, crowds mutely gazing streamed;
Altar and tomb the while through mists of incense gleamed.
And, by the torches' blaze, the stately Priest had said
High words of power and praise, to the glory of the dead.
—They lowered him, with the sound of requiems, to repose;
When, from the throngs around, a solemn voice arose:

"Forbear! forbear!" it cried, "in the holiest name, forbear!
He hath conquered regions wide, but he shall not slumber *there!*
By the violated hearth, which made way for yon proud shrine;
By the harvests which this earth hath borne for me and mine;
By the house e'en here o'erthrown, on my brethren's native spot;—
Hence with his dark renown, cumber our birth-place not!
Will my sire's unransomed field, o'er which your censers wave,
To the buried spoiler yield soft slumbers in the grave?
The tree before him fell which we cherished many a year,
But its deep root yet shall swell, and heave against his bier.
The land that I have tilled hath yet its brooding breast,
With my home's white ashes filled,—and it shall not give him rest!
Each pillar's massy bed hath been wet by weeping eyes;
Away! bestow your dead where no wrong against him cries."

Shame glowed on each dark face of those proud and steel-girt men,
And they bought with gold a place for their leader's dust e'en then—
A little earth for him whose banner flew so far!
And a peasant's tale could dim the name—a nation's star!
One deep voice thus arose from a heart which wrongs had riven:
Oh! who shall number those that were but heard in heaven?

XLIX.—THE HERITAGE.—LOWELL.

The Rich Man's Son inherits lands, and piles of brick, and stone, and gold; and he inherits soft white hands, and tender flesh that fears the cold—nor dares to wear a garment old: a heritage, it seems to me, one scarce would wish to hold in fee. The Rich Man's Son inherits cares: the bank may break—the factory burn; a breath may burst his bubble shares; and soft white hands could hardly earn a living that would serve his turn. The Rich Man's Son inherits wants: his stomach craves for dainty fare; with sated heart, he hears the pants of toiling hinds, with brown arms bare—and wearies in his easy-chair.

What doth the Poor Man's Son inherit? Stout muscles, and a sinewy heart, a hardy frame, a hardier spirit; King of two hands, he does his part in every useful toil and art: a heritage, it seems to me, a King might wish to hold in fee. What doth the Poor Man's Son inherit? Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things; a rank adjudged by toil-won merit, content that from employment springs, a heart that in his labour sings! What doth the Poor Man's Son inherit? A patience learnt of being poor; courage, if sorrow come, to bear it: a fellow-feeling that is sure to make the Outcast bless his door.

Oh! Rich Man's Son, there is a toil that with all others level stands; large charity doth never soil, but only whiten, soft white hands—this is the best crop from thy lands. A heritage, it seems to me, worth being rich to hold in fee. . . . Oh! Poor Man's Son, scorn not thy state; there is worse weariness than thine, in merely being rich and great; toil only gives the soul to shine, and makes rest fragrant and benign! Both, heirs to some six feet of sod, are equal in the earth at last; both children of the same great God! Prove title to your heirship vast by record of a well-spent past. A heritage, it seems to me, well worth a life to hold in fee!

L.—WHAT IS TIME?—MARSDEN.

I asked an aged Man, with hoary hairs,
Wrinkled, and curved with worldly cares;
"Time is the warp of life," he said; "oh, tell
The young, the fair, the gay, to weave it well!"

I asked the ancient, venerable Dead,
Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled;
From the cold grave a hollow murmur flowed,
"Time sowed the seed we reap in this abode!"

I asked a dying Sinner, ere the tide
Of life had left his veins; "Time!" he replied;
"I've lost it! ah, the treasure!"—and he died.

I asked the golden sun and silver spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years;
They answered, "Time is but a meteor glare,"
And bade me for Eternity prepare."

I asked the Seasons, in their annual round
Which beautify or desolate the ground;
And they replied (no oracle more wise),
"'Tis Folly's blank, and Wisdom's highest prize!"

I asked a Spirit lost,—but oh! the shriek
That pierced my soul! I shudder while I speak,—
It cried, "A particle! a speck! a mite
Of endless years, duration infinite!"

Of things inanimate, my dial I
Consulted, and it made me this reply,—
"Time is the season fair of living well,
The path of glory, or the path of hell."

I asked my Bible, and methinks it said,
"Time is the present hour, the past is fled;
Live! live to-day! to-morrow never yet
On any human being rose or set."

I asked Old Father Time himself at last;
But in a moment he flew swiftly past.—
His chariot was a cloud, the viewless wind
His noiseless steeds, which left no trace behind.

I asked the mighty Angel, who shall stand
One foot on sea, and one on solid land;
"Mortal!" he cried, "the mystery now is o'er;
Time was,—Time is,—but Time shall be no more!"

LI.—THE SLEEP.—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Of all the thoughts of God, that are born inward into souls afar, along the Psalmist's music deep, now tell me if that any is, for gift or grace surpassing this—"He giveth His belovèd, sleep?" What would we give to our belov'd? The hero's heart to be unmoved,—the poet's star-tuned heart to sweep,—the patriot's voice to teach and rouse,—the monarch's crown to light the brows:—"He giveth His belov d, sleep." What do we give to our belov'd? A little faith all undisproved, a little dust to over weep; and bitter memories, to make the whole earth blasted for our sake. "He giveth His belovèd, sleep."

"Sleep soft, belov'd!" we sometimes say, who have no tune to charm away sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:—but, never doleful dream again shall break the happy slumber, when "He giveth His beloved, sleep!"... O earth, so full of dreary noises! O men, with wailing in your voices! O delvèd gold, the wailer's heap! O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall! God strikes a silence through you all, and giveth His belovèd, sleep! His dews drop mutely on the hill,—His cloud

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Your nobles in their ancient halls are hunted down and slain;
In convent cells and holy shrines, the blood is poured like rain;
The peasant's vine is rooted up, his cottage given to flame;
His son is to the scaffold sent, his daughter driven to shame;
With torch in hand, and hate in heart, the rebel host is nigh;
Up, up for France! the time is come, for France to live or die."

And through the night, on foot and horse, the sleepless summons flew,
And morning saw the Lily-flag wide-waving o'er Poitou;
And many an ancient musketoon was taken from the wall,
And many a jovial hunter's steed was harnessed in the stall;
And many a noble's armoury gave up the sword and spear,
And many a bride, and many a babe, were left with kiss and tear;
And many a homely peasant bade "farewell" to his old "dame;"
As in the days, when France's king unfurled the Oriflame.

We marched by tens of thousands! we marched through day and night!
The Lily standard in our front, like Israel's holy light:
Around us rushed the rebels, as the wolf upon the sheep;
We burst upon their columns, as the lion roused from sleep;
We tore the bayonets from their hands, we slew them at their guns;
Their boasted horsemen flew like chaff before our forest-sons;
That eve, we heaped their baggage high, their lines of dead between,
And, in the centre, blazed to heaven their blood-dyed guillotine!

In vain they hid their heads in walls: we rushed on stout Thouar,—
What cared we for its shot or shell, for battlement or bar?
We burst its gates; then, like the wind, we rushed on Fontenaye—
We saw its flag at morning's light—'twas ours by setting day!
We crushed, like ripened grapes, Montreuil, we tore down old Vetier—
We charged them with our naked breasts, and took them with a cheer.
We 'll hunt the robbers through the land, from Seine to sparkling Rhone.
Now, "Here 's a health to all we love! Our king shall have his own."

LIV.—MARSTON MOOR.—W. M. PRAED.

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas; the clarion's note is high!
To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas; the big drum makes reply!
Ere this, hath Lucas marched, with his gallant cavaliers,
And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter in our ears.
To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas! White Guy is at the door,
And the raven whets his beak o'er the field of Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken prayer,
And she brought a silken banner down the narrow turret-stair;
Oh! many were the tears that those radiant eyes had shed,
As she traced the bright word "Glory," in the gay and glancing thread;
And mournful was the smile which o'er those lovely features ran,
As she said: "It is your lady's gift; unfurl it in the van!"

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and boldest ride,
'Midst the steel-clad files of Skippon, the black dragoons of Pride;
The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sicklier qualm,
And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm,
When they see my lady's gewgaw flaunt proudly on their wing,
And hear her loyal soldiers shout, "For God and for the King!"

'Tis soon! The ranks are broken! along the royal line
They fly, the braggarts of the court! the bullies of the Rhine!
Stout Langdale's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is down,
And Rupert sheathes his rapier with a curse and with a frown;
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their flight,
"The German boar had better far have supped in York to-night."

The knight is left alone, his steel-cap cleft in twain,
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a gory stain;
Yet still he waves his banner, and cries, amid the rout,
"For Church and King, fair gentlemen! spur on, and fight it out!"
And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now he hums a stave,
And now he quotes a stage-play,—and now he fells a knave!

Heaven aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no thought of fear;
Heaven aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! for fearful odds are here!
The rebels hem thee in, and, at every cut and thrust,
"Down, down," they cry, "with Belial! down with him to the dust!"
"I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's trusty sword
This day were doing battle for the Saints and for the Lord!"

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her bower,
The gray-haired Warder watches from the castle's topmost tower;
"What news? what news, old Hubert?"—"The battle's lost and won
The royal troops are melting, like mists before the sun!
And a wounded man approaches—I'm blind and cannot see,
Yet, sure I am, that sturdy step my Master's step must be!"

"I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from as rude and red a fray
As e'er was proof of soldier's thew, or theme for minstrel's lay!
Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor quantum suff.
I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with boots and buff—
Though Guy, through many a gaping wound, is breathing forth his life,
And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and faithful wife!

"Sweet! we will fill our money-bags, and freight a ship for France,
And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land's mischance:
For if the worst befall me, why, better axe and rope,
Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for a pope!
Alas! alas! my gallant Guy!—curse on the crop-eared boor
Who sent me, with my standard, on foot from Marston Moor!"

LV.—RING OUT, WILD BELLS.—TENNYSON.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky, the flying clouds, the frosty light; the Year is dying in the night; ring out, wild bells, and let him die! Ring out the Old, ring in the New; ring, happy bells, across the snow; the Year is going—let him go; ring out the False, ring in the True! Ring out the grief that saps the mind, for those that here we see no more; ring out the feud of rich and poor, ring in redress to all mankind! Ring out the slowly dying cause, and ancient forms of party strife; ring in the nobler modes of life, with sweeter manners, purer laws! Ring out the want, the care, the sin, the faithless coldness of the times; ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes, but ring the fuller Minstrel in! Ring out false pride in place and blood, the civic slander and the spite; ring in the love of truth and right, ring in the common love of Good! Ring out old shapes of foul disease, ring out the narrow lust of gold; ring out the thousand wars of old, ring in the thousand years of peace! Ring in the valiant man and free, the larger heart, the kindlier hand; ring out the darkness of the land,—ring in the CHRIST, that is to be!

ADDITIONAL HUMOUROUS SELECTIONS FOR RECITATION.

I.--ADDRESS TO AN EGYPTIAN MUMMY.—HORACE SMITH.

And hast thou walked about (how strange a story!)
  In Thebes's streets three thousand years ago?—
When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
  And Time had not begun to overthrow
Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
Of which the very ruins are tremendous!

Speak! for thou long enough hast acted dummy;
  Thou hast a tongue? come, let us hear its tune:
Thou 'rt standing on thy legs above-ground, Mummy!
  "Revisiting the glimpses of the moon;"
Not like thin ghosts, or disembodied creatures,
But with thy bones and flesh, and limbs and features.

Tell us—for doubtless thou canst recollect—
  To whom should we assign the Sphinx's fame?
Was Cheops, or Cephrenes, architect
  Of either pyramid that bears his name?
Is "Pompey's Pillar" really a misnomer?
Had Thebes a hundred gates, as sung by Homer?

Perhaps thou wert a Mason, and forbidden
  By oath, to tell the secrets of thy trade,—
Then say, what secret melody was hidden
  In Memnon's statue, which at sunrise played?
Perhaps thou wert a Priest—if so, my struggles
Are vain, for Priestcraft never owns its juggles!

Perchance that very hand, now pinioned flat,
  Has hob-a-nobbed with Pharaoh, glass to glass;
Or dropped a halfpenny in Homer's hat,
  Or doffed thine own to let Queen Dido pass;
Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,
A torch at the great Temple's dedication.

I need not ask thee if that hand, when armed,
  Has any Roman soldier mauled and knuckled;
For thou wert dead, and buried, and embalmed,
  Ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled:
Antiquity appears to have begun
Long after thy primeval race was run!

Thou couldst develop, if that withered tongue
  Might tell us what those sightless orbs have seen,
How the World looked when it was fresh and young,
  And the great Deluge still had left it green—
Or was it then so old, that History's pages
Contained no record of its early ages?

Still silent? Incommunicative elf!
  Art sworn to secrecy? then keep thy vows;
But pr'ythee tell us something of thyself—
  Reveal "the secrets of thy prison-house;"
Since in the world of spirits thou hast slumbered,
What hast thou seen? what strange adventures numbered?

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

tenant of the county. But titles and the three-per-cents., and mortgages, and great relations, and India bonds, and tithes, and rents, O! what are they to love's sensations? Black eyes, fair forehead, clustering locks, such wealth, such honours, Cupid chooses; he cares as little for the stocks, as Baron Rothschild for the Muses. She sketched: the vale, the wood, the beach, grew lovelier from her pencil's shading. She botanized: I envied each young blossom in her boudoir fading. She warbled Handel: it was grand!—she made the Catalani jealous. She touched the organ: I could stand for hours and hours, and blow the bellows. She kept an album, too, at home, well filled with all an album's glories: paintings of butterflies and Rome, patterns for trimming, Persian stories; soft songs to Julia's cockatoo, fierce odes to famine and to slaughter; and autographs of Prince Leboo, and recipes for elder-water. And she was flattered, worshipped, bored; her steps were watched, her dress was noted; her poodle-dog was quite adored, her sayings were extremely quoted. She laughed, and every heart was glad, as if the taxes were abolished:—she frowned, and every look was sad, as if the opera were demolished. She smiled on many, just for fun—I knew that there was nothing in it; I was the first, the only one her heart had thought of for a minute. I knew it, for she told me so, in phrase which was divinely moulded; she wrote a charming hand, and oh! how sweetly all her notes were folded! . . . Our love was like most other loves—a little glow, a little shiver; a rosebud and a pair of gloves, and "Fly Not Yet," upon the river; some jealousy of some one's heir, some hopes of dying broken-hearted, a miniature, a lock of hair, the usual vows—and then, we parted! We parted: months and years rolled by; we met again, four summers after; our parting was all sob and sigh—our meeting was all mirth and laughter; for, in my heart's most secret cell, there had been many other lodgers; and she was not the ball-room belle, but only Mrs—Something—Rogers.

III.—THE SEVEN AGES OF WOMAN.—ANONYMOUS.

"The world's a stage," and "Man has seven ages"—
So Shakspeare writes (king of dramatic sages!);
But he forgot to tell you, in his plan,
That Woman plays her part, as well as Man.

First, how the Infant heart with triumph swells,
When the red coral shakes its silver bells;
She, like young statesmen, when the rattle rings,
Leaps at the sound, and struts in leading-strings.
Next, little Miss, in pinafore so trim,
With nurse so noisy, and mamma so prim;
Eager to tell you all she has learned to utter,
Lisps as she grasps the allotted bread and butter;—
Type of her sex, who, though no longer young,
Holds every thing with ease—except her tongue!
A Schoolgirl then, she curls her hair in papers,
And mimics father's gout, and mother's vapours;
Tramples alike on customs and on toes,
And whispers all she hears to all she knows:
"Betty" (she cries), "it comes into my head,
Old maids grow cross, because their cats are dead;
My governess has been in such a fuss
About the death of her old tabby puss;
She wears black stockings! Ha! ha! what a pother
'Cause one old cat's in mourning for another!"
—The child of Nature, free from pride and pomp,
And sure to please, though nothing but a romp.

Next, riper Miss, who, nature more disclosing,
Now finds some traits of art are interposing;
And, with blue laughing eyes behind her fan,
First acts her part with that great actor—Man!
Behold her now—an ogling vain Coquette,
Catching male gudgeons in her silver net;
Whilst the fair forehead tresses, frizzled full,
Rival the tufted locks that grace the bull!
Then comes that sober character—the Wife,
With all the dear distracting cares of life;
A thousand cards a thousand joys extend,
For what may not upon a card depend?
Now she 'll snatch half a glance at opera, ball,
A meteor traced by none, though seen by all;
'Till "spousy" finds, while anxious to immure her,
A patent coffin only can secure her.
At last the Dowager, in ancient flounces,
With snuff and spectacles, she folly trounces,
And, moralising, thus the age denounces:
"How bold and forward each young flirt appears!
Courtship, in my time, lasted seven years;
Now seven little months suffice, of course,
For courting, marrying, scolding, and divorce;
They say, we have no souls; but what more odd is—
Nor men nor women now have any bodies!
When I was young, my heart was always tender,
And would, to every spouse I had, surrender;
Their wishes to refuse, I never durst,
And my fourth died as happy as my first!"

Truce to such splenetic and rash designs,
And let us mingle candour with our lines:
In all the stages of domestic life—
As child or sister, parent, friend, or wife—
Woman, the source of every fond employ,
Softens affliction, and enlivens joy.
What is your boast, male rulers of the land?
How cold and cheerless all you can command!
Vain your ambition, vain your wealth and power,
Unless kind woman share the raptured hour;
Unless, 'midst all the glare of pageant art,
She adds her smile, and triumphs in your heart!

IV.—THE LADIES' PETITION.—ANONYMOUS.

Dear Doctor, let it not transpire how much your lectures we admire; how at your eloquence we wonder, when you explain the cause of thunder, of lightning, and of electricity, with so much plainness and simplicity; the origin of rocks and mountains, of seas and rivers, lakes and fountains; of rain and hail, of frost and snow, and all the storms and winds that blow; besides a hundred wonders more, of which we never heard before. But now, dear Doctor, not to flatter, there is a most important matter, a matter which you never touch on, a matter which our thoughts run much on; a subject, if we right conjecture, that well deserves, a long, long lecture, which all the ladies would approve—the "Natural History of Love!" Deny us not our subject's choice; oh, list to our entreating voice! tell us, why our poor tender hearts so easily admit love's darts. Teach us the marks of love's beginning; what makes us think a beau so winning? What makes us think a fox-

comb witty, a black coat wise, a red coat pretty? Why we believe such horrid lies, that we are angels from the skies, our teeth like pearls, our cheeks like roses, our eyes like stars, such charming noses? Explain our dreams, awake or sleeping; explain our blushing, laughing, weeping; explain our hoping and our doubting, our teazing, simpering, and pouting! Teach us, dear Doctor, if you can, to humble that proud creature, Man: to turn the wise ones into fools, the proud and insolent to tools; to make them all run helter skelter their necks into the marriage halter: then, leave us to ourselves with these,—we'll turn and rule them as we please! . . . Dear Doctor, if you grant our wishes, we promise you five hundred kisses; and, rather than the affair be blundered, we'll give you six score to the hundred.

V.—MISADVENTURES AT MARGATE.—Rev. R. H. Barham.

I was in Margate last July,—I walked upon the pier,—
I saw a little vulgar boy—I said, "What want you here?
The gloom upon your youthful cheek speaks anything but joy."
Again I said, "What make you here, you little vulgar boy?"

He frowned,—that little vulgar boy—he deemed I meant to scoff—
And when the little heart is big, a little "sets it off;"
He put his finger in his mouth,—his little bosom rose,—
He had no little handkerchief to wipe his little nose!

"Hark! don't you hear, my little man? it 's striking nine," I said,
"An hour when all good little boys and girls should be in bed;
Run home and get your supper, else your ma' will scold—oh, fie!—
It 's very bad, indeed it is, for boys to stand and cry!"

The tear-drop in his little eye again began to spring,
His bosom throbbed with agony—he cried like anything!
I stopped, and, 'midst his sobs, I heard him murmur, "Ah!
I hav'n't got no supper! and I hav'n't got no ma'!

"My father he is on the seas,—my mother 's dead and gone!
And I am here, on this here pier, to roam the world alone;
I have not had, this live-long day, one drop to cheer my heart,
Nor 'brown' to buy a bit of bread with,—let alone a tart.

"If there 's a soul will give me food, or find me in employ,
By day or night, then '*blow me tight*'" (he was a vulgar boy);
"And now I 'm here—from this here pier it is my fixed intent,
To jump—as many a chap has done—from off the Monument."

"Cheer up! cheer up! my little man—cheer up!" I kindly said;
"You are a naughty boy to take such things into your head:
If you should jump from off this pier, you 'd surely break your legs,
Perhaps your neck—then Bogy 'd have you, sure as eggs are eggs!

"Come home with me, my little man—come home with me and sup;
My landlady is Mrs Jones—we must not keep her up:—
There 's roast potatoes on the fire,—enough for me and you—
Come home, you little vulgar boy—I lodge at number two."

I took him home to number two,—with charitable joy—
I bade him wipe his dirty shoes—he was a vulgar boy,—
And then I said to Mrs Jones—the kindest of her sex—
"Pray, be so good as go and fetch a pint of double X."

But Mrs Jones was rather cross, she made a little noise;
She said she "did not like to wait on little vulgar boys."
She with her apron wiped the plates, and, as she rubbed the delf,
Said, "I might go to —— Jericho, and fetch the beer myself."

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

He sent for the Inspector then, and I described the "*swag*,"—
My "Mackintosh," my sugar-tongs, my spoons, and carpet-bag;
He promised that the New Police should all their power employ;
But never to this hour have I beheld that little vulgar boy!

MORAL.

REMEMBER, then, what (when a boy) I've heard my grandma' tell,
"BE WARNED IN TIME BY OTHERS' HARM, AND YOU SHALL DO FULL WELL!"
Don't link yourself with vulgar folk who 've got no fixed abode,
Tell lies, use naughty words, and say they "*wish they may be blowed!*"

Don't take too much of double X! and don't at night go out
To fetch your beer yourself, but make the pot-boy bring your stout!
And when you go to Margate next, just stop and ring the bell,
Give my respects to Mr Jones, and say I 'm pretty well.

VI.—THE CORONATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA.—

REV. R. H. BARHAM.

Och! the Coronation! what celebration
For emulation can with it compare?
When to Westminster the Royal Spinster,
And the Duke of Leinster, all in order did repair
'Twas there you 'd see the New Polishemen
Making a skrimmage at half after four,
And the Lords and Ladies, and the Miss O'Gradys,
All standing round before the Abbey door.

Their pillows scorning, that self-same morning
Themselves adorning, all by candle-light,
With roses and lilies, and daffy-down-dillies,
And gould and jewels, and rich di'monds bright.
And then approaches five hundred coaches,
With General Dullbeak.—Och! 'twas mighty fine
To see how asy bould Corporal Casey
With his sword drawn, prancing, made them keep the line.

Then the Guns' alarums, and the King of Arums,
All in his Garters and his Clarence-shoes,
Opening the massy doors to the bould Ambassydors,
The Prince of Potboys, and great haythen Jews;
'Twould have made you crazy to see Esterhazy
All jools from his jasey to his di'mond boots,
With Alderman Harmer, and that swate charmer,
The famale heiress, Miss Anja-ly Coutts.

And Wellington, walking with his swoord drawn, talking
To Hill and Hardinge, haroes of great fame:
And Sir De Lacy, and the Duke Dalmasey,
(They called him Sowlt afore he changed his name),
Themselves presading Lord Melbourne, lading
The Queen, the darling, to her royal chair,
And that fine ould fellow, the Duke of Pell-Mello,
The Queen of Portingal's Chargy-de-fair.

Then the Noble Prussians, likewise the Russians,
In fine laced jackets with their goulden cuffs,
And the Bavarians, and the proud Hungarians,
And Everythingarians all in furs and muffs.

Then Misthur Spaker, with Misthur Pays the Quaker,
All in the Gallery you might persave;
But Lord Brougham was missing, and gone a-fishing,
Ounly crass Lord Essex would not give him lave.

There was Baron Alten himself exalting,
And Prince Von Schwartzenberg, and many more;
Och! I'd be bothered and entirely smothered
To tell the half of 'em was to the fore;
With the swate Peeresses, in their crowns and dresses,
And Aldermanesses, and the Boord of Works;
But Mehemet Ali said, quite gintaly,
"I'd be proud to see the likes among the Turks!"

Then the Queen, heaven bless her! och! they did dress her
In her purple garaments and her goulden Crown;
Like Venus or Hebe, or the Queen of Sheby,
With eight young ladies houlding up her gown.
Sure 'twas grand to see her, also for to he-ar
The big drums bating, and the trumpets blow,
And Sir George Smart! Oh! he play'd a Consarto,
With his four-and-twenty fiddlers all on a row!

Then the Lord Archbishop held a goulden dish up,
For to resave her bounty and great wealth,
Saying, "Please your Glory, great Queen Vic-tory!
Ye'll give the Clargy lave to dhrink your health!"
Then his Riverence, retrating, discoorsed the meeting;
"Boys! Here's your Queen! deny it if you can!
And if any bould traitour, or infarior craythur,
Sneezes at that, I'd like to see the man!"

Then the Nobles kneeling to the Pow'rs appealing,
"Heaven send your Majesty a glorious reign!"
And Sir Claudius Hunter he did confront her,
All in his scarlet gown and goulden chain.
The great Lord May'r, too, sat in his chair, too,
But mighty serious, looking fit to cry,
For the Earl of Surrey, all in his hurry,
Throwing the thirteens, hit him in the eye.

Then there was preaching, and good store of speeching,
With Dukes and Marquises on bended knee;
And they did splash her with raal Macasshur,
And the Queen said, "Ah! then thank ye all for me!"
Then the trumpets braying, and the organ playing,
And sweet trombones, with their silver tones;
But Lord Rolle was rolling;—'twas mighty consoling
To think his Lordship did not break his bones!

Then the crames and custard, and the beef and mustard,
All on the tombstones like a poultherer's shop;
With lobsters and white-bait, and other sweet-meat,
And wine and nagus, and Imparial Pop!
There was cakes and apples in all the Chapels,
With fine polonies, and rich mellow pears,—
Och! the Count Von Strogonoff, sure he got prog enough,
The sly ould villian, undernath the stairs.

Then the cannons thundered, and the people wondered,
Crying, "Long live Victoria, our Royal Queen!"—
—Och! if myself should live to be a hundred,
Sure it 's the proudest day that I'll have seen!

And now, I 've ended, what I pretended,
This narration splendid, in swate poe-thry!
Ye dear bewitcher, just hand the pitcher;
Faix, it 's myself that 's getting mighty dhry.

VII.—A PARENTAL ODE TO MY SON.—THOMAS HOOD.

Thou happy, happy elf! (but stop,—first let me kiss away that tear) —thou tiny image of myself! (my love, he 's poking peas into his ear!) Thou merry, laughing sprite! with spirits feather-light, untouched by sorrow, and unsoiled by sin—(good heavens! the child is swallowing a pin!) Thou little tricksy Puck! with antic toys so funnily bestuck, light as the singing-bird that wings the air—(the door! the door! he 'll tumble down the stair!) thou darling of thy sire! (why, Jane, he 'll set his pinafore a-fire!) thou imp of mirth and joy! in love's dear chain so strong and bright a link, thou idol of thy parents—(drat the boy! there goes my ink!) Thou cherub—but of earth; fit playfellow for fays, by moonlight pale, in harmless sport and mirth (that dog will bite him, if he pulls its tail!) Thou human humming-bee, extracting honey from every blossom in the world that blows, singing in youth's Elysium ever sunny (another tumble! that 's his precious nose!) Thy father's pride and hope! (He 'll break the mirror with that skipping-rope!) with pure heart newly stamped from Nature's mint—(where *did* he learn that squint?) thou young domestic dove! (he 'll have that jug off, with another shove!) dear nursling of the hymeneal nest! (are those torn clothes his best?) little epitome of man! (he 'll climb the table, that 's his plan!) touched with the beauteous tints of dawning life—(he 's got a knife!) Thou enviable being! no storms, no clouds, in thy blue sky foreseeing! play on, play on, my elfin John! toss the light ball—bestride the stick—(I knew so many cakes would make him sick!) With fancies, buoyant as the thistle-down, prompting the face grotesque and antic brisk, with many a lamb-like frisk (he 's got the scissors, snipping at your gown!) Thou pretty opening rose! (go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!) balmy and breathing music like the South (he really brings my heart into my mouth!) fresh as the morn, and brilliant as its star,—(I wish that window had an iron bar!) Bold as the hawk, yet gentle as the dove,—(I tell you what, my love, I cannot write unless he 's sent above!)

VIII.—THE COURTIN'.—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

God makes sech nights, all white an' still, fur'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill, all silence an' all glisten.
Zekel crep' up, quite unbeknown, an' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy, all alone, with no one nigh to hinder.
The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out towárd the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle flames danced all about the chiny on the dresser.
The very room, coz she was in, seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin, ez the apples she was peelin'.
'Twas kin' o' "kingdom come" to look on such a blessèd cretur,
A dog-rose blushin' to a brook ain't modester nor sweeter.
He was six foot o' man, A 1, clean grit an' human natur,
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton, nor dror a furrer straighter.
He 'd sparked it with full twenty gals, he 'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, and then thet, by spells,—all is, he couldn't love 'em.
But long o' her, his veins 'ould run all crinkly, like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun, ez a south slope in Ap'il.

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Why feel athirst while folks are quaffing? Oh! trust me, whatsoe'er they say, there 's nothing half so good as laughing! Never cry while you can sing; but laugh, like me, at everything!

X.—"I WOULDN'T—WOULD YOU?"—ANONYMOUS.

When a lady is seen at a party or ball,—
  Her eyes vainly turned in her fits of conceit,
As she peers at the gentlemen, fancying all
  Are enchained by her charms, and would kneel at her feet,—
With each partner coquetting,—to nobody true;—
I wouldn't give much for her *chances!*—would you?

When an upstart is seen on the flags strutting out,
  With his hat cocked aslant, and a glass in his eye:
And thick clouds of foul smoke he stands puffing about,
  As he inwardly says;—"What a stunner am I,"—
While he twists his moustache, for the ladies to view;—
I wouldn't give much for his *senses*:—would you?

When a wife runs about at her neighbours to pry,
  Leaving children at home, unprotected to play;
Till she starts back in haste at the sound of their cry;
  And finds they 've been fighting while mother's away,
Sugar eaten—panes broken—the wind blowing through;
I wouldn't give much for her *comfort*:—would you?

When a husband is idle, neglecting his work,
  In the public-house snarling with quarrelsome knaves;
When he gambles with simpletons, drinks like a Turk,
  While his good wife at home for the poor children slaves;
And that home is quite destitute—painful to view;—
I wouldn't give much for his *morals*:—would you?

When a boy at his school, lounging over his seat,
  Sits rubbing his head, and neglecting his book,
While he fumbles his pockets, for something to eat,
  Yet pretendeth to read when his master may look,
Though he boasts to his parents how much he can do,
I wouldn't give much for his *progress*:—would you?

When a husband and wife keep their secrets apart,
  Not a word to "my spouse" about this, or on that;
When a trifle may banish the pledge of their heart,
  And he naggles,—she snaggles—both contradict flat;
Tho' unequalled their love when its first blossoms blew;—
I wouldn't give much for their *quiet*:—would you?

When a man who has lived here for none but himself,
  Feels laid on his strong frame the cold hand of death,
When all fade away,—wife, home, pleasures, and pelf,
  And he yields back to God both his soul and his breath;—
As up to the Judgment that naked soul flew,—
I wouldn't give much for his *Heaven!*—would you?

XI.—RHYME OF THE RAIL.—SAXE.

Singing through the forests, rattling over ridges,
Shooting under arches, rumbling over bridges,
Whizzing through the mountains, buzzing o'er the vale,—
Bless me! this is pleasant, riding on the rail!

Men of different stations, in the eye of Fame,
Here are very quickly coming to the same;
High and lowly people, birds of every feather,
On a common level, travelling together!

Gentleman in shorts, looming very tall;
Gentleman at large, talking very small;
Gentleman in tights, with a loose-ish mien;
Gentleman in gray, looking rather green;
Gentleman quite old, asking for the news;
Gentleman in black, in a fit of blues;
Gentleman in claret, sober as a vicar;
Gentleman in tweed, dreadfully in liquor!

Stranger on the right, looking very sunny,
Obviously reading something rather funny.
Now the smiles are thicker—wonder what they mean?
Sure, he 's got the Knickerbocker Magazine!

Stranger on the left, closing up his peepers;
Now he snores amain, like the seven sleepers:
At his feet a volume gives the explanation,
How the man grew stupid from "association!"

Ancient maiden lady anxiously remarks,
That there must be peril 'mong so many sparks:
Roguish-looking fellow, turning to the stranger,
Says it 's his opinion, *she* is out of danger!

Woman with her baby, sitting *vis-à-vis*;
Baby keeps a-squalling, woman looks at me;
Asks about the distance; says it 's tiresome talking.
Noises of the cars are so very shocking!

Market woman, careful of the precious casket,
Knowing eggs are eggs, tightly holds her basket;
Feeling that a smash, if it came, would surely
Send her eggs to pot, rather prematurely.

—Singing through the forests, rattling over ridges,
Shooting under arches, rumbling over bridges,
Whizzing through the mountains, buzzing o'er the vale,—
Bless me! this is pleasant, riding on the rail!

XII.—THE BASHFUL BACHELOR—"ASK PAPA!"—

A. Melville Bell.

When bashful bachelors are "well to do,"
The ladies try their best to make them woo;
And, surely, if the man is worth the plot,
And to one's mind, *et cetera*,—wherefore not?
All wives are "helpmates;" and each *would-be* wife
Helping to mate, proves fit for married life.

No mortal ever had a better heart,
Or needed more this matrimonial art,
Than Mr Slow; and many damsels vied
In showing him he would not be denied,
If he would only lay aside his fear,
And tell—or whisper—what they longed to hear.

Some sent him slippers to advance their suit,
Hoping to catch the lover by the foot!
Some, with a higher aim, his throat would deck
With warm cravat—to take him by the neck!

One maiden, with affections fixed "above,"
Sent him a smoking-cap to crown her love!
Others gave flowers, their passion to disclose,
And even handkerchiefs,—to have him by the nose!
Gloves, cuffs, and mittens were by many planned,
With wiles directly levelled at his hand!
But none had found out the successful art
To make this "eligible man" take heart.

He *looked* the lover, gave expressive sighs,
But only spoke the language of "sheeps' eyes:"
At last, one maid, who wisely judged the case,
And really loved him, met him "face to face."

She bantered Mr Slow upon his ways:
"You need some one, I'm sure, to cheer your days—
Eh? Did you speak?"—He could not for his life!
"I often wonder you don't get a wife!
I know *some one, I think*, who would not frown,
If you should ask her!"—O, the senseless clown!
He wriggles nervously, plays with his hat,
Looks down and blushes, fumbles his cravat,
Then "hems!" and seems about to speak. But no—
He only sighs, and draws a face of woe!

"Are you not well? I fear you don't take care
To wrap yourself from this damp evening air.
Put in this button: there! that draws your coat
Close as a comforter about your throat—
But I'm afraid you think me very bold?"
"O no; go on! I'm . . . not afraid of cold."
"*Why* then go on?—I think you hardly know;
But I'll unbutton it if you say so."

"You're very kind—I—don't know what to say—
Whatever way you please!—don't go away!"

"Dear me! I've pulled the button off, I vow:
If you'd a wife, she'd sew it for you now!"—
"I wish that *you* would"—"Eh?"—"would sew it on—
And something else!"—His modest features shone,
But not a word his palsied tongue could frame:
"Well? 'Something else' has surely got a name?"
He covered up his face, and whispered this:—
"I wish—you'd—*give* me—something!" "What?" "A kiss!"
"Oh, Mr Slow! you are a curious elf:
A man in such a case should help himself!
For, if I *gave* you one, why, that would be
Like sealing an engagement,—don't you see?

"That's what I want!"—"Now, really! Is it so?
Well, just suppose that I have not said, No!"
A maiden's coyness overwhelmed him. "Ah!"
He whispered blushing—"Thank you: ask papa!"

She laughed outright; though 'twas indeed no joke!
He felt the Rubicon was passed! and spoke
Quite freely now; and had so much to say
That, ere she left, he made her fix the day!
A little help quite cured his *single* trouble;
And very soon they loved each other *double!*

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

Which is the patron of our noble calling.
I well remember, in my early years,
When these young hands first closed upon a goose!
I have a scar upon my thimble finger
Which chronicles the hour of young ambition.
My father was a tailor, and his father,
And my sire's grandsire, all of them were tailors;
They had an ancient goose—it was an heirloom
From some remoter tailor of our race.
It happened I did see it on a time
When none was near, and I did deal with it,
And it did burn me—oh, most fearfully!

It is a joy to straighten out one's limbs,
And leap elastic from the level counter;
Leaving the petty grievances of earth—
The breaking thread, the din of clashing shears,
And all the needles that do wound the spirit—
For such a pensive hour of soothing silence.
Kind Nature, shuffling in her loose undress,
Lays bare her shady bosom. I can feel
With all around me. I can hail the flowers
That sprig earth's mantle, and yon quiet bird
That rides the stream is to me as a brother.
The vulgar know not all the hidden pockets
Where Nature stows away her loveliness!
But this unnatural posture of the legs
Cramps my extended calves, and I must go
Where I can coil them in their wonted fashion.

XV.—THE BIG SHOE.—ANONYMOUS.

Can you find out the likeness? A portly old Dame—
The mother of millions—BRITANNIA by name:
And—howe'er it may strike you, in reading the song—
Not stinted in space for lodging the throng:—
Since the sun can himself hardly manage to go,
In a day and a night, from the heel to the toe!

On the arch of the instep she builds up her throne;
And, with seas rolling under, she sits there alone:
With her heel at the foot of the Himmalehs planted,
And her toe in the icebergs, unchilled and undaunted!

Yet though justly of all her fine family proud,
'Tis no light undertaking to rule such a crowd;
Not to mention the trouble of seeing them fed,
And dispensing, with justice, the broth and the bread!

Some will seize upon one,—some are left with the other;
And so the whole household gets into a pother!
But the rigid old Dame has a summary way
Of her own—when she finds there is mischief to pay:—

She just takes up the rod, and she lays down the spoon,
And makes their rebellious backs tingle right soon;
Then she bids them, while yet the sore smarting they feel,
To lie down, and go to sleep, under her heel!

Only once was she posed,—when the little boy, Sam
(Who had always before been as meek as a lamb),

Refused to take "*tea*," as his mother had bid,
And returned saucy answers because he was chid.

Not content even then, he cut loose from her throne,
And set about making a "shoe" of his own,
Which succeeded so well, and was filled up so fast,
That the world, in amazement, confessed at the last—
Looking on at the work with a gasp and a stare—
That 'twas hard to tell which would be best of the pair.

Side by side they are standing together to-day;
Side by side may they keep their strong foothold for aye!
And beneath the broad sea, whose blue depths intervene,
May the "finishing string" lie unbroken between!

XVI.—NOTHING TO WEAR.—W. A. BUTLER.

Miss Flora M'Flimsey, of Madison Square,
Has made three separate journeys to Paris,
And her father assures me, each time she was there,
That she and her friend, "Mrs Harris"—
(Not the lady whose name is so famous in history,
But plain Mrs H., without romance or mystery),
Spent six consecutive weeks without stopping,
In one continuous round of shopping;
Shopping alone, and shopping together,
At all hours of the day, and in all sorts of weather;
For all manner of things that a woman can put
On the crown of her head, or the sole of her foot,
Or wrap round her shoulders, or fit round her waist,
Or that can be sewed on, or pinned on, or laced,
Or tied on with a string, or stitched on with a bow,
In front or behind, above or below:
For bonnets, mantillas, capes, collars, and shawls;
Dresses for breakfasts, and dinners, and balls;
Dresses to sit in, and stand in, and walk in;
Dresses to dance in, and flirt in, and talk in;
Dresses in which to do nothing at all;
Dresses for winter, spring, summer, and fall;
All of them different in colour and pattern,—
Silk, muslin, and lace, crape, velvet, and satin;
Brocade, and broadcloth, and other material
Quite as expensive and much more ethereal;
In short, for all things that could ever be thought of,
Or milliner, modiste, or tradesman be bought of,
From ten-thousand-franc robes to twenty-sous frills;
In all quarters of Paris, and to every store,
While M'Flimsey in vain stormed, scolded, and swore,
They footed the streets, and he footed the bills.

And yet though scarce three months have passed since the day
This merchandise went, on twelve carts, up Broadway,
This same Miss M'Flimsey, of Madison Square,
The last time we met, was in utter despair,
Because she had nothing whatever to wear!

NOTHING TO WEAR! Now, as this is a true ditty,
I do not assert—this, you know, is between us—
That she 's in a state of absolute nudity,
Like Power's "Greek Slave," or the "Medici Venus;"

But I do mean to say, I have heard her declare,
When, at the same moment, she had on a dress
Which cost five hundred dollars, and not a cent less,
And jewell'ry worth ten times more, I should guess,
That she had not a thing in the wide world to wear!

I should mention just here, that out of Miss Flora's
Two hundred and fifty or sixty adorers,
I had just been selected; as he who should throw all
The rest in the shade, by the gracious bestowal
On myself, after twenty or thirty rejections,
Of those fossil remains which she called, "her affections,"
And that rather decayed, but well-known work of art,
Which Miss Flora persisted in styling "her heart."
So we were engaged. Our troth had been plighted,
Not by moonbeam or starbeam, by fountain or grove,
But in a front parlour, most brilliantly lighted,
Beneath the gas-fixtures we whispered our love.
Without any romances, or raptures, or sighs,
Without any tears in Miss Flora's blue eyes,
Or blushes, or transports, or such silly actions,
It was one of the quietest business transactions.
On her virginal lips while I printed a kiss,
She exclaimed, as a sort of parenthesis,
And by way of putting me quite at my ease,
"You know, I 'm to polka as much as I please,
And flirt when I like: now stop, don't you speak—
And you must not come here more than twice in the week,
Or talk to me, either at party or ball,
But always be ready to come when I call;
So don't prose to me about duty and stuff;
If we don't break this off, there will be time enough
For that sort of thing; but the bargain must be
That, as long as I choose, I am perfectly free;
For this is a sort of engagement, you see,
Which is binding on you, but not binding on me."

Well, having thus wooed Miss M'Flimsey and gained her,
With the silks, crinolines, and hoops that contained her,
I had, as I thought, a "contingent remainder"
At least in the property, and the best right
To appear as its escort by day and by night:
And it being the week of the STUCKUPS' grand ball—
Their cards had been out a fortnight or so,
And set all the Avenue on the tip-toe—
I considered it only my duty to call,
And see if Miss Flora intended to go.

The fair Flora looked up with a pitiful air,
And answered quite promptly, "Why, Harry, mon cher,
I should like above all things to go with you there;
But, really and truly—I 've nothing to wear."
"Nothing to wear! Go just as you are;
Wear the dress you have on, and you 'll be by far,
I engage, the most bright and particular star
On the Stuckup horizon"—I stopped, for her eye,
Notwithstanding this delicate onset of flattery,
Opened on me at once a most terrible battery
Of scorn and amazement. She made no reply,
But gave a slight turn to the end of her nose—
(That pure Grecian feature!)—as much as to say

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

A course of inquiry, extensive and thorough,
On this vital subject, and find, to my horror,
That the fair Flora's case is by no means surprising,
  But that there exists the greatest distress
In our female community, solely arising
  From this unsupplied destitution of dress,
Whose unfortunate victims are filling the air
With the pitiful wail of "Nothing to wear."
Won't somebody, moved by this touching description,
Come forward to-morrow and head a subscription?
Won't some kind philanthropist, seeing that aid is
So needed at once by these indigent ladies,
Endow a new charity, just for the care
Of these unhappy women with Nothing to Wear,—
Which, in view of the cash which would daily be claimed,
The Laying-out Hospital well might be named?
Or, to furnish the cash to supply these distresses,
And life's pathway strew with shawls, collars, and dresses,
Ere the want of them makes it much rougher and thornier,
Won't some one discover a new California?

Oh, ladies, dear ladies, the next sunny day,
Please trundle your hoops just out of Broadway,
From its whirl and its bustle, its fashion and pride,
And the temples of Trade which tower on each side,
To the alleys and lanes, where Misfortune and Guilt
Their children have gathered, their city have built;
Where Hunger and Vice, like twin beasts of prey,
  Have hunted their victims to gloom and despair!—
Raise the rich, dainty dress, and the fine broidered skirt,
Pick your delicate way through the dampness and dirt;
  Grope through the dark dens; climb the rickety stair
To the garret,—where wretches, the young and the old,
Half-starved and half-naked, lie crouched from the cold!
See those skeleton limbs, those frost-bitten feet,
All bleeding and bruised by the stones of the street!
Hear the sharp cry of childhood, the deep groans that swell
  From the poor dying creature who writhes on the floor!
Hear the curses, that sound like the echoes of Hell,
  As you sicken and shudder, and fly from the door!—
Then, home to your wardrobes, and say, if you dare—
Spoiled children of Fashion—you 've Nothing to Wear!

And oh! if perchance there should be a sphere
Where all is made right which so puzzles us here,
Where the glare, and the glitter, and tinsel of Time
Fade and die in the light of that region sublime;
Where the soul, disenchanted of flesh and of sense,
Unscreened by its trappings, and shows, and pretence,
Must be clothed, for the life and the service above,
With purity, truth, faith, meekness, and love;
Oh, daughters of Earth! foolish virgins, beware!
Lest, in that upper realm, you have Nothing to Wear!

INDEX.

		Page
Actions, On the Influence of Great	*Webster*	137
Adversity, Ode to	*Gray*	159
Adopted Child, The	*Mrs Hemans*	238
Address to an Egyptian Mummy	*Smith*	481
African Chief, The	*Bryant*	215
All Hollow	*Anonymous*	201
Albuera, The Battle of	*Byron*	269
Alexander's Feast	*Dryden*	286
Alarm, The	*Anonymous*	313
American War, On the	*Chatham*	117
Annabel Lee	*Edgar A. Poe*	476
An Old Man's Idyl	*Realf*	472
Apology for the Pig	*Southey*	207
A Parental Ode to my Son	*Hood*	490
Arab Maid's Song, The	*Moore*	206
Arab's Farewell to his Steed, The	*Mrs Norton*	259
Arnold Winkelried	*Montgomery*	236
Art of Reading Well, The	*Mrs Ellis*	43
As You Like It, Dialogue from Comedy of	*Shakspeare*	416
Ask Mamma	*A. M. Bell*	310
Ask Papa	*A. M. Bell*	493
Astronomical Alderman, The	*Anonymous*	299
Autumn, On	*Alison*	92
Bachelor's Complaint, The	*H. G. Bell*	335
Balaklava, Cavalry Charge at	*Tennyson*	277
Baltimore, The Sack of	*Davis*	266
Bard, The	*Gray*	284
Barbara Fritchie	*Whittier*	450
Bashful Man, The	*Mackenzie*	339
Baron's Last Banquet, The	*Greene*	287
Bashful Bachelor	*A. M. Bell*	493
Battle, The	*Bulwer Lytton*	279
Battle of Flodden Field, The	*Scott*	262
Battle of the Baltic, The	*Campbell*	227
Battle of Morgarten, The	*Mrs Hemans*	437
Battle of Fontenoy, The	*Davis*	460
Beauty and Expression	*Moore*	170
Beautiful Snow	*Sigourney*	450
Bended Bow, The	*Mrs Hemans*	441
Bells, The	*Poe*	291
Belle of the Ball, The	*Praed*	483
Belshazzar, The Vision of	*Byron*	220
Bernardo del Carpio. Part I.	*Mrs Hemans*	239
Bernardo and Alphonso. Part II.	*Lockhart*	240
Bernardo's Revenge. Part III.	*Anonymous*	241
Beth Gelert	*Spencer*	218
Bethlehem, The Star of	*Kirke White*	189
Bible, The Poetry of the	*Gilfillan*	72
Big Shoe, The	*Anonymous*	496

		Page
Bishop of Carlisle for Richard II.	*Shakspeare*	354
Black Beer for Brown Stout	*Anonymous*	334
Black Regiment, The	*Boker*	473
Blank Bible, The	*Rogers*	51
Blenheim, The Battle of	*Southey*	196
Blind Man's Buff	*Smith*	328
Boadicea	*Cowper*	223
Bobadil's Mode of Warfare	*Johnson*	361
British History, On	*Rev. C. Wolfe*	57
British Government in America, On	*Henry*	125
British Press, On the	*Mackintosh*	128
British Freedom	*Mackay*	199
Bridge of Sighs, The	*Hood*	149
Bridal of Malahide, The	*Griffin*	464
Bruce and the Spider	*Eliza Cook*	197
Brutus on the Death of Cæsar	*Shakspeare*	347
Bullum *versus* Boatum	*Stevens*	335
Burns, Fate of	*Carlyle*	49
Burial of Sir John Moore	*Wolfe*	205
Building of the House, The	*Mackay*	461
Burial of William the Conqueror	*Mrs Hemans*	476
Burial of Moses	*Mrs Alexander*	436
Caius Verres, Character of	*Cicero*	99
Captive Knight, The	*Mrs Hemans*	224
Coriolanus, Dialogue from the Tragedy of	*Shakspeare*	420
Casabianca	*Mrs Hemans*	189
Cassio on his Dismissal	*Shakspeare*	366
Cassius instigating Brutus	*Shakspeare*	346
Catiline, Dialogue from the Tragedy of	*Croly*	382
Cataract of Lodore, The	*Southey*	185
Cato, Dialogue from the Tragedy of	*Addison*	384
Cato on the Immortality of the Soul	*Addison*	343
Catiline Conspiracy, On the	*Cicero*	103
Cavalry Charge at Balaklava	*Tennyson*	277
Chameleon, The	*Merrick*	300
Chamouni, Hymn before Sunrise in Vale of	*Coleridge*	171
Charles Edward at Versailles on the Anniversary of Culloden	*Aytoun*	243
Cheap Dinner, A	*Planché*	315
Childe Harold's Song	*Byron*	234
Childhood and Manhood	*Crabbe*	272
Christian Warfare	*C. Elizabeth*	191
Clarence's Dream	*Shakspeare*	350
Claude Melnotte to Pauline	*Lytton*	362
Cloud, The	*Shelley*	161
Collegian and the Porter, The	*Planché*	315
Collier's Dying Child, The	*Farmer*	276
Colonies, On Conciliating the	*Burke*	112
Common Lot, The	*Montgomery*	200
Confidence in God	*Addison*	199
Constance, on being informed of a Peace	*Shakspeare*	369
Contest between the Nose and the Eyes	*Cowper*	333
Confession, The	*Barham*	311

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

Get Smart



Over 2,000 years of human knowledge in 797,885 volumes

Instant access $8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

		Page
Englishman returned from Paris, The	*Foote*	392
Essay on Man	*Pope*	152
Evening, Approach of	*Hervey*	63
Evening—by a Tailor	*Holmes*	495
Excelsior	*Longfellow*	193
Execution of Montrose	*Aytoun*	249
Exile of Erin, The	*Campbell*	214
Exiled Duke to his Companions	*Shakspeare*	377
Faithless Nelly Gray	*Hood*	303
Fall of D'Assas, The	*Mrs Hemans*	191
Farmer and the Barrister, The	*Smith*	318
Farmer's Blunder, The	*Anon.*	317
Farewell to Caledonia	*Burns*	440
Fate of MacGregor, The	*Hogg*	452
Felon, The	*Lewis*	217
Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu, Combat	*Scott*	253
Flight of Imagination, The	*Akenside*	183
Flodden Field, Battle of	*Scott*	262
Flowers, Death of the	*Bryant*	223
Fontenoy, Battle of	*Davis*	460
Fortune, Uncertainties of	*Bolingbroke*	46
Forging of the Anchor, The	*Ferguson*	183
Fountain, The	*Wordsworth*	173
Freedom	*Lowell*	199
Frenchman and the Rats, The	*Anon.*	320
Friendship, Instability of	*Moore*	160
Fugitive Slave, The	*Baine*	224
Fugitive Slave Bill, On the	*Sumner*	135
Gambler's Wife, The	*Coates*	267
Gertrude Von der Wart	*Mrs Hemans*	192
Ginevra	*Rogers*	267
Ghebers' Attack, The	*Moore*	210
Glenara	*Campbell*	212
Gloster on his Ambitious Projects	*Shakspeare*	359
Glove and the Lions, The	*Hunt*	229
Gluttonous Duck, The	*Miss Taylor*	202
God is Love	*Watson*	69
God, On the Being of a	*Dr Young*	139
Good Time Coming, The	*Mackay*	237
Good News from Ghent	*Browning*	433
Gospel, On the Doctrines of the	*Guthrie*	84
Gougaune Barra	*Callanan*	436
Greece, The Isles of	*Byron*	250
Greece, The Shores of	*Byron*	175
Hamlet on his Mother's Marriage	*Shakspeare*	354
Hamlet on the Emotion of the Players	*Shakspeare*	354
Hamlet on a Future State	*Shakspeare*	355
Hamlet to the Players	*Shakspeare*	356
Hamlet, Dialogue from the Tragedy of	*Shakspeare*	414
Hannibal to his Soldiers	*Livy*	108
Happiness, Pursuit of	*Sterne*	83
Harmosan	*Trench*	213
Heaven, The Star of	*Callanan*	188

		Page
Heir at Law, Dialogue from Comedy of	*Colman*	400
Henry IV. on Sleep	*Shakspeare*	351
Henry IV., Dialogue from the Play of	*Shakspeare*	422
Henry IV., Dialogue from the Play of	*Shakspeare*	423
Henry V. at the Siege of Harfleur	*Shakspeare*	351
Henry V. on Royal Ceremony	*Shakspeare*	357
Henry V. before Agincourt	*Shakspeare*	371
Henry VI. on the Anxieties of Royalty	*Shakspeare*	358
Heritage, The	*Lowell*	477
Herculaneum, the Last Days of	*Atherstone*	282
High-born Ladye, The	*Moore*	224
Hohenlinden, the Battle of	*Campbell*	206
Holly Tree, The	*Southey*	167
Home for the Holidays	*Eliza Cook*	203
Homes of England, The	*Mrs Hemans*	194
Honeymoon, Dialogue from Comedy of	*Tobin*	404
Horatius	*Macaulay*	242
Humorous Incongruities	*Sydney Smith*	60
Human Grandeur, On	*Goldsmith*	62
Human Works, Inefficiency of	*Melville*	73
Human Life	*Rogers*	144
Husband's Petition, The	*Bon Gaultier*	311
Hymn before Sunrise in Chamouni	*Coleridge*	171
Iliad of Homer, Dialogue from the	*Pope*	382
Imagination, Flight of	*Akenside*	183
Inchcape Bell, The	*Southey*	235
Independence, Address to	*Smollett*	146
Indian Hunter, The	*Longfellow*	230
India, On the Condition of	*Sheridan*	133
Infidelity, On	*Thomson*	87
Influence of Great Actions, On the	*Webster*	137
Infant Orator, The	*Everett*	204
Inkermann, Fifth of November at	*Massey*	277
Insignificance of this World	*Chalmers*	76
Irish Emigrant, The Lament of the	*Lady Dufferin*	261
Ireland's Pillar Towers	*Mac Carthy*	449
Irish Valour and Loyalty, On	*Sheil*	132
Island, The	*Hood*	61
Ivan the Czar	*Mrs Hemans*	233
Iron Chest, Dialogue from the Play of the	*Colman*	388
"I Wouldn't—Would You?"	*Anon.*	492
Jackdaw, The	*Cowper*	194
Jacques on the Fool	*Shakspeare*	377
Jephtha's Daughter	*Byron*	187
Jessie Brown at Lucknow	*Vandenhoff*	470
Jerusalem	*Moore*	194
John Little-John	*Mackay*	237
Jugurtha in Prison	*Wolfe*	276
Julius Cæsar, Dialogue from the Tragedy of	*Shakspeare*	413
King and the Miller of Mansfield, Dialogue	*Dodsley*	379
King John instigating Hubert	*Shakspeare*	370
King Lear to his Daughters	*Shakspeare*	366
King Lear on Goneril's unkindness	*Shakspeare*	366

		Page
King Lear shut out by his Daughters	*Shakspeare*	367
King Robert of Sicily	*Longfellow*	457
Killed at the Ford	*Longfellow*	438
Korner, The Grave of	*Mrs Hemans*	225
LABOUR, Dignity of	*Carlyle*	47
Lady Macbeth meditating the Murder of King Duncan	*Shakspeare*	368
Ladies' Petition, The	*Anon.*	485
Laertes to his Sister Ophelia	*Shakspeare*	365
Last Minstrel, The	*Scott*	177
Last of the Red Men, The	*Bryant*	208
Last Man, The	*Campbell*	288
Laugh and Get Fat	*Praed*	491
Law Reform, On	*Brougham*	110
League, War of the	*Macaulay*	263
Leaguer of Lucknow, The	*Reed*	292
Leper, The	*Willis*	296
Lessons of the Birds, The	*Doane*	444
Liberty and Slavery	*Sterne*	66
Life, Uncertainty of	*Kirwan*	80
Literature and Liberty	*Everett*	122
Lochiel's Warning	*Campbell*	380
Lochinvar	*Scott*	211
Lodgings for Single Gentlemen	*Colman*	321
Lodore, The Cataract of	*Southey*	185
Look Aloft	*Lawrence*	197
Lord Ullin's Daughter	*Campbell*	208
Lord William and Edmund	*Southey*	252
Lord Chief Justice to King Henry V.	*Shakespeare*	371
Lorenzo on the Influence of Music	*Shakspeare*	376
Love (a Tale)	*Coleridge*	268
Lover's Sacrifice, The	*Wordsworth*	312
Lucius Junius Brutus over Lucretia	*Payne*	362
Lyre, The	*Montgomery*	271
MACBETH to the Dagger Vision	*Shakspeare*	352
Macbeth before the Murder of King Duncan	*Shakspeare*	357
Macbeth planning the Murder of Banquo	*Shakspeare*	357
Macbeth on attaining the First of his Fore-told Honours	*Shakspeare*	367
Macbeth instigating his Hirelings	*Shakspeare*	368
Macbeth on seeing the Ghost of Banquo	*Shakspeare*	369
Macbeth, Dialogue from the Tragedy of	*Shakspeare*	421
Maccabees, the Mother of the	*Callanan*	191
Mac Nessa, Death of King Conor	*Sullivan*	445
Madness, the Progress of	*Lewis*	255
Maiden's Request, The	*Lover*	312
Man was made to Mourn	*Burns*	439
Man, On	*Pope*	152
Marco Bozzaris	*Halleck*	251
Mariners of England, The	*Campbell*	195
Mariner's Hymn, The	*Mrs Southey*	198
Mariner's Dream, The	*Dimond*	221
Mark Antony on the Death of Cæsar	*Shakspeare*	347

THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!
All you can read
for only
$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies

		Page
Our Country and our Home	*Montgomery*	186
Our Folks	*Lynn*	474
Palm Tree, The	*Mrs Hemans*	196
Parrhasius	*Willis*	451
Passions, The	*Collins*	298
Paul Revere's Ride	*Longfellow*	434
Pauper's Deathbed, The	*Mrs Southey*	216
Pauper's Grave, The	*Noel*	442
Pillar Towers of Ireland, The	*Mac Carthy*	449
Pitt on being taunted by Walpole	*Pitt*	131
Philip of Macedon, On	*Demosthenes*	101
Pilgrim Fathers, The	*Mrs Hemans*	196
Ploughshare of Old England, The	*Eliza Cook*	235
Poland, Downfall of	*Campbell*	281
Polish Exiles, The	*Miss Pardoe*	219
Polonius to his son Laertes	*Shakspeare*	265
Pompeii	*Anon.*	174
Poor Gentleman, Dialogue from Comedy of	*Colman*	393
Portia's Description of her Suitors	*Shakspeare*	376
Power of Little Things, The	*Smiles*	67
Precedents, On	*Erskine*	120
Present Age, On the	*Channing*	115
Prince Arthur to Hubert	*Shakspeare*	370
Prisoner of Chillon, The	*Byron*	260
Prospero's Adjuration of Magic	*Shakspeare*	378
Procrastination, On	*Young*	145
Provençe, The Lady of	*Mrs Hemans*	247
Psalm of Life, A	*Longfellow*	192
Pulpit, The	*Cowper*	180
Pursuit of Happiness, The	*Sterne*	83
Quarrel, The	*Mackay*	313
Queen Mab	*Shakspeare*	345
Queen Catherine to Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey	*Shakspeare*	374
Rara Avis, A	*Anon.*	322
Raven, The	*Poe*	289
Razor Seller, The	*Wolcot*	302
Redeemer, Majesty of the	*Butler*	70
Religion, Latent Principles of	*Caird*	75
Religion, Consolations of	*Finlayson*	69
Report of a Lawsuit, Goody Grim *v.* Lapstone	*Smith*	325
Retreat of the French from Moscow	*Croly*	157
Revisiting the Banks of the Wye, On	*Wordsworth*	168
Rhyme of the Rail	*Saxe*	492
Richard III. awaking from ill-boding Dreams	*Shakspeare*	373
Richmond encouraging the Soldiers	*Shakspeare*	351
Rienzi to the Romans	*Miss Mitford*	360
Ring out, Wild Bells!	*Tennyson*	481
Rising of the Vendée, The	*Croly*	479
Rivals, Dialogue from the Comedy of the	*Sheridan*	396
Road to the Trenches, The	*Lushington*	222
Rob Roy's Grave	*Wordsworth*	440
Rolla to the Peruvians	*Sheridan*	352

		Page
Romeo on seeing Juliet at a window	*Shakspeare*	356
Ruined Cottage, The	*Mrs Maclean*	259
Rustic Logic	*Anon.*	306
SALVATION, The Grace and Glory of	*Eyre*	91
Satan's Address to the Sun	*Milton*	179
Saul's Address	*Byron*	187
School for Scandal, Dialogue from the	*Sheridan*	401
Scipio to the Roman Army	—	105
Scythian Ambassadors to Alexander	*Q. Curtius*	106
Sea, A Wild Night at	*Dickens*	58
Sergeant Buzfuz, Speech of	*Dickens*	337
Seven Ages of Woman, The	*Anon.*	484
Seven Ages, The	*Shakspeare*	343
Sheil's Reply to Lord Lyndhurst	*Sheil*	132
Sheridan's Ride	*Read*	484
Ship Sinking, A	*Wilson*	215
Shipwreck, The	*Byron*	469
Ship on Fire, The	*Mackay*	442
Sin, The Slavery of	*Moberly*	90
Sir John Moore, Burial of	*Wolfe*	205
Skylark, The	*Hogg*	154
Skylark, The	*Shelley*	165
Slave Trade, On the	*Canning*	113
Slave's Petition, The	*Mrs Norton*	216
Slave's Dream, The	*Longfellow*	236
Slave's Remonstrance, The	*Knowles*	346
Slavery of Sin, The	*Moberly*	90
Slavery, On Negro	*Brougham*	109
Slavery, On	*Cowper*	147
Sleep, The	*E. B. Browning*	473
Soldier's Funeral, The	*Mrs M'Lean*	190
Soldier's Dream, The	*Campbell*	195
Soliloquy of King Claudius in Hamlet	*Shakspeare*	344
Song of the Shirt, The	*Hood*	270
Song of the Sword, The	*Anon.*	441
Song of Old Time	*Eliza Cook*	469
Sorrow for the Dead	*Washington Irving*	64
Spider and the Fly, The	*Mrs Howitt*	332
Spirit of Contradiction, The	*Lloyd*	324
Spring Rain	*Anon.*	151
Spring Journey, The	*Heber*	193
St Cecilia's Day, Ode for	*Pope*	293
Street of By-and-Bye, The	*Mrs Abdy*	207
Study, On	*Bacon*	44
Suffering, Sympathy Taught by	*Alford*	97
Sweet and Bitter Memories	*Bloomfield*	82
TELL to his Native Mountains	*Knowles*	349
Thanatopsis—a View of Death	*Bryant*	142
Theatre, On the	*Channing*	116
Thermopylæ	*Byron*	469
Things, The Power of Little	*Smiles*	67
Three Black Crows	*Byrom*	495
Three Sons, The	*Moultrie*	154

			Page
Three Warnings, The		*Piozzi*	275
Thunderstorm on the Lake of Geneva		*Byron*	167
Time and the Sea Tide		*Tennyson*	297
Toby Tosspot		*Colman*	305
To-morrow		*Cotton*	146
Tones of the Human Voice, On the		*Allison*	41
Touchstone on Quarrelling		*Shakspeare*	378
Treasures of the Deep		*Mrs Hemans*	200
Trenches, The Road to the		*Lushington*	222
Truth, The Lamp of		*Ruskin*	47
True Eloquence, On		*Lovell*	138
Tubal Cain		*Mackay*	297
Two Cats, The		*Howard*	330
Universal Emancipation, On		*Curran*	119
Uncle, The		*H. G. Bell*	466
Uplifting of the Banner, The		*Eaine*	227
Vagabonds, The		*Trowbridge*	475
Venice Preserved, Dialogue from the Play of		*Otway*	387
Village Blacksmith, The		*Longfellow*	231
Virginia, A Lay of Ancient Rome		*Macaulay*	245
Voice and the Pen, The		*M'Carthy*	205
Waiting for the May		*M'Carthy*	182
War, On		*Channing*	83
War Song of the Greeks		*Proctor*	213
War of the League, The		*Macaulay*	263
Waterloo, The Field of		*Byron*	269
Waterloo Ballad, A		*Hood*	304
We are Seven		*Wordsworth*	230
Wealth not Productive of Enjoyment		*Taylor*	78
Well of St Keyne, The		*Southey*	314
What is Time?		*Marsden*	477
Wicked, Death of the		*Massillon*	95
Widow's Choice, The		*Bon Gaultier*	303
Wild Night at Sea, A		*Dickens*	58
William Tell, Dialogue from the Play of		*Knowles*	390
Wind and the Weathercock, The		*Lover*	198
Within and Without		*Proctor*	272
Wolsey to his Secretary		*Shakspeare*	375
Wolsey on his Fall		*Shakspeare*	375
World for Sale, The		*Hoyt*	288
World, Insignificance of this		*Chalmers*	76
Wreck of the Hesperus		*Longfellow*	233
Wye, On Revisiting the Banks of the		*Wordsworth*	168
Xerxes, The Flight of		*Mrs Jewsbury*	212
Yorkshire Angling		*Anon.*	322

COLSTON AND SON, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.