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CONTENTS.

A BACKWARD GLANCE O'ER TRAVEL'D ROADS, 5
SANDS AT SEVENTY :

Mannahatta, 19
Paumanok, 19
From Montauk Point, 19
To Those Who've Fail'd, 19
A Carol Closing Sixty-Nine, 20
The Bravest Soldiers, 20
A Font of Type, 20
As I Sit Writing Here, 20
My Canary Bird, 20
Queries to My Seventieth Year, 21
The Wallabout Martyrs, 21
The First Dandelion, 21
America, 21
Memories, 21
To-day and Thee, 22
After the Dazzle of Day, 22
Abraham Lincoln, born Feb. 12,
1809, 22
Out of May's Shows Selected, 22
Halcyon Days, 22
Fancies at Navesink, 23

*(The Pilot in the Mist—Had I the
Choice—You Tides With Ceaseless
Swell—Last of Ebb, and Daylight
Waning—And Yet Not You Alone—
Proudly the Flood Comes In—By That
Long Scan of Waves—Then Last of
All.)*

Election Day, November, 1884, 25

With Husky-Haughty Lips, O
Sea, 26
Death of General Grant, 26
Red Jacket (from Aloft,) 27
Washington's Monument, February,
1885, 27
Of That Blithe Throat of Thine, 28
Broadway, 28
To Get the Final Lilt of Songs, 28
Old Salt Kossabone, 29
The Dead Tenor, 29
Continuities, 30
Yonnonodio, 30
Life, 30
"Going Somewhere," 31
Small the Theme of My Chant, 31
True Conquerors, 31
The United States to Old World
Critics, 32
The Calming Thought of All, 32
Thanks in Old Age, 32
Life and Death, 32
The Voice of the Rain, 33
Soon Shall the Winter's Foil Be
Here, 33
While Not the Past Forgetting, 33
The Dying Veteran, 34
Stronger Lessons, 34
A Prairie Sunset, 34

Twenty Years, 35	The Dead Emperor, 36
Orange Buds by Mail From Florida, 35	As the Greek's Signal Flame, 36
Twilight, 35	The Dismantled Ship, 37
You Linger Sparse Leaves of Me, 36	Now Precedent Songs, Farewell, 37
Not Meagre, Latent Boughs Alone, 36	An Evening Lull, 37
	After the Supper and Talk, 38
OUR EMINENT VISITORS, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, 39	
THE BIBLE AS POETRY, 43	
FATHER TAYLOR (AND ORATORY,) 47	
THE SPANISH ELEMENT IN OUR NATIONALITY, 50	
WHAT LURKS BEHIND SHAKSPERE'S HISTORICAL PLAYS? 52	
A THOUGHT ON SHAKSPERE, 55	
ROBERT BURNS AS POET AND PERSON, 57	
A WORD ABOUT TENNYSON, 65	
SLANG IN AMERICA, 68	
AN INDIAN BUREAU REMINISCENCE, 73	
SOME DIARY NOTES AT RANDOM, 76	
<i>(Negro Slaves in New York—Canada Nights—Country Days and Nights—Central Park Notes—Plate Glass, St. Louis.)</i>	
SOME WAR MEMORANDA, 80	
<i>("Yankee Doodle"—Washington Street Scenes—The 105th Pennsylvania—Left-hand Writing by Soldiers—Central Virginia in '64—Paying the First Color'd Troops.)</i>	
FIVE THOUSAND POEMS, 86	
THE OLD BOWERY, 87	
NOTES TO LATE ENGLISH BOOKS, 93	
<i>(Preface to Reader in British Islands—Additional Note, 1837—Preface to English Edition "Democratic Vistas.")</i>	
ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 97	
NEW ORLEANS IN 1848—TRIP UP THE MISSISSIPPI, &C., 100	
SMALL MEMORANDA, 105	
<i>(Attorney General's Office, Washington, Aug. 22, 1865—Washington, Sept. 8, 9, etc., 1865—A Glimpse Inside of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet Appointments: one item of many —Note to a Friend—Written impromptu in an album—The place gratitude fills in a fine character.)</i>	
LAST OF THE WAR CASES, 109	
ELIAS HICKS, NOTES (SUCH AS THEY ARE,) 119	
George Fox and Shakspeare, 136	

A BACKWARD GLANCE O'ER TRAVEL'D ROADS.

PERHAPS the best of songs heard, or of any and all true love, or life's fairest episodes, or sailors', soldiers' trying scenes on land or sea, is the *résumé* of them, or any of them, long afterwards, looking at the actualities away back past, with all their practical excitations gone. How the soul loves to float amid such reminiscences!

So here I sit gossiping in the early candle-light of old age—I and my book—casting backward glances over our travel'd road. After completing, as it were, the journey—(a varied jaunt of years, with many halts and gaps of intervals—or some lengthen'd ship-voyage, wherein more than once the last hour had apparently arrived, and we seem'd certainly going down—yet reaching port in a sufficient way through all discomfitures at last)—After completing my poems, I am curious to review them in the light of their own (at the time unconscious, or mostly unconscious) intentions, with certain unfoldings of the thirty years they seek to embody. These lines, therefore, will probably blend the web of first purposes and speculations, with the warp of that experience afterwards, always bringing strange developments.

Result of seven or eight stages and struggles extending through nearly thirty years, (as I nigh my three-score-and-ten I live largely on memory,) I look upon "Leaves of Grass," now finish'd to the end of its opportunities and powers, as my definitive *carte visite* to the coming generations of the New World,* if I may assume to say so. That I have not gain'd the acceptance of my own time, but have fallen back on fond dreams of the future—anticipations—"still lives the song, though Regnar dies"—That from a worldly and business point of view "Leaves of Grass" has been worse than a failure—that public criticism on the book and myself as author of it yet shows mark'd anger and contempt more than anything else—"I find a solid line of ene-

* When Champollion, on his death-bed, handed to the printer the revised proof of his "Egyptian Grammar," he said gayly, "Be careful of this—it is my *carte de visite* to posterity."

mies to you everywhere,"—letter from W. S. K., Boston, May 28, 1884)—And that solely for publishing it I have been the object of two or three pretty serious special official buffetings—is all probably no more than I ought to have expected. I had my choice when I commenc'd. I bid neither for soft eulogies, big money returns, nor the approbation of existing schools and conventions. As fulfill'd, or partially fulfill'd, the best comfort of the whole business (after a small band of the dearest friends and upholders ever vouchsafed to man or cause—doubtless all the more faithful and uncompromising—this little phalanx!—for being so few) is that, unstopp'd and unwarp'd by any influence outside the soul within me, I have had my say entirely my own way, and put it unerringly on record—the value thereof to be decided by time.

In calculating that decision, William O'Connor and Dr. Bucke are far more peremptory than I am. Behind all else that can be said, I consider "Leaves of Grass" and its theory experimental—as, in the deepest sense, I consider our American republic itself to be, with its theory. (I think I have at least enough philosophy not to be too absolutely certain of any thing, or any results.) In the second place, the volume is a *sortie*—whether to prove triumphant, and conquer its field of aim and escape and construction, nothing less than a hundred years from now can fully answer. I consider the point that I have positively gain'd a hearing, to far more than make up for any and all other lacks and withholdings. Essentially, *that* was from the first, and has remain'd throughout, the main object. Now it seems to be achiev'd, I am certainly contented to waive any otherwise momentous drawbacks, as of little account. Candidly and dispassionately reviewing all my intentions, I feel that they were creditable—and I accept the result, whatever it may be.

After continued personal ambition and effort, as a young fellow, to enter with the rest into competition for the usual rewards, business, political, literary, &c.—to take part in the great *m lée*, both for victory's prize itself and to do some good—After years of those aims and pursuits, I found myself remaining possess'd, at the age of thirty-one to thirty-three, with a special desire and conviction. Or rather, to be quite exact, a desire that had been flitting through my previous life, or hovering on the flanks, mostly indefinite hitherto, had steadily advanced to the front, defined itself, and finally dominated everything else. This was a feeling or ambition to articulate and faithfully express in literary or poetic form, and uncompromisingly, my own physical, emotional, moral, intellectual, and æsthetic Personality, in the midst of, and tallying, the momentous spirit and facts of its immediate days, and of current America—and to exploit that Per-

sonality, identified with place and date, in a far more candid and comprehensive sense than any hitherto poem or book.

Perhaps this is in brief, or suggests, all I have sought to do. Given the Nineteenth Century, with the United States, and what they furnish as area and points of view, "Leaves of Grass" is, or seeks to be, simply a faithful and doubtless self-will'd record. In the midst of all, it gives one man's—the author's—identity, ardors, observations, faiths, and thoughts, color'd hardly at all with any decided coloring from other faiths or other identities. Plenty of songs had been sung—beautiful, matchless songs—adjusted to other lands than these—another spirit and stage of evolution; but I would sing, and leave out or put in, quite solely with reference to America and to-day. Modern science and democracy seem'd to be throwing out their challenge to poetry to put them in its statements in contradistinction to the songs and myths of the past. As I see it now (perhaps too late,) I have unwittingly taken up that challenge and made an attempt at such statements—which I certainly would not assume to do now, knowing more clearly what it means.

For grounds for "Leaves of Grass," as a poem, I abandon'd the conventional themes, which do not appear in it: none of the stock ornamentation, or choice plots of love or war, or high, exceptional personages of Old-World song; nothing, as I may say, for beauty's sake—no legend, or myth, or romance, nor euphemism, nor rhyme. But the broadest average of humanity and its identities in the now ripening Nineteenth Century, and especially in each of their countless examples and practical occupations in the United States to-day.

One main contrast of the ideas behind every page of my verses, compared with establish'd poems, is their different relative attitude towards God, towards the objective universe, and still more (by reflection, confession, assumption, &c.) the quite changed attitude of the ego, the one chanting or talking, towards himself and towards his fellow-humanity. It is certainly time for America, above all, to begin this readjustment in the scope and basic point of view of verse; for everything else has changed. As I write, I see in an article on Wordsworth, in one of the current English magazines, the lines, "A few weeks ago an eminent French critic said that, owing to the special tendency to science and to its all-devouring force, poetry would cease to be read in fifty years." But I anticipate the very contrary. Only a firmer, vastly broader, new area begins to exist—nay, is already form'd—to which the poetic genius must emigrate. Whatever may have been the case in years gone by, the true use for the imaginative faculty of modern times is to give ultimate vivification to facts,

to science, and to common lives, endowing them with the glows and glories and final illustriousness which belong to every real thing, and to real things only. Without that ultimate vivification—which the poet or other artist alone can give—reality would seem incomplete, and science, democracy, and life itself, finally in vain.

Few appreciate the moral revolutions, our age, which have been profounder far than the material or inventive or war-produced ones. The Nineteenth Century, now well towards its close (and ripening into fruit the seeds of the two preceding centuries*)—the uprisings of national masses and shiftings of boundary-lines—the historical and other prominent facts of the United States—the war of attempted Secession—the stormy rush and haste of nebulous forces—never can future years witness more excitement and din of action—never completer change of army front along the whole line, the whole civilized world. For all these new and evolutionary facts, meanings, purposes, new poetic messages, new forms and expressions, are inevitable.

My Book and I—what a period we have presumed to span! those thirty years from 1850 to '80—and America in them! Proud, proud indeed may we be, if we have cull'd enough of that period in its own spirit to worthily waft a few live breaths of it to the future!

Let me not dare, here or anywhere, for my own purposes, or any purposes, to attempt the definition of Poetry, nor answer the question what it is. Like Religion, Love, Nature, while those terms are indispensable, and we all give a sufficiently accurate meaning to them, in my opinion no definition that has ever been made sufficiently encloses the name Poetry; nor can any rule or convention ever so absolutely obtain but some great exception may arise and disregard and overturn it.

Also it must be carefully remember'd that first-class literature does not shine by any luminosity of its own; nor do its poems. They grow of circumstances, and are evolutionary. The actual living light is always curiously from elsewhere—follows unaccountable sources, and is lunar and relative at the best. There are, I know, certain controlling themes that seem endlessly appropriated to the poets—as war, in the past—in the Bible, religious rapture and adoration—always love, beauty, some fine plot,

*The ferment and germination even of the United States to-day, dating back to, and in my opinion mainly founded on, the Elizabethan age in English history, the age of Francis Bacon and Shakspeare. Indeed, when we pursue it, what growth or advent is there that does not date back, back, until lost—perhaps its most tantalizing clues lost—in the receded horizons of the past?

or pensive or other emotion. But, strange as it may sound at first, I will say there is something striking far deeper and towering far higher than those themes for the best elements of modern song.

Just as all the old imaginative works rest, after their kind, on long trains of presuppositions, often entirely unmention'd by themselves, yet supplying the most important bases of them, and without which they could have had no reason for being, so "Leaves of Grass," before a line was written, presupposed something different from any other, and, as it stands, is the result of such presupposition. I should say, indeed, it were useless to attempt reading the book without first carefully tallying that preparatory background and quality in the mind. Think of the United States to-day—the facts of these thirty-eight or forty empires solder'd in one—sixty or seventy millions of equals, with their lives, their passions, their future—these incalculable, modern, American, seething multitudes around us, of which we are inseparable parts! Think, in comparison, of the petty environment and limited area of the poets of past or present Europe, no matter how great their genius. Think of the absence and ignorance, in all cases hitherto, of the multitudinousness, vitality, and the unprecedented stimulants of to-day and here. It almost seems as if a poetry with cosmic and dynamic features of magnitude and limitlessness suitable to the human soul, were never possible before. It is certain that a poetry of absolute faith and equality for the use of the democratic masses never was.

In estimating first-class song, a sufficient Nationality, or, on the other hand, what may be call'd the negative and lack of it, (as in Goethe's case, it sometimes seems to me,) is often, if not always, the first element. One needs only a little penetration to see, at more or less removes, the material facts of their country and radius, with the coloring of the moods of humanity at the time, and its gloomy or hopeful prospects, behind all poets and each poet, and forming their birth-marks. I know very well that my "Leaves" could not possibly have emerged or been fashion'd or completed, from any other era than the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, nor any other land than democratic America, and from the absolute triumph of the National Union arms.

And whether my friends claim it for me or not, I know well enough, too, that in respect to pictorial talent, dramatic situations, and especially in verbal melody and all the conventional technique of poetry, not only the divine works that to-day stand ahead in the world's reading, but dozens more, transcend (some of them immeasurably transcend) all I have done, or could do.

But it seem'd to me, as the objects in Nature, the themes of æstheticism, and all special exploitations of the mind and soul, involve not only their own inherent quality, but the quality, just as inherent and important, of *their point of view*,* the time had come to reflect all themes and things, old and new, in the lights thrown on them by the advent of America and democracy—to chant those themes through the utterance of one, not only the grateful and reverent legatee of the past, but the born child of the New World—to illustrate all through the genesis and ensemble of to-day; and that such illustration and ensemble are the chief demands of America's prospective imaginative literature. Not to carry out, in the approved style, some choice plot of fortune or misfortune, or fancy, or fine thoughts, or incidents, or courtesies—all of which has been done overwhelmingly and well, probably never to be excell'd—but that while in such æsthetic presentation of objects, passions, plots, thoughts, &c., our lands and days do not want, and probably will never have, anything better than they already possess from the bequests of the past, it still remains to be said that there is even towards all those a subjective and contemporary point of view appropriate to ourselves alone, and to our new genius and environments, different from anything hitherto; and that such conception of current or gone-by life and art is for us the only means of their assimilation consistent with the Western world.

Indeed, and anyhow, to put it specifically, has not the time arrived when, (if it must be plainly said, for democratic America's sake, if for no other) there must imperatively come a readjustment of the whole theory and nature of Poetry? The question is important, and I may turn the argument over and repeat it: Does not the best thought of our day and Republic conceive of a birth and spirit of song superior to anything past or present? To the effectual and moral consolidation of our lands (already, as materially establish'd, the greatest factors in known history, and far, far greater through what they prelude and necessitate, and are to be in future)—to conform with and build on the concrete realities and theories of the universe furnish'd by science, and henceforth the only irrefragable basis for anything, verse included—to root both influences in the emotional and imaginative action of the modern time, and dominate all that precedes or opposes them—is not either a radical advance and step forward, or a new verteber of the best song indispensable?

* According to Immanuel Kant, the last essential reality, giving shape and significance to all the rest.

The New World receives with joy the poems of the antique, with European feudalism's rich fund of epics, plays, ballads—seeks not in the last to deaden or displace those voices from our ear and area—holds them indeed as indispensable studies, influences, records, comparisons. But though the dawn-dazzle of the sun of literature is in those poems for us of to-day—though perhaps the best parts of current character in nations, social groups, or any man's or woman's individuality, Old World or New, are from them—and though if I were ask'd to name the most precious bequest to current American civilization from all the hitherto ages, I am not sure but I would name those old and less old songs ferried hither from east and west—some serious words and debits remain; some acrid considerations demand a hearing. Of the great poems receiv'd from abroad and from the ages, and to-day enveloping and penetrating America, is there one that is consistent with these United States, or essentially applicable to them as they are and are to be? Is there one whose underlying basis is not a denial and insult to democracy? What a comment it forms, anyhow, on this era of literary fulfilment, with the splendid day-rise of science and resuscitation of history, that our chief religious and poetical works are not our own, nor adapted to our light, but have been furnish'd by far-back ages out of their arriere and darkness, or, at most, twilight dimness! What is there in those works that so imperiously and scornfully dominates all our advanced civilization, and culture?

Even Shakspeare, who so suffuses current letters and art (which indeed have in most degrees grown out of him,) belongs essentially to the buried past. Only he holds the proud distinction for certain important phases of that past, of being the loftiest of the singers life has yet given voice to. All, however, relate to and rest upon conditions, standards, politics, sociologies, ranges of belief, that have been quite eliminated from the Eastern hemisphere, and never existed at all in the Western. As authoritative types of song they belong in America just about as much as the persons and institutes they depict. True, it may be said, the emotional, moral, and æsthetic natures of humanity have not radically changed—that in these the old poems apply to our times and all times, irrespective of date; and that they are of incalculable value as pictures of the past. I willingly make those admissions, and to their fullest extent; then advance the points herewith as of serious, even paramount importance.

I have indeed put on record elsewhere my reverence and eulogy for those never-to-be-excell'd poetic bequests, and their indescribable preciousness as heirlooms for America. Another and separate point must now be candidly stated. If I had not stood

before those poems with uncover'd head, fully aware of their colossal grandeur and beauty of form and spirit, I could not have written "Leaves of Grass." My verdict and conclusions as illustrated in its pages are arrived at through the temper and inculcation of the old works as much as through anything else—perhaps more than through anything else. As America fully and fairly construed is the legitimate result and evolutionary outcome of the past, so I would dare to claim for my verse. Without stopping to qualify the averment, the Old World has had the poems of myths, fictions, feudalism, conquest, caste, dynastic wars, and splendid exceptional characters and affairs, which have been great; but the New World needs the poems of realities and science and of the democratic average and basic equality, which shall be greater. In the centre of all, and object of all, stands the Human Being, towards whose heroic and spiritual evolution poems and everything directly or indirectly tend, Old World or New.

Continuing the subject, my friends have more than once suggested—or may be the garrulity of advancing age is possessing me—some further embryonic facts of "Leaves of Grass," and especially how I enter'd upon them. Dr. Bucke has, in his volume, already fully and fairly described the preparation of my poetic field, with the particular and general plowing, planting, seeding, and occupation of the ground, till everything was fertilized, rooted, and ready to start its own way for good or bad. Not till after all this, did I attempt any serious acquaintance with poetic literature. Along in my sixteenth year I had become possessor of a stout, well-cramm'd one thousand page octavo volume (I have it yet,) containing Walter Scott's poetry entire—an inexhaustible mine and treasury of poetic forage (especially the endless forests and jungles of notes)—has been so to me for fifty years, and remains so to this day.*

Later, at intervals, summers and falls, I used to go off, sometimes for a week at a stretch, down in the country, or to Long Island's seashores—there, in the presence of outdoor influences,

* Sir Walter Scott's COMPLETE POEMS; especially including BORDER MINSTRELSY; then Sir Tristrem; Lay of the Last Minstrel; Ballads from the German; Marmion; Lady of the Lake; Vision of Don Roderick; Lord of the Isles; Rokeby; Bridal of Triermain; Field of Waterloo; Harold the Dauntless; all the Dramas; various Introductions, endless interesting Notes, and Essays on Poetry, Romance, &c.

Lockhart's 1833 (or '34) edition with Scott's latest and copious revisions and annotations. (All the poems were thoroughly read by me, but the ballads of the Border Minstrelsy over and over again.)

I went over thoroughly the Old and New Testaments, and absorb'd (probably to better advantage for me than in any library or indoor room—it makes such difference *where* you read,) Shakspeare, Ossian, the best translated versions I could get of Homer, Eschylus, Sophocles, the old German Nibelungen, the ancient Hindoo poems, and one or two other masterpieces, Dante's among them. As it happen'd, I read the latter mostly in an old wood. The Iliad (Buckley's prose version,) I read first thoroughly on the peninsula of Orient, northeast end of Long Island, in a shelter'd hollow of rocks and sand, with the sea on each side. (I have wonder'd since why I was not overwhelm'd by those mighty masters. Likely because I read them, as described, in the full presence of Nature, under the sun, with the far-spreading landscape and vistas, or the sea rolling in.)

Toward the last I had among much else look'd over Edgar Poe's poems—of which I was not an admirer, tho' I always saw that beyond their limited range of melody (like perpetual chimes of music bells, ringing from lower *b* flat up to *g*) they were melodious expressions, and perhaps never excell'd ones, of certain pronounc'd phases of human morbidity. (The Poetic area is very spacious—has room for all—has so many mansions!) But I was repaid in Poe's prose by the idea that (at any rate for our occasions, our day) there can be no such thing as a long poem. The same thought had been haunting my mind before, but Poe's argument, though short, work'd the sum out and proved it to me.

Another point had an early settlement, clearing the ground greatly. I saw, from the time my enterprise and questionings positively shaped themselves (how best can I express my own distinctive era and surroundings, America, Democracy?) that the trunk and centre whence the answer was to radiate, and to which all should return from straying however far a distance, must be an identical body and soul, a personality—which personality, after many considerations and ponderings I deliberately settled should be myself—indeed could not be any other. I also felt strongly (whether I have shown it or not) that to the true and full estimate of the Present both the Past and the Future are main considerations.

These, however, and much more might have gone on and come to naught (almost positively would have come to naught,) if a sudden, vast, terrible, direct and indirect stimulus for new and national declamatory expression had not been given to me. It is certain, I say, that, although I had made a start before, only from the occurrence of the Secession War, and what it show'd me as by flashes of lightning, with the emotional depths it sounded

and arous'd (of course, I don't mean in my own heart only, I saw it just as plainly in others, in millions)—that only from the strong flare and provocation of that war's sights and scenes the final reasons-for-being of an autochthonic and passionate song definitely came forth.

I went down to the war fields in Virginia (end of 1862), lived thenceforward in camp—saw great battles and the days and nights afterward—partook of all the fluctuations, gloom, despair, hopes again arous'd, courage evoked—death readily risk'd—*the cause*, too—along and filling those agonistic and lurid following years, 1863-'64-'65—the real parturition years (more than 1776-'83) of this henceforth homogeneous Union. Without those three or four years and the experiences they gave, "Leaves of Grass" would not now be existing.

But I set out with the intention also of indicating or hinting some point-characteristics which I since see (though I did not then, at least not definitely) were bases and object-urgings toward those "Leaves" from the first. The word I myself put primarily for the description of them as they stand at last, is the word Suggestiveness. I round and finish little, if anything; and could not, consistently with my scheme. The reader will always have his or her part to do, just as much as I have had mine. I seek less to state or display any theme or thought, and more to bring you, reader, into the atmosphere of the theme or thought—there to pursue your own flight. Another impetus-word is Comradeship as for all lands, and in a more commanding and acknowledg'd sense than hitherto. Other word-signs would be Good Cheer, Content, and Hope.

The chief trait of any given poet is always the spirit he brings to the observation of Humanity and Nature—the mood out of which he contemplates his subjects. What kind of temper and what amount of faith report these things? Up to how recent a date is the song carried? What the equipment, and special raciness of the singer—what his tinge of coloring? The last value of artistic expressers, past and present—Greek æsthetes, Shakspeare—or in our own day Tennyson, Victor Hugo, Carlyle, Emerson—is certainly involv'd in such questions. I say the profoundest service that poems or any other writings can do for their reader is not merely to satisfy the intellect, or supply something polish'd and interesting, nor even to depict great passions, or persons or events, but to fill him with vigorous and clean manliness, religiousness, and give him *good heart* as a radical possession and habit. The educated world seems to have been growing more and more ennuyed for ages, leaving to our time the inheri-

tance of it all. Fortunately there is the original inexhaustible fund of buoyancy, normally resident in the race, forever eligible to be appeal'd to and relied on.

As for native American individuality, though certain to come, and on a large scale, the distinctive and ideal type of Western character (as consistent with the operative political and even money-making features of United States' humanity in the Nineteenth Century as chosen knights, gentlemen and warriors were the ideals of the centuries of European feudalism) it has not yet appear'd. I have allow'd the stress of my poems from beginning to end to bear upon American individuality and assist it—not only because that is a great lesson in Nature, amid all her generalizing laws, but as counterpoise to the leveling tendencies of Democracy—and for other reasons. Defiant of ostensible literary and other conventions, I avowedly chant “the great pride of man in himself,” and permit it to be more or less a *motif* of nearly all my verse. I think this pride indispensable to an American. I think it not inconsistent with obedience, humility, deference, and self-questioning.

Democracy has been so retarded and jeopardized by powerful personalities, that its first instincts are fain to clip, conform, bring in stragglers, and reduce everything to a dead level. While the ambitious thought of my song is to help the forming of a great aggregate Nation, it is, perhaps, altogether through the forming of myriads of fully develop'd and enclosing individuals. Welcome as are equality's and fraternity's doctrines and popular education, a certain liability accompanies them all, as we see. That primal and interior something in man, in his soul's abysses, coloring all, and, by exceptional fruitions, giving the last majesty to him—something continually touch'd upon and attain'd by the old poems and ballads of feudalism, and often the principal foundation of them—modern science and democracy appear to be endangering, perhaps eliminating. But that forms an appearance only; the reality is quite different. The new influences, upon the whole, are surely preparing the way for grander individualities than ever. To-day and here personal force is behind everything, just the same. The times and depictions from the Iliad to Shakspeare inclusive can happily never again be realized—but the elements of courageous and lofty manhood are unchanged.

Without yielding an inch the working-man and working-woman were to be in my pages from first to last. The ranges of heroism and loftiness with which Greek and feudal poets endow'd their god-like or lordly born characters—indeed prouder and better based and with fuller ranges than those—I was to

endow the democratic averages of America. I was to show that we, here and to-day, are eligible to the grandest and the best—more eligible now than any times of old were. I will also want my utterances (I said to myself before beginning) to be in spirit the poems of the morning. (They have been founded and mainly written in the sunny forenoon and early midday of my life.) I will want them to be the poems of women entirely as much as men. I have wish'd to put the complete Union of the States in my songs without any preference or partiality whatever. Henceforth, if they live and are read, it must be just as much South as North—just as much along the Pacific as Atlantic—in the valley of the Mississippi, in Canada, up in Maine, down in Texas, and on the shores of Puget Sound.

From another point of view "Leaves of Grass" is avowedly the song of Sex and Amativeness, and even Animality—though meanings that do not usually go along with those words are behind all, and will duly emerge; and all are sought to be lifted into a different light and atmosphere. Of this feature, intentionally palpable in a few lines, I shall only say the espousing principle of those lines so gives breath of life to my whole scheme that the bulk of the pieces might as well have been left unwritten were those lines omitted. Difficult as it will be, it has become, in my opinion, imperative to achieve a shifted attitude from superior men and women towards the thought and fact of sexuality, as an element in character, personality, the emotions, and a theme in literature. I am not going to argue the question by itself; it does not stand by itself. The vitality of it is altogether in its relations, bearings, significance—like the clef of a symphony. At last analogy the lines I allude to, and the spirit in which they are spoken, permeate all "Leaves of Grass," and the work must stand or fall with them, as the human body and soul must remain as an entirety.

Universal as are certain facts and symptoms of communities or individuals all times, there is nothing so rare in modern conventions and poetry as their normal recognizance. Literature is always calling in the doctor for consultation and confession, and always giving evasions and swathing suppressions in place of that "heroic nudity" * on which only a genuine diagnosis of serious cases can be built. And in respect to editions of "Leaves of Grass" in time to come (if there should be such) I take occasion now to confirm those lines with the settled convictions and deliberate renewals of thirty years, and to hereby prohibit, as far as word of mine can do so, any elision of them.

* "Nineteenth Century," July, 1883.

Then still a purpose enclosing all, and over and beneath all. Ever since what might be call'd thought, or the budding of thought, fairly began in my youthful mind, I had had a desire to attempt some worthy record of that entire faith and acceptance ("to justify the ways of God to man" is Milton's well-known and ambitious phrase) which is the foundation of moral America. I felt it all as positively then in my young days as I do now in my old ones; to formulate a poem whose every thought or fact should directly or indirectly be or connive at an implicit belief in the wisdom, health, mystery, beauty of every process, every concrete object, every human or other existence, not only consider'd from the point of view of all, but of each.

While I can not understand it or argue it out, I fully believe in a clue and purpose in Nature, entire and several; and that invisible spiritual results, just as real and definite as the visible, eventuate all concrete life and all materialism, through Time. My book ought to emanate buoyancy and gladness legitimately enough, for it was grown out of those elements, and has been the comfort of my life since it was originally commenced.

One main genesis-motive of the "Leaves" was my conviction (just as strong to-day as ever) that the crowning growth of the United States is to be spiritual and heroic. To help start and favor that growth—or even to call attention to it, or the need of it—is the beginning, middle and final purpose of the poems. (In fact, when really cipher'd out and summ'd to the last, plowing up in earnest the interminable average fallows of humanity—not "good government" merely, in the common sense—is the justification and main purpose of these United States.)

Isolated advantages in any rank or grace or fortune—the direct or indirect threads of all the poetry of the past—are in my opinion distasteful to the republican genius, and offer no foundation for its fitting verse. Establish'd poems, I know, have the very great advantage of chanting the already perform'd, so full of glories, reminiscences dear to the minds of men. But my volume is a candidate for the future. "All original art," says Taine, anyhow, "is self-regulated, and no original art can be regulated from without; it carries its own counterpoise, and does not receive it from elsewhere—lives on its own blood"—a solace to my frequent bruises and sulky vanity.

As the present is perhaps mainly an attempt at personal statement or illustration, I will allow myself as further help to extract the following anecdote from a book, "Annals of Old Painters," conn'd by me in youth. Rubens, the Flemish painter, in one of his wanderings through the galleries of old convents, came across a singular work. After looking at it thoughtfully for a

good while, and listening to the criticisms of his suite of students, he said to the latter, in answer to their questions (as to what school the work implied or belong'd,) "I do not believe the artist, unknown and perhaps no longer living, who has given the world this legacy, ever belong'd to any school, or ever painted anything but this one picture, which is a personal affair—a piece out of a man's life."

"Leaves of Grass" indeed (I cannot too often reiterate) has mainly been the outcropping of my own emotional and other personal nature—an attempt, from first to last, to put *a Person*, a human being (myself, in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, in America,) freely, fully and truly on record. I could not find any similar personal record in current literature that satisfied me. But it is not on "Leaves of Grass" distinctively as *literature*, or a specimen thereof, that I feel to dwell, or advance claims. No one will get at my verses who insists upon viewing them as a literary performance, or attempt at such performance, or as aiming mainly toward art or æstheticism.

I say no land or people or circumstances ever existed so needing a race of singers and poems differing from all others, and rigidly their own, as the land and people and circumstances of our United States need such singers and poems to-day, and for the future. Still further, as long as the States continue to absorb and be dominated by the poetry of the Old World, and remain unsupplied with autochthonous song, to express, vitalize and give color to and define their material and political success, and minister to them distinctively, so long will they stop short of first-class Nationality and remain defective.

In the free evening of my day I give to you, reader, the foregoing garrulous talk, thoughts, reminiscences,

As idly drifting down the ebb,
Such ripples, half-caught voices, echo from the shore.

Concluding with two items for the imaginative genius of the West, when it worthily rises—First, what Herder taught to the young Goethe, that really great poetry is always (like the Homeric or Biblical canticles) the result of a national spirit, and not the privilege of a polish'd and select few; Second, that the strongest and sweetest songs yet remain to be sung.

SANDS AT SEVENTY.

MANNAHATTA.

My city's fit and noble name resumed,
Choice aboriginal name, with marvellous beauty, meaning,
*A rocky founded island—shores where ever gayly dash the coming,
going, hurrying sea waves.*

PAUMANOK.

Sea-beauty ! stretch'd and basking !
One side thy inland ocean laving, broad, with copious commerce,
 steamers, sails,
And one the Atlantic's wind caressing, fierce or gentle—mighty
 hulls dark-gliding in the distance.
Isle of sweet brooks of drinking-water—healthy air and soil !
Isle of the salty shore and breeze and brine !

FROM MONTAUK POINT.

I stand as on some mighty eagle's beak,
Eastward the sea absorbing, viewing, (nothing but sea and sky,)
The tossing waves, the foam, the ships in the distance,
The wild unrest, the snowy, curling caps—that inbound urge
 and urge of waves,
Seeking the shores forever.

TO THOSE WHO'VE FAIL'D.

To those who've fail'd, in aspiration vast,
To unnam'd soldiers fallen in front on the lead,
To calm, devoted engineers—to over-ardent travelers—to pilots
 on their ships,
To many a lofty song and picture without recognition—I'd rear
 a laurel-cover'd monument,
High, high above the rest—To all cut off before their time,
Possess'd by some strange spirit of fire,
Quench'd by an early death.

SANDS AT SEVENTY.

A CAROL CLOSING SIXTY-NINE.

A carol closing sixty-nine—a *résumé*—a repetition,
 My lines in joy and hope continuing on the same,
 Of ye, O God, Life, Nature, Freedom, Poetry ;
 Of you, my Land—your rivers, prairies, States—you, mottled
 Flag I love,
 Your aggregate retain'd entire—Of north, south, east and west,
 your items all ;
 Of me myself—the jocund heart yet beating in my breast,
 The body wreck'd, old, poor and paralyzed—the strange inertia
 falling pall-like round me,
 The burning fires down in my sluggish blood not yet extinct,
 The undiminish'd faith—the groups of loving friends.

THE BRAVEST SOLDIERS.

Brave, brave were the soldiers (high named to-day) who lived
 through the fight ;
 But the bravest press'd to the front and fell, unnamed, unknown.

A FONT OF TYPE.

This latent mine—these unlaunch'd voices—passionate powers,
 Wrath, argument, or praise, or comic leer, or prayer devout,
 (Not nonpareil, brevier, bourgeois, long primer merely,)
 These ocean waves arousable to fury and to death,
 Or sooth'd to ease and sheeny sun and sleep,
 Within the pallid slivers slumbering.

AS I SIT WRITING HERE.

As I sit writing here, sick and grown old,
 Not my least burden is that dulness of the years, querilities,
 Ungracious glooms, aches, lethargy, constipation, whimpering
 ennui,
 May filter in my daily songs.

MY CANARY BIRD.

Did we count great, O soul, to penetrate the themes of mighty
 books,
 Absorbing deep and full from thoughts, plays, speculations ?
 But now from thee to me, caged bird, to feel thy joyous warble,
 Filling the air, the lonesome room, the long forenoon,
 Is it not just as great, O soul ?

QUERIES TO MY SEVENTIETH YEAR.

Approaching, nearing, curious,
 Thou dim, uncertain spectre—bringest thou life or death?
 Strength, weakness, blindness, more paralysis and heavier?
 Or placid skies and sun? Wilt stir the waters yet?
 Or haply cut me short for good? Or leave me here as now,
 Dull, parrot-like and old, with crack'd voice harping, screeching?

THE WALLABOUT MARTYRS.

[In Brooklyn, in an old vault, mark'd by no special recognition, lie huddled at this moment the undoubtedly authentic remains of the stanchest and earliest revolutionary patriots from the British prison ships and prisons of the times of 1776-83, in and around New York, and from all over Long Island; originally buried—many thousands of them—in trenches in the Wallabout sands.]

Greater than memory of Achilles or Ulysses,
 More, more by far to thee than tomb of Alexander,
 Those cart loads of old charnel ashes, scales and splints of
 mouldy bones,
 Once living men—once resolute courage, aspiration, strength,
 The stepping stones to thee to-day and here, America.

THE FIRST DANDELION.

Simple and fresh and fair from winter's close emerging,
 As if no artifice of fashion, business, politics, had ever been,
 Forth from its sunny nook of shelter'd grass—innocent, golden,
 calm as the dawn,
 The spring's first dandelion shows its trustful face.

AMERICA.

Centre of equal daughters, equal sons,
 All, all alike endear'd, grown, ungrown, young or old,
 Strong, ample, fair, enduring, capable, rich,
 Perennial with the Earth, with Freedom, Law and Love,
 A grand, sane, towering, seated Mother,
 Chair'd in the adamant of Time.

MEMORIES.

How sweet the silent backward tracings!
 The wanderings as in dreams—the meditation of old times re-
 sumed—their loves, joys, persons, voyages.

SANDS AT SEVENTY.

TO-DAY AND THEE.

The appointed winners in a long-stretch'd game ;
 The course of Time and nations—Egypt, India, Greece and
 Rome ;
 The past entire, with all its heroes, histories, arts, experiments,
 Its store of songs, inventions, voyages, teachers, books,
 Garner'd for now and thee—To think of it !
 The heirdom all converged in thee !

AFTER THE DAZZLE OF DAY.

After the dazzle of day is gone,
 Only the dark, dark night shows to my eyes the stars ;
 After the clangor of organ majestic, or chorus, or perfect band,
 Silent, athwart my soul, moves the symphony true.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, BORN FEB. 12, 1809.

To-day, from each and all, a breath of prayer—a pulse of
 thought,
 To memory of Him—to birth of Him.

Publish'd Feb. 12, 1888.

OUT OF MAY'S SHOWS SELECTED.

Apple orchards, the trees all cover'd with blossoms ;
 Wheat fields carpeted far and near in vital emerald green ;
 The eternal, exhaustless freshness of each early morning ;
 The yellow, golden, transparent haze of the warm afternoon sun ;
 The aspiring lilac bushes with profuse purple or white flowers.

HALCYON DAYS.

Not from successful love alone,
 Nor wealth, nor honor'd middle age, nor victories of politics or
 war ;
 But as life wanes, and all the turbulent passions calm,
 As gorgeous, vapory, silent hues cover the evening sky,
 As softness, fulness, rest, suffuse the frame, like fresher, balmier
 air,
 As the days take on a mellower light, and the apple at last hangs
 really finish'd and indolent-ripe on the tree,
 Then for the teeming quietest, happiest days of all !
 The brooding and blissful halcyon days !

FANCIES AT NAVESINK.

THE PILOT IN THE MIST.

Steaming the northern rapids—(an old St. Lawrence reminiscence,
 A sudden memory-flash comes back, I know not why,
 Here waiting for the sunrise, gazing from this hill;)*
 Again 'tis just at morning—a heavy haze contends with day-break,
 Again the trembling, laboring vessel veers me—I press through
 foam-dash'd rocks that almost touch me,
 Again I mark where aft the small thin Indian helmsman
 Looms in the mist, with brow elate and governing hand.

HAD I THE CHOICE.

Had I the choice to tally greatest bards,
 To limn their portraits, stately, beautiful, and emulate at will,
 Homer with all his wars and warriors—Hector, Achilles, Ajax,
 Or Shakspeare's woe-entangled Hamlet, Lear, Othello—Tennyson's fair ladies,
 Metre or wit the best, or choice conceit to wield in perfect
 rhyme, delight of singers;
 These, these, O sea, all these I'd gladly barter,
 Would you the undulation of one wave, its trick to me transfer,
 Or breathe one breath of yours upon my verse,
 And leave its odor there.

YOU TIDES WITH CEASELESS SWELL.

You tides with ceaseless swell! you power that does this work!
 You unseen force, centripetal, centrifugal, through space's
 spread,
 Rapport of sun, moon, earth, and all the constellations,
 What are the messages by you from distant stars to us? what
 Sirius? what Capella's?
 What central heart—and you the pulse—vivifies all? what
 boundless aggregate of all?
 What subtle indirection and significance in you? what clue to
 all in you? what fluid, vast identity,
 Holding the universe with all its parts as one—as sailing in a ship?

* Navesink—a sea-side mountain, lower entrance of New York Bay.

LAST OF EBB, AND DAYLIGHT WANING.

Last of ebb, and daylight waning,
Scented sea-cool landward making, smells of sedge and salt
incoming,

With many a half-caught voice sent up from the eddies,
Many a muffled confession—many a sob and whisper'd word,
As of speakers far or hid.

How they sweep down and out! how they mutter!
Poets unnamed—artists greatest of any, with cherish'd lost
designs,

Love's unresponse—a chorus of age's complaints—hope's last
words,

Some suicide's despairing cry, *Away to the boundless waste, and
never again return.*

On to oblivion then!

On, on, and do your part, ye burying, ebbing tide!

On for your time, ye furious debouché!

AND YET NOT YOU ALONE.

And yet not you alone, twilight and burying ebb,
Nor you, ye lost designs alone—nor failures, aspirations;
I know, divine deceitful ones, your glamour's seeming;
Duly by you, from you, the tide and light again—duly the
hinges turning,

Duly the needed discord-parts offsetting, blending,
Weaving from you, from Sleep, Night, Death itself,
The rhythmus of Birth eternal.

PROUDLY THE FLOOD COMES IN.

Proudly the flood comes in, shouting, foaming, advancing,
Long it holds at the high, with bosom broad outswelling,
All throbs, dilates—the farms, woods, streets of cities—workmen
at work,

Mainsails, topsails, jibs, appear in the offing—steamers' pennants
of smoke—and under the forenoon sun,

Freighted with human lives, gaily the outward bound, gaily the
inward bound,

Flaunting from many a spar the flag I love.

BY THAT LONG SCAN OF WAVES.

By that long scan of waves, myself call'd back, resumed upon
myself,

In every crest some undulating light or shade—some retrospect,

Joys, travels, studies, silent panoramas—scenes ephemeral,
 The long past war, the battles, hospital sights, the wounded and
 the dead,
 Myself through every by-gone phase—my idle youth—old age at
 hand,
 My three-score years of life summ'd up, and more, and past,
 By any grand ideal tried, intentionless, the whole a nothing,
 And haply yet some drop within God's scheme's ensemble—some
 wave, or part of wave,
 Like one of yours, ye multitudinous ocean.

THEN LAST OF ALL.

Then last of all, caught from these shores, this hill,
 Of you O tides, the mystic human meaning:
 Only by law of you, your swell and ebb, enclosing me the same,
 The brain that shapes, the voice that chants this song.

ELECTION DAY, NOVEMBER, 1884.

If I should need to name, O Western World, your powerfulest
 scene and show,
 'Twould not be you, Niagara—nor you, ye limitless prairies—nor
 your huge rifts of canyons, Colorado,
 Nor you, Yosemite—nor Yellowstone, with all its spasmic geyser-
 loops ascending to the skies, appearing and disappearing,
 Nor Oregon's white cones—nor Huron's belt of mighty lakes—
 nor Mississippi's stream:
 —This seething hemisphere's humanity, as now, I'd name—the
still small voice vibrating—America's choosing day,
 (The heart of it not in the chosen—the act itself the main, the
 quadriennial choosing,)
 The stretch of North and South arous'd—sea-board and inland
 —Texas to Maine—the Prairie States—Vermont, Virginia,
 California,
 The final ballot-shower from East to West—the paradox and con-
 flict,
 The countless snow-flakes falling—(a swordless conflict,
 Yet more than all Rome's wars of old, or modern Napoleon's:)
 the peaceful choice of all,
 Or good or ill humanity—welcoming the darker odds, the dross:
 —Foams and ferments the wine? it serves to purify—while the
 heart pants, life glows:
 These stormy gusts and winds waft precious ships,
 Swell'd Washington's, Jefferson's, Lincoln's sails.

WITH HUSKY-HAUGHTY LIPS, O SEA!

With husky-haughty lips, O sea!
 Where day and night I wend thy surf-beat shore,
 Imaging to my sense thy varied strange suggestions,
 (I see and plainly list thy talk and conference here,)
 Thy troops of white-maned racers racing to the goal,
 Thy ample, smiling face, dash'd with the sparkling dimples of the
 sun,
 Thy brooding scowl and murk—thy unloos'd hurricanes,
 Thy unsubduedness, caprices, wilfulness;
 Great as thou art above the rest, thy many tears—a lack from all
 eternity in thy content,
 (Naught but the greatest struggles, wrongs, defeats, could make
 thee greatest—no less could make thee,)
 Thy lonely state—something thou ever seek'st and seek'st, yet
 never gain'st,
 Surely some right withheld—some voice, in huge monotonous
 rage, of freedom-lover pent,
 Some vast heart, like a planet's, chain'd and chafing in those
 breakers,
 By lengthen'd swell, and spasm, and panting breath,
 And rhythmic rasping of thy sands and waves,
 And serpent hiss, and savage peals of laughter,
 And undertones of distant lion roar,
 (Sounding, appealing to the sky's deaf ear—but now, rapport for
 once,
 A phantom in the night thy confidant for once,)
 The first and last confession of the globe,
 Outsurgings, muttering from thy soul's abysses,
 The tale of cosmic elemental passion,
 Thou tellest to a kindred soul.

DEATH OF GENERAL GRANT.

As one by one withdraw the lofty actors,
 From that great play on history's stage eterne,
 That lurid, partial act of war and peace—of old and new con-
 tending,
 Fought out through wrath, fears, dark dismays, and many a long
 suspense;
 All past—and since, in countless graves receding, mellowing,
 Victor's and vanquish'd—Lincoln's and Lee's—now thou with
 them,

Man of the mighty days—and equal to the days!
 Thou from the prairies!—tangled and many-vein'd and hard has
 been thy part,
 To admiration has it been enacted!

RED JACKET (FROM ALOFT.)

[Impromptu on Buffalo City's monument to, and re-burial of the old Iroquois orator, October 9, 1884.]

Upon this scene, this show,
 Yielded to-day by fashion, learning, wealth,
 (Nor in caprice alone—some grains of deepest meaning.)
 Haply, aloft, (who knows?) from distant sky-clouds' blended
 shapes,
 As some old tree, or rock or cliff, thrill'd with its soul,
 Product of Nature's sun, stars, earth direct—a towering human
 form,
 In hunting-shirt of film, arm'd with the rifle, a half-ironical smile
 curving its phantom lips,
 Like one of Ossian's ghosts looks down.

WASHINGTON'S MONUMENT, FEBRUARY, 1885.

Ah, not this marble, dead and cold:
 Far from its base and shaft expanding—the round zones circling,
 comprehending,
 Thou, Washington, art all the world's, the continents' entire—
 not yours alone, America,
 Europe's as well, in every part, castle of lord or laborer's cot,
 Or frozen North, or sultry South—the African's—the Arab's in
 his tent,
 Old Asia's there with venerable smile, seated amid her ruins;
 (Greets the antique the hero new? 'tis but the same—the heir
 legitimate, continued ever,
 The indomitable heart and arm—proofs of the never-broken
 line,
 Courage, alertness, patience, faith, the same—e'en in defeat de-
 feated not, the same:)
 Wherever sails a ship, or house is built on land, or day or night,
 Through teeming cities' streets, indoors or out, factories or farms,
 Now, or to come, or past—where patriot wills existed or exist,
 Wherever Freedom, pois'd by Toleration, sway'd by Law,
 Stands or is rising thy true monument.

OF THAT BLITHE THROAT OF THINE.

[More than eighty-three degrees north—about a good day's steaming distance to the Pole by one of our fast oceaners in clear water—Greely the explorer heard the song of a single snow-bird merrily sounding over the desolation.]

Of that blithe throat of thine from arctic bleak and blank,
 I'll mind the lesson, solitary bird—let me too welcome chilling
 drifts,
 E'en the profoundest chill, as now—a torpid pulse, a brain un-
 nerv'd,
 Old age land-lock'd within its winter bay—(cold, cold, O cold!)
 These snowy hairs, my feeble arm, my frozen feet,
 For them thy faith, thy rule I take, and grave it to the last;
 Not summer's zones alone—not chants of youth, or south's warm
 tides alone,
 But held by sluggish flocs, pack'd in the northern ice, the cumulus
 of years,
 These with gay heart I also sing.

BROADWAY.

What hurrying human tides, or day or night!
 What passions, winnings, losses, ardors, swim thy waters!
 What whirls of evil, bliss and sorrow, stem thee!
 What curious questioning glances—glints of love!
 Leer, envy, scorn, contempt, hope, aspiration!
 Thou portal—thou arena—thou of the myriad long-drawn lines
 and groups!
 (Could but thy flagstones, curbs, façades, tell their inimitable
 tales;
 Thy windows rich, and huge hotels—thy side-walks wide;)
 Thou of the endless sliding, mincing, shuffling feet!
 Thou, like the parti-colored world itself—like infinite, teeming,
 mocking life!
 Thou visor'd, vast, unspeakable show and lesson!

TO GET THE FINAL LILT OF SONGS.

To get the final lilt of songs,
 To penetrate the inmost lore of poets—to know the mighty ones,
 Job, Homer, Eschylus, Dante, Shakspeare, Tennyson, Emerson;
 To diagnose the shifting-delicate tints of love and pride and
 doubt—to truly understand,
 To encompass these, the last keen faculty and entrance-price,
 Old age, and what it brings from all its past experiences.

OLD SALT KOSSABONE.

Far back, related on my mother's side,
 Old Salt Kossabone, I'll tell you how he died :
 (Had been a sailor all his life—was nearly 90—lived with his
 married grandchild, Jenny ;
 House on a hill, with view of bay at hand, and distant cape, and
 stretch to open sea ;)
 The last of afternoons, the evening hours, for many a year his
 regular custom,
 In his great arm chair by the window seated,
 (Sometimes, indeed, through half the day,)
 Watching the coming, going of the vessels, he mutters to himself
 —And now the close of all :
 One struggling outbound brig, one day, baffled for long—cross-
 tides and much wrong going,
 At last at nightfall strikes the breeze aright, her whole luck veer-
 ing,
 And swiftly bending round the cape, the darkness proudly enter-
 ing, cleaving, as he watches,
 "She's free—she's on her destination"—these the last words—
 when Jenny came, he sat there dead,
 Dutch Kossabone, Old Salt, related on my mother's side, far
 back.

THE DEAD TENOR.

As down the stage again,
 With Spanish hat and plumes, and gait inimitable,
 Back from the fading lessons of the past, I'd call, I'd tell and
 own,
 How much from thee ! the revelation of the singing voice from
 thee !
 (So firm—so liquid-soft—again that tremulous, manly timbre !
 The perfect singing voice—deepest of all to me the lesson—trial
 and test of all :)
 How through those strains distill'd—how the rapt ears, the soul
 of me, absorbing
Fernando's heart, *Manrico's* passionate call, *Ernani's*, sweet
Gennaro's,
 I fold thenceforth, or seek to fold, within my chants transmuting,
 Freedom's and Love's and Faith's unloos'd cantabile,
 (As perfume's, color's, sunlight's correlation :)
 From these, for these, with these, a hurried line, dead tenor,
 A wafted autumn leaf, dropt in the closing grave, the shovel'd
 earth,
 To memory of thee.

CONTINUITIES.

[From a talk I had lately with a German spiritualist.]

Nothing is ever really lost, or can be lost,
 No birth, identity, form—no object of the world,
 Nor life, nor force, nor any visible thing ;
 Appearance must not foil, nor shifted sphere confuse thy brain.
 Ample are time and space—ample the fields of Nature.
 The body, sluggish, aged, cold—the embers left from earlier
 fires,
 The light in the eye grown dim, shall duly flame again ;
 The sun now low in the west rises for mornings and for noons
 continual ;
 To frozen clods ever the spring's invisible law returns,
 With grass and flowers and summer fruits and corn.

YONNONDIO.

[The sense of the word is *lament for the aborigines*. It is an Iroquois term; and has been used for a personal name.]

A song, a poem of itself—the word itself a dirge,
 Amid the wilds, the rocks, the storm and wintry night,
 To me such misty, strange tableaux the syllables calling up ;
 Yonnondio—I see, far in the west or north, a limitless ravine,
 with plains and mountains dark,
 I see swarms of stalwart chieftains, medicine-men, and warriors,
 As fitting by like clouds of ghosts, they pass and are gone in the
 twilight,
 (Race of the woods, the landscapes free, and the falls !
 No picture, poem, statement, passing them to the future :)
 Yonnondio ! Yonnondio !—unlimn'd they disappear ;
 To-day gives place, and fades—the cities, farms, factories fade ;
 A muffled sonorous sound, a wailing word is borne through the
 air for a moment,
 Then blank and gone and still, and utterly lost.

LIFE.

Ever the undiscouraged, resolute, struggling soul of man ;
 (Have former armies fail'd ? then we send fresh armies—and
 fresh again ;)
 Ever the grappled mystery of all earth's ages old or new ;
 Ever the eager eyes, hurrahs, the welcome-clapping hands, the
 loud applause ;
 Ever the soul dissatisfied, curious, unconvinced at last ;
 Struggling to-day the same—battling the same.

"GOING SOMEWHERE."

My science-friend, my noblest woman-friend,
 (Now buried in an English grave—and this a memory-leaf for
 her dear sake,)
 Ended our talk—"The sum, concluding all we know of old or
 modern learning, intuitions deep,
 "Of all Geologies—Histories—of all Astronomy—of Evolution,
 Metaphysics all,
 "Is, that we all are onward, onward, speeding slowly, surely
 bettering,
 "Life, life an endless march, an endless army, (no halt, but it is
 duly over,)
 "The world, the race, the soul—in space and time the universes,
 "All bound as is befitting each—all surely going somewhere."

From the 1867 edition L. of G.

SMALL THE THEME OF MY CHANT.

Small the theme of my Chant, yet the greatest—namely, One's-
 Self—a simple, separate person. That, for the use of the
 New World, I sing.
 Man's physiology complete, from top to toe, I sing. Not physi-
 ognomy alone, nor brain alone, is worthy for the Muse;—I
 say the Form complete is worthier far. The Female equally
 with the Male, I sing.
 Nor cease at the theme of One's-Self. I speak the word of the
 modern, the word En-Masse.
 My Days I sing, and the Lands—with interstice I knew of hap-
 less War.
 (O friend, whoe'er you are, at last arriving hither to commence,
 I feel through every leaf the pressure of your hand, which I
 return.
 And thus upon our journey, footing the road, and more than
 once, and link'd together let us go.)

TRUE CONQUERORS.

Old farmers, travelers, workmen (no matter how crippled or
 bent,)
 Old sailors, out of many a perilous voyage, storm and wreck,
 Old soldiers from campaigns, with all their wounds, defeats and
 scars;
 Enough that they've survived at all—long life's unflinching ones!
 Forth from their struggles, trials, fights, to have emerged at all
 —in that alone,
 True conquerors o'er all the rest.

THE UNITED STATES TO OLD WORLD CRITICS.

Here first the duties of to-day, the lessons of the concrete,
 Wealth, order, travel, shelter, products, plenty;
 As of the building of some varied, vast, perpetual edifice,
 Whence to arise inevitable in time, the towering roofs, the lamps,
 The solid-planted spires tall shooting to the stars.

THE CALMING THOUGHT OF ALL.

That coursing on, whate'er men's speculations,
 Amid the changing schools, theologies, philosophies,
 Amid the bawling presentations new and old,
 The round earth's silent vital laws, facts, modes continue.

THANKS IN OLD AGE.

Thanks in old age—thanks ere I go,
 For health, the midday sun, the impalpable air—for life, mere
 life,
 For precious ever-lingering memories, (of you my mother dear
 —you, father—you, brothers, sisters, friends,)
 For all my days—not those of peace alone—the days of war the
 same,
 For gentle words, caresses, gifts from foreign lands,
 For shelter, wine and meat—for sweet appreciation,
 (You distant, dim unknown—or young or old—countless, un-
 specified, readers below'd,
 We never met, and ne'er shall meet—and yet our souls embrace,
 long, close and long;)
 For beings, groups, love, deeds, words, books—for colors, forms,
 For all the brave strong men—devoted, hardy men—who've for-
 ward sprung in freedom's help, all years, all lands,
 For braver, stronger, more devoted men—(a special laurel ere I
 go, to life's war's chosen ones,
 The cannoneers of song and thought—the great artillerists—the
 foremost leaders, captains of the soul:)
 As soldier from an ended war return'd—As traveler out of
 myriads, to the long procession retrospective,
 Thanks—joyful thanks!—a soldier's, traveler's thanks.

LIFE AND DEATH.

The two old, simple problems ever intertwined,
 Close home, elusive, present, baffled, grappled.
 By each successive age insoluble, pass'd on,
 To ours to-day—and we pass on the same.

THE VOICE OF THE RAIN.

And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
 Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
 I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain,
 Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea,
 Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely form'd, altogether changed,
 and yet the same,
 I descend to lave the drouths, atomies, dust-layers of the globe,
 And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn;
 And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own
 origin, and make pure and beautify it:
 (For song, issuing from its birth-place, after fulfilment, wander-
 ing,
 Reck'd or unreck'd, duly with love returns.)

SOON SHALL THE WINTER'S FOIL BE HERE.

Soon shall the winter's foil be here;
 Soon shall these icy ligatures unbind and melt—A little while,
 And air, soil, wave, suffused shall be in softness, bloom and
 growth—a thousand forms shall rise
 From these dead clods and chills as from low burial graves.
 Thine eyes, ears—all thy best attributes—all that takes cognizance
 of natural beauty,
 Shall wake and fill. Thou shalt perceive the simple shows, the
 delicate miracles of earth,
 Dandelions, clover, the emerald grass, the early scents and flow-
 ers,
 The arbutus under foot, the willow's yellow-green, the blossom-
 ing plum and cherry;
 With these the robin, lark and thrush, singing their songs—the
 flitting bluebird;
 For such the scenes the annual play brings on.

WHILE NOT THE PAST FORGETTING.

While not the past forgetting,
 To-day, at least, contention sunk entire—peace, brotherhood up-
 risen;
 For sign reciprocal our Northern, Southern hands,
 Lay on the graves of all dead soldiers, North or South,
 (Nor for the past alone—for meanings to the future,)
 Wreaths of roses and branches of palm.

Publish'd May 30, 1888.

SANDS AT SEVENTY.

THE DYING VETERAN.

[A Long Island incident—early part of the present century.]

Amid these days of order, ease, prosperity,
 Amid the current songs of beauty, peace, decorum,
 I cast a reminiscence—(likely 'twill offend you,
 I heard it in my boyhood ;)—More than a generation since,
 A queer old savage man, a fighter under Washington himself,
 (Large, brave, cleanly, hot-blooded, no talker, rather spiritual-
 istic,
 Had fought in the ranks—fought well—had been all through the
 Revolutionary war,)
 Lay dying—sons, daughters, church-deacons, lovingly tending
 him,
 Sharpening their sense, their ears, towards his murmuring, half-
 caught words :
 “Let me return again to my war-days,
 To the sights and scenes—to forming the line of battle,
 To the scouts ahead reconnoitering,
 To the cannons, the grim artillery,
 To the galloping aids, carrying orders,
 To the wounded, the fallen, the heat, the suspense,
 The perfume strong, the smoke, the deafening noise ;
 Away with your life of peace !—your joys of peace !
 Give me my old wild battle-life again !”

STRONGER LESSONS.

Have you learn'd lessons only of those who admired you, and
 were tender with you, and stood aside for you ?
 Have you not learn'd great lessons from those who reject you,
 and brace themselves against you ? or who treat you with
 contempt, or dispute the passage with you ?

A PRAIRIE SUNSET.

Shot gold, maroon and violet, dazzling silver, emerald, fawn,
 The earth's whole amplitude and Nature's multiform power con-
 sign'd for once to colors ;
 The light, the general air possess'd by them—colors till now un-
 known,
 No limit, confine—not the Western sky alone—the high meri-
 dian—North, South, all,
 Pure luminous color fighting the silent shadows to the last.

TWENTY YEARS.

Down on the ancient wharf, the sand, I sit, with a new-comer
 chatting :
 He shipp'd as green-hand boy, and sail'd away, (took some sud-
 den, vehement notion ;))
 Since, twenty years and more have circled round and round,
 While he the globe was circling round and round,—and now
 returns :
 How changed the place—all the old land-marks gone—the
 parents dead ;
 (Yes, he comes back *to lay in port for good—to settle*—has a well-
 fill'd purse—no spot will do but this ;))
 The little boat that scull'd him from the sloop, now held in
 leash I see,
 I hear the slapping waves, the restless keel, the rocking in the
 sand,
 I see the sailor kit, the canvas bag, the great box bound with
 brass,
 I scan the face all berry-brown and bearded—the stout-strong
 frame,
 Dress'd in its russet suit of good Scotch cloth :
 (Then what the told-out story of those twenty years? What of
 the future?)

ORANGE BUDS BY MAIL FROM FLORIDA.

[Voltaire closed a famous argument by claiming that a ship of war and the
 grand opera were proofs enough of civilization's and France's progress, in
 his day.]

A lesser proof than old Voltaire's, yet greater,
 Proof of this present time, and thee, thy broad expanse,
 America,
 To my plain Northern hut, in outside clouds and snow,
 Brought safely for a thousand miles o'er land and tide,
 Some three days since on their own soil live-sprouting,
 Now here their sweetness through my room unfolding,
 A bunch of orange buds by mail from Florida.

TWILIGHT.

The soft voluptuous opiate shades,
 The sun just gone, the eager light dispell'd—(I too will soon be
 gone, dispell'd,))
 A haze—nirwana—rest and night—oblivion.

YOU LINGERING SPARSE LEAVES OF ME.

You lingering sparse leaves of me on winter-nearing boughs,
 And I some well-shorn tree of field or orchard-row;
 You tokens diminute and lorn—(not now the flush of May, or
 July clover-bloom—no grain of August now;)
 You pallid banner-staves—you pennants valueless—you over-
 stay'd of time,
 Yet my soul-dearest leaves confirming all the rest,
 The faithfulest—hardiest—last.

NOT MEAGRE, LATENT BOUGHS ALONE.

Not meagre, latent boughs alone, O songs! (scaly and bare,
 like eagles' talons,)
 But haply for some sunny day (who knows?) some future spring,
 some summer—bursting forth,
 To verdant leaves, or sheltering shade—to nourishing fruit,
 Apples and grapes—the stalwart limbs of trees emerging—the
 fresh, free, open air,
 And love and faith, like scented roses blooming.

THE DEAD EMPEROR.

To-day, with bending head and eyes, thou, too, Columbia,
 Less for the mighty crown laid low in sorrow—less for the
 Emperor,
 Thy true condolence breathest, sendest out o'er many a salt sea
 mile,
 Mourning a good old man—a faithful shepherd, patriot.
 Publish'd March 10, 1888.

AS THE GREEK'S SIGNAL FLAME.

[For Whittier's eightieth birthday, December 17, 1887.]

As the Greek's signal flame, by antique records told,
 Rose from the hill-top, like applause and glory,
 Welcoming in fame some special veteran, hero,
 With rosy tinge reddening the land he'd served,
 So I aloft from Mannahatta's ship-fringed shore,
 Lift high a kindled brand for thee, Old Poet.

THE DISMANTLED SHIP.

In some unused lagoon, some nameless bay,
 On sluggish, lonesome waters, anchor'd near the shore,
 An old, dismantled, gray and batter'd ship, disabled, done,
 After free voyages to all the seas of earth, haul'd up at last and
 hawser'd tight,
 Lies rusting, mouldering.

NOW PRECEDENT SONGS, FAREWELL.

Now precedent songs, farewell—by every name farewell,
 (Trains of a staggering line in many a strange procession,
 waggons,
 From ups and downs—with intervals—from elder years, mid-age,
 or youth,)
 “In Cabin'd Ships,” or “Thee Old Cause” or “Poets to Come”
 Or “Paumanok,” “Song of Myself,” “Calamus,” or “Adam,”
 Or “Beat! Beat! Drums!” or “To the Leaven'd Soil they
 Trode,”
 Or “Captain! My Captain!” “Kosmos,” “Quicksand Years,”
 or “Thoughts,”
 “Thou Mother with thy Equal Brood,” and many, many more
 unspecified,
 From fibre heart of mine—from throat and tongue—(My life's
 hot pulsing blood,
 The personal urge and form for me—not merely paper, automatic
 type and ink,)
 Each song of mine—each utterance in the past—having its long,
 long history,
 Of life or death, or soldier's wound, of country's loss or safety,
 (O heaven! what flash and started endless train of all! com-
 pared indeed to that!
 What wretched shred e'en at the best of all!)

AN EVENING LULL.

After a week of physical anguish,
 Unrest and pain, and feverish heat,
 Toward the ending day a calm and lull comes on,
 Three hours of peace and soothing rest of brain.*

* The two songs on this page are eked out during an afternoon, June, 1888, in my seventieth year, at a critical spell of illness. Of course no reader and probably no human being at any time will ever have such phases of emotional and solemn action as these involve to me. I feel in them an end and close of all.

AFTER THE SUPPER AND TALK.

After the supper and talk—after the day is done,
As a friend from friends his final withdrawal prolonging,
Good-bye and Good-bye with emotional lips repeating,
(So hard for his hand to release those hands—no more will they
meet,
No more for communion of sorrow and joy, of old and young,
A far-stretching journey awaits him, to return no more,)
Shunning, postponing severance—seeking to ward off the last
word ever so little,
E'en at the exit-door turning—charges superfluous calling back—
e'en as he descends the steps,
Something to eke out a minute additional—shadows of nightfall
deepening,
Farewells, messages lessening—dimmer the forthgoer's visage
and form,
Soon to be lost for aye in the darkness—loth, O so loth to de-
part!
Garrulous to the very last.

OUR EMINENT VISITORS

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

WELCOME to them each and all! They do good—the deepest, widest, most needed good—though quite certainly not in the ways attempted—which have, at times, something irresistibly comic. What can be more farcical, for instance, than the sight of a worthy gentleman coming three or four thousand miles through wet and wind to speak complacently and at great length on matters of which he both entirely mistakes or knows nothing—before crowds of auditors equally complacent, and equally at fault?

Yet welcome and thanks, we say, to those visitors we have, and have had, from abroad among us—and may the procession continue! We have had Dickens and Thackeray, Froude, Herbert Spencer, Oscar Wilde, Lord Coleridge—soldiers, savants, poets—and now Matthew Arnold and Irving the actor. Some have come to make money—some for a “good time”—some to help us along and give us advice—and some undoubtedly to investigate, *bona fide*, this great problem, democratic America, looming upon the world with such cumulative power through a hundred years, now with the evident intention (since the Secession War) to stay, and take a leading hand, for many a century to come, in civilization's and humanity's eternal game. But alas! that very investigation—the method of that investigation—is where the deficit most surely and helplessly comes in. Let not Lord Coleridge and Mr. Arnold (to say nothing of the illustrious actor) imagine that when they have met and survey'd the etiquettical gatherings of our wealthy, distinguish'd and sure-to-be-put-forward-on-such-occasions citizens (New York, Boston, Philadelphia, &c., have certain stereotyped strings of tables—you are sure to get the same over and over again—it is very amusing)—and the bowing and introducing, the receptions at the swell clubs, the eating and drinking and praising and praising back—and the next day riding about Central Park, or doing the “Public Institutions”—and so passing through, one after another, the full-dress coteries of the Atlantic cities, all

grammatical and cultured and correct, with the toned-down manners of the gentlemen, and the kid-gloves, and luncheons and finger-glasses—Let not our eminent visitors, we say, suppose that, by means of these experiences, they have “seen America,” or captur’d any distinctive clew or purport thereof. Not a bit of it. Of the pulse-beats that lie within and vitalize this Commonwealth to-day—of the hard-pan purports and idiosyncrasies pursued faithfully and triumphantly by its bulk of men North and South, generation after generation, superficially unconscious of their own aims, yet none the less pressing onward with deathless intuition—those coteries do not furnish the faintest scintilla. In the Old World the best flavor and significance of a race may possibly need to be look’d for in its “upper classes,” its gentries, its court, its *état major*. In the United States the rule is revers’d. Besides (and a point, this, perhaps deepest of all,) the special marks of our grouping and design are not going to be understood in a hurry. The lesson and scanning right on the ground are difficult; I was going to say they are impossible to foreigners—but I have occasionally found the clearest appreciation of all, coming from far-off quarters. Surely nothing could be more apt, not only for our eminent visitors present and to come, but for home study, than the following editorial criticism of the London *Times* on Mr. Froude’s visit and lectures here a few years ago, and the culminating dinner given at Delmonico’s, with its brilliant array of guests:

“We read the list,” says the *Times*, “of those who assembled to do honor to Mr. Froude: there were Mr. Emerson, Mr. Beecher, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Bryant; we add the names of those who sent letters of regret that they could not attend in person—Mr. Longfellow, Mr. Whittier. They are names which are well known—almost as well known and as much honor’d in England as in America; and yet what must we say in the end? The American people outside this assemblage of writers is something vaster and greater than they, singly or together, can comprehend. It cannot be said of any or all of them that they can speak for their nation. We who look on at this distance are able perhaps on that account to see the more clearly that there are qualities of the American people which find no representation, no voice, among these their spokesmen. And what is true of them is true of the English class of whom Mr. Froude may be said to be the ambassador. Mr. Froude is master of a charming style. He has the gift of grace and the gift of sympathy. Taking any single character as the subject of his study, he may succeed after a very short time in so comprehending its workings as to be able to present a living figure to the intelligence and memory of his readers. But the movements of a nation, *the voiceless purpose of a people which cannot put its own thoughts into words, yet acts upon them in each successive generation*—these things do not lie within his grasp. . . . The functions of literature such as he represents are limited in their action; the influence he can wield is artificial and restricted, and, while he and his hearers please and are pleas’d with pleasant periods, his great mass of national life will flow around them un-

mov'd in its tides by action as powerless as that of the dwellers by the shore to direct the currents of the ocean."

A thought, here, that needs to be echoed, expanded, permanently treasur'd by our literary classes and educators. (The gestation, the youth, the knitting preparations, are now over, and it is full time for definite purpose, result.) How few think of it, though it is the impetus and background of our whole Nationality and popular life. In the present brief memorandum I very likely for the first time awake "the intelligent reader" to the idea and inquiry whether there isn't such a thing as the distinctive genius of our democratic New World, universal, immanent, bringing to a head the best experience of the past—not specially literary or intellectual—not merely "good," (in the Sunday School and Temperance Society sense,)—some invisible spine and great sympathetic to these States, resident only in the average people, in their practical life, in their physiology, in their emotions, in their nebulous yet fiery patriotism, in the armies (both sides) through the whole Secession War—an identity and character which indeed so far "finds no voice among their spokesmen."

To my mind America, vast and fruitful as it appears to-day, is even yet, for its most important results, entirely in the tentative state; its very formation-stir and whirling trials and essays more splendid and picturesque, to my thinking, than the accomplish'd growths and shows of other lands, through European history, or Greece, or all the past. Surely a New World literature, worthy the name, is not to be, if it ever comes, some fiction, or fancy, or bit of sentimentalism or polish'd work merely by itself, or in abstraction. So long as such literature is no born branch and offshoot of the Nationality, rooted and grown from its roots, and fibred with its fibre, it can never answer any deep call or perennial need. Perhaps the untaught Republic is wiser than its teachers. The best literature is always a result of something far greater than itself—not the hero, but the portrait of the hero. Before there can be recorded history or poem there must be the transaction. Beyond the old masterpieces, the Iliad, the interminable Hindu epics, the Greek tragedies, even the Bible itself, range the immense facts of what must have preceded them, their *sine qua non*—the veritable poems and masterpieces, of which, grand as they are, the word-statements are but shreds and cartoons.

For to-day and the States, I think the vividest, rapidest, most stupendous processes ever known, ever perform'd by man or nation, on the largest scales and in countless varieties, are now

and here presented. Not as our poets and preachers are always conventionally putting it—but quite different. Some colossal foundry, the flaming of the fire, the melted metal, the pounding trip-hammers, the surging crowds of workmen shifting from point to point, the murky shadows, the rolling haze, the discord, the crudeness, the deafening din, the disorder, the dross and clouds of dust, the waste and extravagance of material, the shafts of darted sunshine through the vast open roof-scuttles aloft—the mighty castings, many of them not yet fitted, perhaps delay'd long, yet each in its due time, with definite place and use and meaning—Such, more like, is a symbol of America.

After all of which, returning to our starting-point, we reiterate, and in the whole Land's name, a welcome to our eminent guests. Visits like theirs, and hospitalities, and hand-shaking, and face meeting face, and the distant brought near—what divine solvents they are! Travel, reciprocity, "interviewing," intercommunion of lands—what are they but Democracy's and the highest Law's best aids? O that our own country—that every land in the world—could annually, continually, receive the poets, thinkers, scientists, even the official magnates, of other lands, as honor'd guests. O that the United States, especially the West, could have had a good long visit and explorative jaunt, from the noble and melancholy Tourguéneff, before he died—or from Victor Hugo—or Thomas Carlyle. Castelar, Tennyson, any of the two or three great Parisian essayists—were they and we to come face to face, how is it possible but that the right understanding would ensue?

THE BIBLE AS POETRY.

I SUPPOSE one cannot at this day say anything new, from a literary point of view, about those autochthonic bequests of Asia—the Hebrew Bible, the mighty Hindu epics, and a hundred lesser but typical works; (not now definitely including the Iliad—though that work was certainly of Asiatic genesis, as Homer himself was—considerations which seem curiously ignored.) But will there ever be a time or place—ever a student, however modern, of the grand art, to whom those compositions will not afford profounder lessons than all else of their kind in the garnerage of the past? Could there be any more opportune suggestion, to the current popular writer and reader of verse, what the office of poet was in primeval times—and is yet capable of being, anew, adjusted entirely to the modern?

All the poems of Orientalism, with the Old and New Testaments at the centre, tend to deep and wide, (I don't know but the deepest and widest,) psychological development—with little, or nothing at all, of the mere æsthetic, the principal verse-requirement of our day. Very late, but unerringly, comes to every capable student the perception that it is not in beauty, it is not in art, it is not even in science, that the profoundest laws of the case have their eternal sway and outcropping.

In his discourse on "Hebrew Poets" De Sola Mendes said: "The fundamental feature of Judaism, of the Hebrew nationality, was religion; its poetry was naturally religious. Its subjects, God and Providence, the covenants with Israel, God in Nature, and as reveal'd, God the Creator and Governor, Nature in her majesty and beauty, inspired hymns and odes to Nature's God. And then the checker'd history of the nation furnish'd allusions, illustrations, and subjects for epic display—the glory of the sanctuary, the offerings, the splendid ritual, the Holy City, and lov'd Palestine with its pleasant valleys and wild tracts." Dr. Mendes said "that rhyming was not a characteristic of Hebrew poetry at all. Metre was not a necessary mark of poetry. Great poets discarded it; the early Jewish poets knew it not."

Compared with the famed epics of Greece, and lesser ones since, the spinal supports of the Bible are simple and meagre. All its history, biography, narratives, etc., are as beads, strung on and indicating the eternal thread of the Deific purpose and

power. Yet with only deepest faith for impetus, and such Deific purpose for palpable or impalpable theme, it often transcends the masterpieces of Hellas, and all masterpieces. The metaphors daring beyond account, the lawless soul, extravagant by our standards, the glow of love and friendship, the fervent kiss—nothing in argument or logic, but unsurpass'd in proverbs, in religious ecstasy, in suggestions of common mortality and death, man's great equalizers—the spirit everything, the ceremonies and forms of the churches nothing, faith limitless, its immense sensuousness immensely spiritual—an incredible, all-inclusive non-worldliness and dew-scented illiteracy (the antipodes of our Nineteenth Century business absorption and morbid refinement)—no hair-splitting doubts, no sickly sulking and sniffing, no "Hamlet," no "Adonais," no "Thanatopsis," no "In Memoriam."

The culminated proof of the poetry of a country is the quality of its personnel, which, in any race, can never be really superior without superior poems. The finest blending of individuality with universality (in my opinion nothing out of the galaxies of the "Iliad," or Shakspeare's heroes, or from the Tennysonian "Idyls," so lofty, devoted and starlike,) typified in the songs of those old Asiatic lands. Men and women as great columnar trees. Nowhere else the abnegation of self towering in such quaint sublimity; nowhere else the simplest human emotions conquering the gods of heaven, and fate itself. (The episode, for instance, toward the close of the "Mahabharata"—the journey of the wife Savitri with the god of death, Yama,

"One terrible to see—blood-red his garb,
His body huge and dark, bloodshot his eyes,
Which flamed like suns beneath his turban cloth,
Arm'd was he with a noose,"

who carries off the soul of the dead husband, the wife tenaciously following, and—by the resistless charm of perfect poetic recitation!—eventually redeeming her captive mate.)

I remember how enthusiastically William H. Seward, in his last days, once expatiated on these themes, from his travels in Turkey, Egypt, and Asia Minor, finding the oldest Biblical narratives exactly illustrated there to-day with apparently no break or change along three thousand years—the veil'd women, the costumes, the gravity and simplicity, all the manners just the same. The veteran Trelawney said he found the only real *nobleman* of the world in a good average specimen of the mid-aged or elderly Oriental. In the East the grand figure, always leading, is the *old man*, majestic, with flowing beard, paternal,

etc. In Europe and America, it is, as we know, the young fellow—in novels, a handsome and interesting hero, more or less juvenile—in operas, a tenor with blooming cheeks, black mustache, superficial animation, and perhaps good lungs, but no more depth than skim-milk. But reading folks probably get their information of those Bible areas and current peoples, as depicted in print by English and French cads, the most shallow, impudent, supercilious brood on earth.

I have said nothing yet of the cumulus of associations (perfectly legitimate parts of its influence, and finally in many respects the dominant parts,) of the Bible as a poetic entity, and of every portion of it. Not the old edifice only—the congeries also of events and struggles and surroundings, of which it has been the scene and motive—even the horrors, dreads, deaths. How many ages and generations have brooded and wept and agonized over this book! What untellable joys and ecstasies—what support to martyrs at the stake—from it. (No really great song can ever attain full purport till long after the death of its singer—till it has accrued and incorporated the many passions, many joys and sorrows, it has itself arous'd.) To what myriads has it been the shore and rock of safety—the refuge from driving tempest and wreck! Translated in all languages, how it has united this diverse world! Of civilized lands to-day, whose of our retrospects has it not interwoven and link'd and permeated? Not only does it bring us what is clasp'd within its covers; nay, that is the least of what it brings. Of its thousands, there is not a verse, not a word, but is thick-studded with human emotions, successions of fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, of our own antecedents, inseparable from that background of us, on which, phantasmal as it is, all that we are to-day inevitably depends—our ancestry, our past.

Strange, but true, that the principal factor in cohering the nations, eras and paradoxes of the globe, by giving them a common platform of two or three great ideas, a commonality of origin, and projecting cosmic brotherhood, the dream of all hope, all time—that the long trains, gestations, attempts and failures, resulting in the New World, and in modern solidarity and politics—are to be identified and resolv'd back into a collection of old poetic lore, which, more than any one thing else, has been the axis of civilization and history through thousands of years—and except for which this America of ours, with its polity and essentials, could not now be existing.

No true bard will ever contravene the Bible. If the time ever comes when iconoclasm does its extremest in one direction against the Books of the Bible in its present form, the collection

must still survive in another, and dominate just as much as hitherto, or more than hitherto, through its divine and primal poetic structure. To me, that is the living and definite element-principle of the work, evolving everything else. Then the continuity; the oldest and newest Asiatic utterance and character, and all between, holding together, like the apparition of the sky, and coming to us the same. Even to our Nineteenth Century here are the fountain heads of song.

FATHER TAYLOR (AND ORATORY.)

I have never heard but one essentially perfect orator—one who satisfied those depths of the emotional nature that in most cases go through life quite untouch'd, unfe'd—who held every hearer by spells which no conventionalist, high or low—nor any pride or composure, nor resistance of intellect—could stand against for ten minutes.

And by the way, is it not strange, of this first-class genius in the rarest and most profound of humanity's arts, that it will be necessary, (so nearly forgotten and rubb'd out is his name by the rushing whirl of the last twenty-five years,) to first inform current readers that he was an orthodox minister, of no particular celebrity, who during a long life preach'd especially to Yankee sailors in an old fourth-class church down by the wharves in Boston—had practically been a sea-faring man through his earlier years—and died April 6, 1871, "just as the tide turn'd, going out with the ebb as an old salt should"? His name is now comparatively unknown, outside of Boston—and even there, (though Dickens, Mr. Jameson, Dr. Bartol and Bishop Haven have commemorated him,) is mostly but a reminiscence.

During my visits to "the Hub," in 1859 and '60 I several times saw and heard Father Taylor. In the spring or autumn, quiet Sunday forenoons, I liked to go down early to the quaint ship-cabin-looking church where the old man minister'd—to enter and leisurely scan the building, the low ceiling, every thing strongly timber'd (polish'd and rubb'd apparently,) the dark rich colors, the gallery, all in half-light—and smell the aroma of old wood—to watch the auditors, sailors, mates, "matlows," officers, singly or in groups, as they came in—their physiognomies, forms, dress, gait, as they walk'd along the aisles,—their postures, seating themselves in the rude, roomy, undoor'd, uncushion'd pews—and the evident effect upon them of the place, occasion, and atmosphere.

The pulpit, rising ten or twelve feet high, against the rear wall, was back'd by a significant mural painting, in oil—showing out its bold lines and strong hues through the subdued light of the building—of a stormy sea, the waves high-rolling, and

amid them an old-style ship, all bent over, driving through the gale, and in great peril—a vivid and effectual piece of limning, not meant for the criticism of artists (though I think it had merit even from that standpoint,) but for its effect upon the congregation, and what it would convey to them.

Father Taylor was a moderate-sized man, indeed almost small, (reminded me of old Booth, the great actor, and my favorite of those and preceding days,) well advanced in years, but alert, with mild blue or gray eyes, and good presence and voice. Soon as he open'd his mouth I ceas'd to pay any attention to church or audience, or pictures or lights and shades; a far more potent charm entirely sway'd me. In the course of the sermon, (there was no sign of any MS., or reading from notes,) some of the parts would be in the highest degree majestic and picturesque. Colloquial in a severe sense, it often lean'd to Biblical and oriental forms. Especially were all allusions to ships and the ocean and sailors' lives, of unrival'd power and life-likeness. Sometimes there were passages of fine language and composition, even from the purist's point of view. A few arguments, and of the best, but always brief and simple. One realized what grip there might have been in such words-of-mouth talk as that of Socrates and Epictetus. In the main, I should say, of any of these discourses, that the old Demosthenean rule and requirement of "action, action, action," first in its inward and then (very moderate and restrain'd) its outward sense, was the quality that had leading fulfilment.

I remember I felt the deepest impression from the old man's prayers, which invariably affected me to tears. Never, on similar or any other occasions, have I heard such impassion'd pleading—such human-harassing reproach (like Hamlet to his mother, in the closet)—such probing to the very depths of that latent conscience and remorse which probably lie somewhere in the background of every life, every soul. For when Father Taylor preach'd or pray'd, the rhetoric and art, the mere words, (which usually play such a big part) seem'd altogether to disappear, and the *live feeling* advanced upon you and seiz'd you with a power before unknown. Everybody felt this marvellous and awful influence. One young sailor, a Rhode Islander, (who came every Sunday, and I got acquainted with, and talk'd to once or twice as we went away,) told me, "that must be the Holy Ghost we read of in the Testament."

I should be at a loss to make any comparison with other preachers or public speakers. When a child I had heard Elias Hicks—and Father Taylor (though so different in personal appearance, for Elias was of tall and most shapely form, with

black eyes that blazed at times like meteors,) always reminded me of him. Both had the same inner, apparently inexhaustible, fund of latent volcanic passion—the same tenderness, blended with a curious remorseless firmness, as of some surgeon operating on a belov'd patient. Hearing such men sends to the winds all the books, and formulas, and polish'd speaking, and rules of oratory.

Talking of oratory, why is it that the unsophisticated practices often strike deeper than the train'd ones? Why do our experiences perhaps of some local country exhorter—or often in the West or South at political meetings—bring the most definite results? In my time I have heard Webster, Clay, Edward Everett, Phillips, and such *célébrés*; yet I recall the minor but life-eloquence of men like John P. Hale, Cassius Clay, and one or two of the old abolition “fanatics” ahead of all those stereotyped fames. Is not—I sometimes question—the first, last, and most important quality of all, in training for a “finish'd speaker,” generally unsought, unreck'd of, both by teacher and pupil? Though maybe it cannot be taught, anyhow. At any rate, we need to clearly understand the distinction between oratory and elocution. Under the latter art, including some of high order, there is indeed no scarcity in the United States, preachers, lawyers, actors, lecturers, &c. With all, there seem to be few real orators—almost none.

I repeat, and would dwell upon it (more as suggestion than mere fact)—among all the brilliant lights of bar or stage I have heard in my time (for years in New York and other cities I haunted the courts to witness notable trials, and have heard all the famous actors and actresses that have been in America the past fifty years) though I recall marvellous effects from one or other of them, I never had anything in the way of vocal utterance to shake me through and through, and become fix'd, with its accompaniments, in my memory, like those prayers and sermons—like Father Taylor's personal electricity and the whole scene there—the prone ship in the gale, and dashing wave and foam for background—in the little old sea-church in Boston, those summer Sundays just before the Secession War broke out.

THE SPANISH ELEMENT IN OUR NATIONALITY.

[Our friends at Santa Fé, New Mexico, have just finish'd their long drawn out anniversary of the 333d year of the settlement of their city by the Spanish. The good, gray Walt Whitman was asked to write them a poem in commemoration. Instead he wrote them a letter as follows:—*Philadelphia Press*, August 5, 1883.]

CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY, July 20, 1883.

To Messrs. Griffin, Martínez, Prince, and other Gentlemen at
Santa Fé:

DEAR SIRS:—Your kind invitation to visit you and deliver a poem for the 333d Anniversary of founding Santa Fé has reach'd me so late that I have to decline, with sincere regret. But I will say a few words off hand.

We Americans have yet to really learn our own antecedents, and sort them, to unify them. They will be found ampler than has been supposed, and in widely different sources. Thus far, impress'd by New England writers and schoolmasters, we tacitly abandon ourselves to the notion that our United States have been fashion'd from the British Islands only, and essentially form a second England only—which is a very great mistake. Many leading traits for our future national personality, and some of the best ones, will certainly prove to have originated from other than British stock. As it is, the British and German, valuable as they are in the concrete, already threaten excess. Or rather, I should say, they have certainly reach'd that excess. To-day, something outside of them, and to counterbalance them, is seriously needed.

The seething materialistic and business vortices of the United States, in their present devouring relations, controlling and belittling everything else, are, in my opinion, but a vast and indispensable stage in the new world's development, and are certainly to be follow'd by something entirely different—at least by immense modifications. Character, literature, a society worthy the name, are yet to be establish'd, through a nationality of noblest spiritual, heroic and democratic attributes—not one of which at present definitely exists—entirely different from the past, though unerringly founded on it, and to justify it.

To that composite American identity of the future, Spanish

character will supply some of the most needed parts. No stock shows a grander historic retrospect—grander in religiousness and loyalty, or for patriotism, courage, decorum, gravity and honor. (It is time to dismiss utterly the illusion-compound, half raw-head-and-bloody-bones and half Mysteries-of-Udolpho, inherited from the English writers of the past 200 years. It is time to realize—for it is certainly true—that there will not be found any more cruelty, tyranny, superstition, &c., in the *résumé* of past Spanish history than in the corresponding *résumé* of Anglo-Norman history. Nay, I think there will not be found so much.)

Then another point, relating to American ethnology, past and to come, I will here touch upon at a venture. As to our aboriginal or Indian population—the Aztec in the South, and many a tribe in the North and West—I know it seems to be agreed that they must gradually dwindle as time rolls on, and in a few generations more leave only a reminiscence, a blank. But I am not at all clear about that. As America, from its many far-back sources and current supplies, develops, adapts, entwines, faithfully identifies its own—are we to see it cheerfully accepting and using all the contributions of foreign lands from the whole outside globe—and then rejecting the only ones distinctively its own—the autochthonic ones?

As to the Spanish stock of our Southwest, it is certain to me that we do not begin to appreciate the splendor and sterling value of its race element. Who knows but that element, like the course of some subterranean river, dipping invisibly for a hundred or two years, is now to emerge in broadest flow and permanent action?

If I might assume to do so, I would like to send you the most cordial, heartfelt congratulations of your American fellow-countrymen here. You have more friends in the Northern and Atlantic regions than you suppose, and they are deeply interested in the development of the great Southwestern interior, and in what your festival would arouse to public attention.

Very respectfully, &c.,

WALT WHITMAN.

WHAT LURKS BEHIND SHAKSPERE'S HISTORICAL PLAYS?

We all know how much *mythus* there is in the Shakspeare question as it stands to-day. Beneath a few foundations of proved facts are certainly engulf'd far more dim and elusive ones, of deepest importance—tantalizing and half suspected—suggesting explanations that one dare not put in plain statement. But coming at once to the point, the English historical plays are to me not only the most eminent as dramatic performances (my maturest judgment confirming the impressions of my early years, that the distinctiveness and glory of the Poet reside not in his vaunted dramas of the passions, but those founded on the contests of English dynasties, and the French wars,) but form, as we get it all, the chief in a complexity of puzzles. Conceiv'd out of the fullest heat and pulse of European feudalism—personifying in unparallel'd ways the mediæval aristocracy, its towering spirit of ruthless and gigantic caste, with its own peculiar air and arrogance (no mere imitation)—only one of the “wolfish earls” so plenteous in the plays themselves, or some born descendant and knower, might seem to be the true author of those amazing works—works in some respects greater than anything else in recorded literature.

The start and germ-stock of the pieces on which the present speculation is founded are undoubtedly (with, at the outset, no small amount of bungling work) in “Henry VI.” It is plain to me that as profound and forecasting a brain and pen as ever appear'd in literature, after floundering somewhat in the first part of that trilogy—or perhaps draughting it more or less experimentally or by accident—afterward developed and defined his plan in the Second and Third Parts, and from time to time, then onward, systematically enlarged it to majestic and mature proportions in “Richard II,” “Richard III,” “King John,” “Henry IV,” “Henry V,” and even in “Macbeth,” “Coriolanus” and “Lear.” For it is impossible to grasp the whole cluster of those plays, however wide the intervals and different circumstances of their composition, without thinking of them as, in a free sense, the result of an *essentially controlling plan*. What was that plan? Or, rather, what was veil'd behind it—for to

me there was certainly something so veil'd. Even the episodes of Cade, Joan of Arc, and the like (which sometimes seem to me like interpolations allow'd,) may be meant to foil the possible sleuth, and throw any too 'cute pursuer off the scent. In the whole matter I should specially dwell on, and make much of, that inexplicable element of every highest poetic nature which causes it to cover up and involve its real purpose and meanings in folded removes and far recesses. Of this trait—hiding the nest where common seekers may never find it—the Shakspearean works afford the most numerous and mark'd illustrations known to me. I would even call that trait the leading one through the whole of those works.

All the foregoing to premise a brief statement of how and where I get my new light on Shakspeare. Speaking of the special English plays, my friend William O'Connor says:

They seem simply and rudely historical in their motive, as aiming to give in the rough a tableau of warring dynasties,—and carry to me a lurking sense of being in aid of some ulterior design, probably well enough understood in that age, which perhaps time and criticism will reveal. . . . Their atmosphere is one of barbarous and tumultuous gloom,—they do not make us love the times they limn, . . . and it is impossible to believe that the greatest of the Elizabethan men could have sought to indoctrinate the age with the love of feudalism which his own drama in its entirety, if the view taken of it herein be true, certainly and subtly saps and mines.

Reading the just-specified play in the light of Mr. O'Connor's suggestion, I defy any one to escape such new and deep utterance-meanings, like magic ink, warm'd by the fire, and previously invisible. Will it not indeed be strange if the author of "Othello" and "Hamlet" is destin'd to live in America, in a generation or two, less as the cunning draughtsman of the passions, and more as putting on record the first full exposé—and by far the most vivid one, immeasurably ahead of doctrinaires and economists—of the political theory and results, or the reason-why and necessity for them which America has come on earth to abnegate and replace?

The summary of my suggestion would be, therefore, that while the more the rich and tangled jungle of the Shakspearean area is travers'd and studied, and the more baffled and mix'd, as so far appears, becomes the exploring student (who at last surmises everything, and remains certain of nothing,) it is possible a future age of criticism, diving deeper, mapping the land and lines freer, completer than hitherto, may discover in the plays named the scientific (Baconian?) inauguration of modern Democracy—furnishing realistic and first-class artistic portraitures of the mediæval world, the feudal personalities, institutes, in their

morbid accumulations, deposits, upon politics and sociology,— may penetrate to that hard-pan, far down and back of the ostent of to-day, on which (and on which only) the progressism of the last two centuries has built this Democracy which now holds secure lodgment over the whole civilized world.

Whether such was the unconscious, or (as I think likely) the more or less conscious, purpose of him who fashion'd those marvellous architectonics, is a secondary question.

A THOUGHT ON SHAK- SPERE.

The most distinctive poems—the most permanently rooted and with heartiest reason for being—the copious cycle of Arthurian legends, or the almost equally copious Charlemagne cycle, or the poems of the Cid, or Scandinavian Eddas, or Nibelungen, or Chaucer, or Spenser, or *bona fide* Ossian, or Inferno—probably had their rise in the great historic perturbations, which they came in to sum up and confirm, indirectly embodying results to date. Then however precious to “culture,” the grandest of those poems, it may be said, preserve and typify results offensive to the modern spirit, and long past away. To state it briefly, and taking the strongest examples, in Homer lives the ruthless military prowess of Greece, and of its special god-descended dynastic houses; in Shakspeare the dragon-rancors and stormy feudal splendor of mediæval caste.

Poetry, largely consider'd, is an evolution, sending out improved and ever-expanded types—in one sense, the past, even the best of it, necessarily giving place, and dying out. For our existing world, the bases on which all the grand old poems were built have become vacuums—and even those of many comparatively modern ones are broken and half-gone. For us to-day, not their own intrinsic value, vast as that is, backs and maintains those poems—but a mountain-high growth of associations, the layers of successive ages. Everywhere—their own lands included—(is there not something terrible in the tenacity with which the one book out of millions holds its grip?)—the Homeric and Virgilian works, the interminable ballad-romances of the middle ages, the utterances of Dante, Spenser, and others, are upheld by their cumulus-entrenchment in scholarship, and as precious, always welcome, unspeakably valuable reminiscences.

Even the one who at present reigns unquestion'd—of Shakspeare—for all he stands for so much in modern literature, he stands entirely for the mighty æsthetic sceptres of the past, not for the spiritual and democratic, the sceptres of the future. The inward and outward characteristics of Shakspeare are his vast and rich variety of persons and themes, with his wondrous delineation of each and all—not only limitless funds of verbal and pictorial resource, but great excess, superfœtation—mannerism,

like a fine, aristocratic perfume, holding a touch of musk (Euphues, his mark)—with boundless sumptuousness and adornment, real velvet and gems, not shoddy nor paste—but a good deal of bombast and fustian—(certainly some terrific mouthing in Shakspeare!)

Superb and inimitable as all is, it is mostly an objective and physiological kind of power and beauty the soul finds in Shakspeare—a style supremely grand of the sort, but in my opinion stopping short of the grandest sort, at any rate for fulfilling and satisfying modern and scientific and democratic American purposes. Think, not of growths as forests primeval, or Yellowstone geysers, or Colorado ravines, but of costly marble palaces, and palace rooms, and the noblest fixings and furniture, and noble owners and occupants to correspond—think of carefully built gardens from the beautiful but sophisticated gardening art at its best, with walks and bowers and artificial lakes, and appropriate statue-groups and the finest cultivated roses and lilies and japonicas in plenty—and you have the tally of Shakspeare. The low characters, mechanics, even the loyal henchmen—all in themselves nothing—serve as capital foils to the aristocracy. The comedies (exquisite as they certainly are) bringing in admirably portray'd common characters, have the unmistakable hue of plays, portraits, made for the divertisement only of the élite of the castle, and from its point of view. The comedies are altogether non-acceptable to America and Democracy.

But to the deepest soul, it seems a shame to pick and choose from the riches Shakspeare has left us—to criticise his infinitely royal, multiform quality—to gauge, with optic glasses, the dazzle of his sun-like beams.

The best poetic utterance, after all, can merely hint, or remind, often very indirectly, or at distant removes. Aught of real perfection, or the solution of any deep problem, or any completed statement of the moral, the true, the beautiful, eludes the greatest, deftest poet—flies away like an always uncaught bird.

Learn of Shakespeare!

ROBERT BURNS AS POET AND PERSON.

WHAT the future will decide about Robert Burns and his works—what place will be assign'd them on that great roster of geniuses and genius which can only be finish'd by the slow but sure balancing of the centuries with their ample average—I of course cannot tell. But as we know him, from his recorded utterances, and after nearly one century, and its diligence of collections, songs, letters, anecdotes, presenting the figure of the canny Scotchman in a fullness and detail wonderfully complete, and the lines mainly by his own hand, he forms to-day, in some respects, the most interesting personality among singers. Then there are many things in Burns's poems and character that specially endear him to America. He was essentially a Republican—would have been at home in the Western United States, and probably become eminent there. He was an average sample of the good-natured, warm-blooded, proud-spirited, amative, alimotive, convivial, young and early-middle-aged man of the decent-born middle classes everywhere and any how. Without the race of which he is a distinct specimen, (and perhaps his poems) America and her powerful Democracy could not exist to-day—could not project with unparallel'd historic sway into the future.

Perhaps the peculiar coloring of the era of Burns needs always first to be consider'd. It included the times of the '76-'83 Revolution in America, of the French Revolution, and an unparallel'd chaos development in Europe and elsewhere. In every department, shining and strange names, like stars, some rising, some in meridian, some declining—Voltaire, Franklin, Washington, Kant, Goethe, Fulton, Napoleon, mark the era. And while so much, and of grandest moment, fit for the trumpet of the world's fame, was being transacted—that little tragi-comedy of R. B.'s life and death was going on in a country by-place in Scotland!

Burns's correspondence, generally collected and publish'd since his death, gives wonderful glints into both the amiable and weak (and worse than weak) parts of his portraiture, habits, good and bad luck, ambition and associations. His letters to Mrs. Dunlop, Mrs. McLehose, (Clarinda,) Mr. Thompson, Dr. Moore, Robert Muir, Mr. Cunningham, Miss Margaret Chalmers, Peter Hill,

Richard Brown, Mrs. Riddel, Robert Ainslie, and Robert Graham, afford valuable lights and shades to the outline, and with numerous others, help to a touch here, and fill-in there, of poet and poems. There are suspicions, it is true, of "the Genteel Letter-Writer," with scraps and words from "the Manual of French Quotations," and, in the love-letters, some hollow mouthings. Yet we wouldn't on any account lack the letters. A full and true portrait is always what is wanted; veracity at every hazard. Besides, do we not all see by this time that the story of Burns, even for its own sake, requires the record of the whole and several, with nothing left out? Completely and every point minutely told out its fullest, explains and justifies itself—(as perhaps almost any life does.) He is very close to the earth. He pick'd up his best words and tunes directly from the Scotch home-singers, but tells Thompson they would not please his, T's, "learn'd lugs," adding, "I call them simple—you would pronounce them silly." Yes, indeed; the idiom was undoubtedly his happiest hit. Yet Dr. Moore, in 1789, writes to Burns, "If I were to offer an opinion, it would be that in your future productions you should abandon the Scotch stanza and dialect, and adopt the measure and language of modern English poetry!"

As the 128th birth-anniversary of the poet draws on, (January, 1887,) with its increasing club-suppers, vehement celebrations, letters, speeches, and so on—(mostly, as William O'Connor says, from people who would not have noticed R. B. at all during his actual life, nor kept his company, or read his verses, on any account)—it may be opportune to print some leisurely-jotted notes I find in my budget. I take my observation of the Scottish bard by considering him as an individual amid the crowded clusters, galaxies, of the old world—and fairly inquiring and suggesting what out of these myriads he too may be to the Western Republic. In the first place no poet on record so fully bequeaths his own personal magnetism,* nor illustrates more pointedly how one's

* Probably no man that ever lived—a friend has made the statement—was so fondly loved, both by men and women, as Robert Burns. The reason is not hard to find: he had a real heart of flesh and blood beating in his bosom; you could almost hear it throb. "Some one said, that if you had shaken hands with him his hand would have burnt yours. The gods, indeed, made him poetical, but Nature had a hand in him first. His heart was in the right place; he did not pile up cantos of poetic diction; he pluck'd the mountain daisy under his feet; he wrote of field-mouse hurrying from its ruin'd dwelling. He held the plough or the pen with the same firm, manly grasp. And he was loved. The simple roll of the women who gave him their affection and their sympathy would make a long manuscript; and most of these were of such noble worth that, as Robert Chambers says, 'their character may stand as a testimony in favor of that of Burns.'" [As I understand, the

verses, by time and reading, can so curiously fuse with the versifier's own life and death, and give final light and shade to all.

I would say a large part of the fascination of Burns's homely, simple dialect-melodies is due, for all current and future readers, to the poet's personal "errors," the general bleakness of his lot, his ingrain'd pensiveness, his brief dash into dazzling, tantalizing, evanescent sunshine—finally culminating in those last years of his life, his being taboo'd and in debt, sick and sore, yaw'd as by contending gales, deeply dissatisfied with everything, most of all with himself—high-spirited too—(no man ever really higher-spirited than Robert Burns.) I think it a perfectly legitimate part too. At any rate it has come to be an impalpable aroma through which only both the songs and their singer must henceforth be read and absorb'd. Through that view-medium of misfortune—of a noble spirit in low environments, and of a squalid and premature death—we view the undoubted facts, (giving, as we read them now, a sad kind of pungency,) that Burns's were, before all else, the lyrics of illicit loves and carousing intoxication. Perhaps even it is this strange, impalpable *post-mortem* comment and influence referr'd to, that gives them their contrast, attraction, making the zest of their author's after fame. If he had lived steady, fat, moral, comfortable, well-to-do years, on his own grade, (let alone, what of course was out of the question, the ease and velvet and rosewood and copious royalties of Tennyson or Victor Hugo or Longfellow,) and died well-ripen'd and respectable, where could have come in that burst of passionate sobbing and remorse which well'd forth instantly and generally in Scotland, and soon follow'd everywhere among English-speaking races, on the announcement of his death? and which, with no sign of stopping, only regulated and vein'd with fitting appreciation, flows deeply, widely yet?

Dear Rob! manly, witty, fond, friendly, full of weak spots as well as strong ones—essential type of so many thousands—perhaps the average, as just said, of the decent-born young men and the early mid-aged, not only of the British Isles, but America, too, North and South, just the same. I think, indeed, one best part of Burns is the unquestionable proof he presents of the perennial existence among the laboring classes, especially farmers, of the finest latent poetic elements in their blood. (How clear it is to me that the common soil has always been, and is now, thickly strewn with just such gems.) He is well-called the *Ploughman*.

foregoing is from an extremely rare book publish'd by M'Kie, in Kilmarnock. I find the whole beautiful paragraph in a capital paper on Burns, by Amelia Barr.]

“ Holding the plough,” said his brother Gilbert, “ was the favorite situation with Robert for poetic compositions ; and some of his best verses were produced while he was at that exercise.” “ I must return to my humble station, and woo my rustic muse in my wonted way, at the plough-tail.” 1787, to the Earl of Buchan. He has no high ideal of the poet or the poet’s office ; indeed quite a low and contracted notion of both :

“ Fortune ! if thou’l but gie me still
Hale breeks, a scone, and whiskey gill,
An’ rowth o’ rhyme to rave at will,
Tak’ a’ the rest.”

See also his rhym’d letters to Robert Graham invoking patronage ; “ one stronghold,” Lord Glencairn, being dead, now these appeals to “ Fintra, my other stay,” (with in one letter a copious shower of vituperation generally.) In his collected poems there is no particular unity, nothing that can be called a leading theory, no unmistakable spine or skeleton. Perhaps, indeed, their very desultoriness is the charm of his songs : “ I take up one or another,” he says in a letter to Thompson, “ just as the bee of the moment buzzes in my bonnet-lug.”

Consonantly with the customs of the time—yet markedly inconsistent in spirit with Burns’s own case, (and not a little painful as it remains on record, as depicting some features of the bard himself,) the relation called *patronage* existed between the nobility and gentry on one side, and literary people on the other, and gives one of the strongest side-lights to the general coloring of poems and poets. It crops out a good deal in Burns’s Letters, and even necessitated a certain flunkeyism on occasions, through life. It probably, with its requirements, (while it help’d in money and countenance) did as much as any one cause in making that life a chafed and unhappy one, ended by a premature and miserable death.

Yes, there is something about Burns peculiarly acceptable to the concrete, human points of view. He poetizes work-a-day agricultural labor and life, (whose spirit and sympathies, as well as practicalities, are much the same everywhere,) and treats fresh, often coarse, natural occurrences, loves, persons, not like many new and some old poets in a genteel style of gilt and china, or at second or third removes, but in their own born atmosphere, laughter, sweat, unction. Perhaps no one ever sang “ lads and lasses ”—that universal race, mainly the same, too, all ages, all lands—down on their own plane, as he has. He exhibits no philosophy worth mentioning ; his morality is hardly more than

parrot-talk—not bad or deficient, but cheap, shopworn, the platitudes of old aunts and uncles to the youngsters (be good boys and keep your noses clean.) Only when he gets at Poozie Nansie's, celebrating the "barley bree," or among tramps, or democratic bouts and drinking generally,

(“Freedom and whiskey gang thegither,”)

we have, in his own unmistakable color and warmth, those interiors of rake-helly life and tavern fun—the cantabile of jolly beggars in highest jinks—lights and groupings of rank glee and brawny amorousness, outvying the best painted pictures of the Dutch school, or any school.

By America and her democracy such a poet, I cannot too often repeat, must be kept in loving remembrance; but it is best that discriminations be made. His admirers (as at those anniversary suppers, over the “hot Scotch”) will not accept for their favorite anything less than the highest rank, alongside of Homer, Shakspeare, etc. Such, in candor, are not the true friends of the Ayrshire bard, who really needs a different place quite by himself. The Iliad and the Odyssey express courage, craft, full-grown heroism in situations of danger, the sense of command and leadership, emulation, the last and fullest evolution of self-poise as in kings, and god-like even while animal appetites. The Shakspearean compositions, on vertebres and framework of the primary passions, portray (essentially the same as Homer's,) the spirit and letter of the feudal world, the Norman lord, ambitious and arrogant, taller and nobler than common men—with much underplay and gusts of heat and cold, volcanoes and stormy seas. Burns (and some will say to his credit) attempts none of these themes. He poetizes the humor, riotous blood, sulks, amorous torments, fondness for the tavern and for cheap objective nature, with disgust at the grim and narrow ecclesiasticism of his time and land, of a young farmer on a bleak and hired farm in Scotland, through the years and under the circumstances of the British politics of that time, and of his short personal career as author, from 1783 to 1796. He is intuitive and affectionate, and just emerged or emerging from the shackles of the kirk, from poverty, ignorance, and from his own rank appetites—(out of which latter, however, he never extricated himself.) It is to be said that amid not a little smoke and gas in his poems, there is in almost every piece a spark of fire, and now and then the real afflatus. He has been applauded as democratic, and with some warrant; while Shakspeare, and with the greatest warrant, has been called monarchical or aristocratic (which he certainly is.) But the splendid person-

alizations of Shakspeare, formulated on the largest, freest, most heroic, most artistic mould, are to me far dearer as lessons, and more precious even as models for Democracy, than the humdrum samples Burns presents. The motives of some of his effusions are certainly discreditably personally—one or two of them markedly so. He has, moreover, little or no spirituality. This last is his mortal flaw and defect, tried by highest standards. The ideal he never reached, and yet I think he leads the way to it.) He gives melodies, and now and then the simplest and sweetest ones; but harmonies, complications, oratorious in words, never. (I do not speak this in any deprecatory sense. Blessed be the memory of the warm-hearted Scotchman for what he has left us, just as it is!) He likewise did not know himself, in more ways than one. Though so really free and independent, he prided himself in his songs on being a reactionist and a Jacobite—on persistent sentimental adherence to the cause of the Stuarts—the weakest, thinnest, most faithless, brainless dynasty that ever held a throne.

Thus, while Burns is not at all great for New World study, in the sense that Isaiah and Eschylus and the book of Job are unquestionably great—is not to be mention'd with Shakspeare—hardly even with current Tennyson or our Emerson—he has a nestling niche of his own, all fragrant, fond, and quaint and homely—a lodge built near but outside the mighty temple of the gods of song and art—those universal strivers, through their works of harmony and melody and power, to ever show or intimate man's crowning, last, victorious fusion in himself of Real and Ideal. Precious, too—fit and precious beyond all singers, high or low—will Burns ever be to the native Scotch, especially to the working-classes of North Britain; so intensely one of them, and so racy of the soil, sights, and local customs. He often apostrophizes Scotland, and is, or would be, enthusiastically patriotic. His country has lately commemorated him in a statue.* His aim is declaredly to be 'a Rustic Bard.' His poems were all written in youth or young manhood, (he was little more than a young man when he

* The Dumfries statue of Robert Burns was successfully unveil'd April 1881 by Lord Roseberry, the occasion having been made national in its character. Before the ceremony, a large procession paraded the streets of the town, all the trades and societies of that part of Scotland being represented, at the head of which went dairymen and ploughmen, the former driving their carts and being accompanied by their maids. The statue is of Sicilian marble. It rests on a pedestal of gray stone five feet high. The poet is represented as sitting easily on an old tree root, holding in his left hand a cluster of daisies. His face is turn'd toward the right shoulder, and the eyes gaze into the distance. Near by lie a collie dog, a broad bonnet half covering a well-thumb'd song-book, and a rustic flageolet. The costume is taken from the Nasmyth portrait, which has been follow'd for the features of the face.

died.) His collected works in giving everything, are nearly one half first drafts. His brightest hit is his use of the Scotch patois, so full of terms flavor'd like wild fruits or berries. Then I should make an allowance to Burns which cannot be made for any other poet. Curiously even the frequent crudeness, haste, deficiencies, (flatness and puerilities by no means absent) prove upon the whole not out of keeping in any comprehensive collection of his works, heroically printed, 'following copy,' every piece, every line according to originals. Other poets might tremble for such boldness, such rawness. In 'this odd-kind chiel' such points hardly mar the rest. Not only are they in consonance with the underlying spirit of the pieces, but complete the full abandon and veracity of the farm-fields and the home-brew'd flavor of the Scotch vernacular. (Is there not often something in the very neglect, unfinish, careless nudity, slovenly hiatus, coming from intrinsic genius, and not 'put on,' that secretly pleases the soul more than the wrought and re-wrought polish of the most perfect verse?) Mark the native spice and untranslatable twang in the very names of his songs—"O for ane and twenty, Tam," "John Barleycorn," "Last May a braw Wooer," "Rattlin roarin Willie," "O wert thou in the cauld, cauld blast," "Gude e'en to you, Kimmer," "Merry hae I been teething a Heckle," "O lay thy loof in mine, lass," and others.

The longer and more elaborated poems of Burns are just such as would please a natural but homely taste, and cute but average intellect, and are inimitable in their way. The "Twa Dogs," (one of the best) with the conversation between Cesar and Luath, the "Brigs of Ayr," "the Cotter's Saturday Night," "Tam O'Shanter"—all will be long read and re-read and admired, and ever deserve to be. With nothing profound in any of them, what there is of moral and plot has an inimitably fresh and racy flavor. If it came to question, Literature could well afford to send adrift many a pretensive poem, and even book of poems, before it could spare these compositions.

Never indeed was there truer utterance in a certain range of idiosyncrasy than by this poet. Hardly a piece of his, large or small, but has "snap" and raciness. He puts in cantering rhyme (often doggerel) much cutting irony and idiomatic ear-cuffing of the kirk-deacons—drily good-natured addresses to his cronies, (he certainly would not stop us if he were here this moment, from classing that "to the De'il" among them)—"to Mailie and her Lambs," "to auld Mare Maggie," "to a Mouse,"

"Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie:"

"to a Mountain Daisy," "to a Haggis," "to a Louse," "to the

Toothache," etc.—and occasionally to his brother bards and lady or gentleman patrons, often with strokes of tenderest sensibility, idiopathic humor, and genuine poetic imagination—still oftener with shrewd, original, sheeny, steel-flashes of wit, home-spun sense, or lance-blade puncturing. Then, strangely, the basis of Burns's character, with all its fun and manliness, was hypochondria, the blues, palpable enough in "Despondency," "Man was made to Mourn," "Address to Ruin," a "Bard's Epitaph," &c. From such deep-down elements sprout up, in very contrast and paradox, those riant utterances of which a superficial reading will not detect the hidden foundation. Yet nothing is clearer to me than the black and desperate background behind those pieces—as I shall now specify them. I find his most characteristic, Nature's masterly touch and luxuriant life-blood, color and heat, not in "Tam O'Shanter," "the Cotter's Saturday Night," "Scots who hae," "Highland Mary," "the Twa Dogs," and the like, but in "the Jolly Beggars," "Rigs of Barley," "Scotch Drink," "the Epistle to John Rankine," "Holy Willie's Prayer," and in "Halloween," (to say nothing of a certain cluster, known still to a small inner circle in Scotland, but, for good reasons, not published anywhere.) In these compositions, especially the first, there is much indelicacy (some editions flatly leave it out,) but the composer reigns alone, with handling free and broad and true, and is an artist. You may see and feel the man indirectly in his other verses, all of them, with more or less life-likeness—but these I have named last call out pronouncedly in his own voice,

"I, Rob, am here."

Finally, in any summing-up of Burns, though so much is to be said in the way of fault-finding, drawing black marks, and doubtless severe literary criticism—(in the present outpouring I have 'kept myself in,' rather than allow'd any free flow)—after full retrospect of his works and life, the aforesaid 'odd-kind chiel' remains to my heart and brain as almost the tenderest, manliest, and (even if contradictory) dearest flesh-and-blood figure in all the streams and clusters of by-gone poets.

A WORD ABOUT TENNYSON.

BEAUTIFUL as the song was, the original 'Locksley Hall' of half a century ago was essentially morbid, heart-broken, finding fault with everything, especially the fact of money's being made (as it ever must be, and perhaps should be) the paramount matter in worldly affairs ;

Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

First, a father, having fallen in battle, his child (the singer)

Was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Of course love ensues. The woman in the chant or monologue proves a false one ; and as far as appears the ideal of woman, in the poet's reflections, is a false one—at any rate for America. Woman is *not* 'the lesser man.' (The heart is not the brain.) The best of the piece of fifty years since is its concluding line :

For the mighty wind arises roaring seaward and I go.

Then for this current 1886-7, a just-out sequel, which (as an apparently authentic summary says) 'reviews the life of mankind during the past sixty years, and comes to the conclusion that its boasted progress is of doubtful credit to the world in general and to England in particular. A cynical vein of denunciation of democratic opinions and aspirations runs throughout the poem in mark'd contrast with the spirit of the poet's youth.' Among the most striking lines of this sequel are the following :

Envy wears the mask of love, and, laughing sober fact to scorn,
Cries to weakest as to strongest, 'Ye are equals, equal born,'
Equal-born! Oh yes, if yonder hill be level with the flat.
Charm us, orator, till the lion look no larger than the cat :
Till the cat, through that mirage of overheated language, loom
Larger than the lion Demo—end in working its own doom.
Tumble Nature heel o'er head, and, yelling with the yelling street,
Set the feet above the brain, and swear the brain is in the feet.
Bring the old dark ages back, without the faith, without the hope
Beneath the State, the Church, the Throne, and roll their ruins down the
slope.

I should say that all this is a legitimate consequence of the tone and convictions of the earlier standards and points of view. Then some reflections, down to the hard-pan of this sort of thing.

The course of progressive politics (democracy) is so certain and resistless, not only in America but in Europe, that we can well afford the warning calls, threats, checks, neutralizings, in imaginative literature, or any department, of such deep-sounding and high-soaring voices as Carlyle's and Tennyson's. Nay, the blindness, excesses, of the prevalent tendency—the dangers of the urgent trends of our times—in my opinion, need such voices almost more than any. I should, too, call it a signal instance of democratic humanity's luck that it has such enemies to contend with—so candid, so fervid, so heroic. But why do I say enemies? Upon the whole is not Tennyson—and was not Carlyle (like an honest and stern physician)—the true friend of our age?

Let me assume to pass verdict, or perhaps momentary judgment, for the United States on this poet—a remov'd and distant position giving some advantages over a nigh one. What is Tennyson's service to his race, times, and especially to America? First, I should say—or at least not forget—his personal character. He is not to be mention'd as a rugged, evolutionary, aboriginal force—but (and a great lesson is in it) he has been consistent throughout with the native, healthy, patriotic spinal element and promptings of himself. His moral line is local and conventional, but it is vital and genuine. He reflects the upper-crust of his time, its pale cast of thought—even its *ennui*. Then the simile of my friend John Burroughs is entirely true, 'his glove is a glove of silk, but the hand is a hand of iron.' He shows how one can be a royal laureate, quite elegant and 'aristocratic,' and a little queer and affected, and at the same time perfectly manly and natural. As to his non-democracy, it fits him well, and I like him the better for it. I guess we all like to have (I am sure I do) some one who presents those sides of a thought, or possibility, different from our own—different and yet with a sort of home-likeness—a tartness and contradiction offsetting the theory as we view it, and construed from tastes and proclivities not at all his own.

To me, Tennyson shows more than any poet I know (perhaps has been a warning to me) how much there is in finest verbalism. There is such a latent charm in mere words, cunning collocations, and in the voice ringing them, which he has caught and brought out, beyond all others—as in the line,

And hollow, hollow, hollow, all delight,

in 'The Passing of Arthur,' and evidenced in 'The Lady of Shalott,' 'The Deserted House,' and many other pieces. Among the best (I often linger over them again and again) are 'Lucretius,' 'The Lotos Eaters,' and 'The Northern Farmer.' His mannerism is great, but it is a noble and welcome mannerism. His very best work, to me, is contain'd in the books of 'The Idyls of the King,' and all that has grown out of them. Though indeed we could spare nothing of Tennyson, however small or however peculiar—not 'Break, Break,' nor 'Flower in the Crannied Wall,' nor the old, eternally-told passion of 'Edward Gray :'

Love may come and love may go,
And fly like a bird from tree to tree.
But I will love no more, no more
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

Yes, Alfred Tennyson's is a superb character, and will help give illustriousness, through the long roll of time, to our Nineteenth Century. In its bunch of orbic names, shining like a constellation of stars, his will be one of the brightest. His very faults, doubts, swervings, doublings upon himself, have been typical of our age. We are like the voyagers of a ship, casting off for new seas, distant shores. We would still dwell in the old suffocating and dead haunts, remembering and magnifying their pleasant experiences only, and more than once impell'd to jump ashore before it is too late, and stay where our fathers stay'd, and live as they lived.

May-be I am non-literary and non-decorous (let me at least be human, and pay part of my debt) in this word about Tennyson. I want him to realize that here is a great and ardent Nation that absorbs his songs, and has a respect and affection for him personally, as almost for no other foreigner. I want this word to go to the old man at Farringford as conveying no more than the simple truth ; and that truth (a little Christmas gift) no slight one either. I have written impromptu, and shall let it all go at that. The readers of more than fifty millions of people in the New World not only owe to him some of their most agreeable and harmless and healthy hours, but he has enter'd into the formative influences of character here, not only in the Atlantic cities, but inland and far West, out in Missouri, in Kansas, and away in Oregon, in farmer's house and miner's cabin.

Best thanks, anyhow, to Alfred Tennyson—thanks and appreciation in America's name.

SLANG IN AMERICA.

VIEW'D freely, the English language is the accretion and growth of every dialect, race, and range of time, and is both the free and compacted composition of all. From this point of view, it stands for Language in the largest sense, and is really the greatest of studies. It involves so much; is indeed a sort of universal absorber, combiner, and conqueror. The scope of its etymologies is the scope not only of man and civilization, but the history of Nature in all departments, and of the organic Universe, brought up to date; for all are comprehended in words, and their backgrounds. This is when words become vitaliz'd, and stand for things, as they unerringly and soon come to do, in the mind that enters on their study with fitting spirit, grasp, and appreciation.

Slang, profoundly consider'd, is the lawless germinal element, below all words and sentences, and behind all poetry, and proves a certain perennial rankness and protestantism in speech. As the United States inherit by far their most precious possession—the language they talk and write—from the Old World, under and out of its feudal institutes, I will allow myself to borrow a simile even of those forms farthest removed from American Democracy. Considering Language then as some mighty potentate, into the majestic audience-hall of the monarch ever enters a personage like one of Shakspeare's clowns, and takes position there, and plays a part even in the stateliest ceremonies. Such is Slang, its induction, an attempt of common humanity to escape from bald literalism, and express itself illimitably, which in highest walks produces prose and poems, and doubtless in pre-historic times gave the start to, and perfected, the whole immense tangle of the old mythology. For, curious as it may appear, it is still the same impulse, the same thing. Slang, too, is the whimsical fermentation or excretion of those processes eternally active in language, by which froth and specks are thrown up much to pass away; though occasionally to settle and permanently crystallize.

To make it plainer, it is certain that many of the oldest and subtlest words we use, were originally generated from the daring and license of slang. In the processes of word-formation, myriads die; but here and there the attempt attracts superior meanings,

becomes valuable and indispensable, and lives forever. Thus the term *right* means literally only straight. *Wrong* primarily meant twisted, distorted. *Integrity* meant oneness. *Spirit* meant breath, or flame. A *supercilious* person was one who rais'd his eyebrows. To *insult* was to leap against. If you *influenc'd* a man, you but flow'd into him. The Hebrew word which is translated *prophesy* meant to bubble up and pour forth as a fountain. The enthusiast bubbles up with the Spirit of God within him, and it pours forth from him like a fountain. The word prophecy is misunderstood. Many suppose that it is limited to mere prediction; that is but the lesser portion of prophecy. The greater work is to reveal God. Every true religious enthusiast is a prophet.

Language, be it remember'd, is not an abstract construction of the learn'd, or of dictionary-makers, but is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes, of long generations of humanity, and has its bases broad and low, close to the ground. Its final decisions are made by the masses, people nearest the concrete, having most to do with actual land and sea. It impermeates all, the Past as well as the Present, and is the grandest triumph of the human intellect. "Those mighty works of art," says Addington Symonds, "which we call languages, in the construction of which whole peoples unconsciously co-operated, the forms of which were determin'd not by individual genius, but by the instincts of successive generations, acting to one end, inherent in the nature of the race—Those poems of pure thought and fancy, cadenced not in words, but in living imagery, fountain-heads of inspiration, mirrors of the mind of nascent nations, which we call Mythologies—these surely are more marvellous in their infantine spontaneity than any more mature production of the races which evolv'd them. Yet we are utterly ignorant of their embryology; the true science of Origins is yet in its cradle."

Daring as it is to say so, in the growth of Language it is certain that the retrospect of slang from the start would be the recalling from their nebulous conditions of all that is poetical in the stores of human utterance. Moreover, the honest delving, as of late years, by the German and British workers in comparative philology, has pierc'd and dispers'd many of the falsest bubbles of centuries; and will disperse many more. It was long recorded that in Scandinavian mythology the heroes in the Norse Paradise drank out of the skulls of their slain enemies. Later investigation proves the word taken for skulls to mean *horns* of beasts slain in the hunt. And what reader had not been exercis'd over the traces of that feudal custom, by which *seigneurs* warm'd

their feet in the bowels of serfs, the abdomen being open'd for the purpose? It now is made to appear that the serf was only required to submit his unharm'd abdomen as a foot cushion while his lord supp'd, and was required to chafe the legs of the seigneur with his hands.

It is curiously in embryos and childhood, and among the illiterate, we always find the groundwork and start, of this great science, and its noblest products. What a relief most people have in speaking of a man not by his true and formal name, with a "Mister" to it, but by some odd or homely appellative. The propensity to approach a meaning not directly and squarely, but by circuitous styles of expression, seems indeed a born quality of the common people every where, evidenced by nick-names, and the inveterate determination of the masses to bestow sub-titles, sometimes ridiculous, sometimes very apt. Always among the soldiers during the Secession War, one heard of "Little Mac" (Gen. McClellan), or of "Uncle Billy" (Gen. Sherman.) "The old man" was, of course, very common. Among the rank and file, both armies, it was very general to speak of the different States they came from by their slang names. Those from Maine were call'd Foxes; New Hampshire, Granite Boys; Massachusetts, Bay Staters; Vermont, Green Mountain Boys; Rhode Island, Gun Flints; Connecticut, Wooden Nutmegs; New York, Knickerbockers; New Jersey, Clam Catchers; Pennsylvania, Logher Heads; Delaware, Muskrats; Maryland, Claw Thumpers; Virginia, Beagles; North Carolina, Tar Boilers; South Carolina, Weasels; Georgia, Buzzards; Louisiana, Creoles; Alabama, Lizzards; Kentucky, Corn Crackers; Ohio, Buckeyes; Michigan, Wolverines; Indiana, Hoosiers; Illinois, Suckers; Missouri, Pukes; Mississippi, Tad Poles; Florida, Fly up the Creeks; Wisconsin, Badgers; Iowa, Hawkeyes; Oregon, Hard Cases. Indeed I am not sure but slang names have more than once made Presidents. "Old Hickory," (Gen. Jackson) is one case in point. "Tippecanoe, and Tyler too," another.

I find the same rule in the people's conversations everywhere. I heard this among the men of the city horse-cars, where the conductor is often call'd a "snatcher" (i. e. because his characteristic duty is to constantly pull or snatch the bell-strap, to stop or go on.) Two young fellows are having a friendly talk, amid which, says 1st conductor, "What did you do before you was a snatcher?" Answer of 2d conductor, "Nail'd." (Translation of answer: "I work'd as carpenter.") What is a "boom"? says one editor to another. "Esteem'd contemporary," says the other, "a boom is a bulge." "Barefoot whiskey" is the Tennessee name for the undiluted stimulant. In the slang of the New York com-

mon restaurant waiters a plate of ham and beans is known as "stars and stripes," codfish balls as "sleeve-buttons," and hash as "mystery."

The Western States of the Union are, however, as may be supposed, the special areas of slang, not only in conversation, but in names of localities, towns, rivers, etc. A late Oregon traveller says:

"On your way to Olympia by rail, you cross a river called the Shookum-Chuck; your train stops at places named Newaukum, Tumwater, and Toutle; and if you seek further you will hear of whole counties labell'd Wahkiakum, or Snohomish, or Kitsar, or Klikatat; and Cowlitz, Hookium, and Nenolelops greet and offend you. They complain in Olympia that Washington Territory gets but little immigration; but what wonder? What man, having the whole American continent to choose from, would willingly date his letters from the county of Snohomish or bring up his children in the city of Nenolelops? The village of Tumwater is, as I am ready to bear witness, very pretty indeed; but surely an emigrant would think twice before he establish'd himself either there or at Toutle. Seattle is sufficiently barbarous; Stelicoom is no better; and I suspect that the Northern Pacific Railroad terminus has been fixed at Tacoma because it is one of the few places on Puget Sound whose name does not inspire horror."

Then a Nevada paper chronicles the departure of a mining party from Reno: "The toughest set of roosters that ever shook the dust off any town left Reno yesterday for the new mining district of Cornucopia. They came here from Virginia. Among the crowd were four New York cock-fighters, two Chicago murderers, three Baltimore bruisers, one Philadelphia prize-fighter, four San Francisco hoodlums, three Virginia beats, two Union Pacific roughs, and two check guerrillas." Among the far-west newspapers, have been, or are, *The Fairplay* (Colorado) *Flume*, *The Solid Muldoon*, of Ouray, *The Tombstone Epitaph*, of Nevada, *The Jimplecute*, of Texas, and *The Bazoo*, of Missouri. Shirttail Bend, Whiskey Flat, Puppytown, Wild Yankee Ranch, Squaw Flat, Rawhide Ranch, Loafer's Ravine, Squitch Gulch, Toenail Lake, are a few of the names of places in Butte county, Cal.

Perhaps indeed no place or term gives more luxuriant illustrations of the fermentation processes I have mention'd, and their froth and specks, than those Mississippi and Pacific coast regions, at the present day. Hasty and grotesque as are some of the names, others are of an appropriateness and originality unsurpassable. This applies to the Indian words, which are often perfect. Oklahoma is proposed in Congress for the name of one of our new Territories. Hog-eye, Lick-skillet, Rake-pocket and Steal-easy are the names of some Texan towns: Miss Bremer found among the aborigines the following names: *Men's*, Horn-

point; Round-Wind; Stand-and-look-out; The-Cloud-that-goes-aside; Iron-toe; Seek-the-sun; Iron-flash; Red-bottle; White-spindle; Black-dog; Two-feathers-of-honor; Gray-grass; Bushy-tail; Thunder-face; Go-on-the-burning-sod; Spirits-of-the-dead. *Women's*, Keep-the-fire; Spiritual-woman; Second-daughter-of-the-house; Blue-bird.

Certainly philologists have not given enough attention to this element and its results, which, I repeat, can probably be found working every where to-day, amid modern conditions, with as much life and activity as in far-back Greece or India, under pre-historic ones. Then the wit—the rich flashes of humor and genius and poetry—darting out often from a gang of laborers, railroad-men, miners, drivers or boatmen! How often have I hover'd at the edge of a crowd of them, to hear their repartees and impromptus! You get more real fun from half an hour with them than from the books of all “the American humorists.”

The science of language has large and close analogies in geological science, with its ceaseless evolution, its fossils, and its numberless submerged layers and hidden strata, the infinite go-before of the present. Or, perhaps Language is more like some vast living body, or perennial body of bodies. And slang not only brings the first feeders of it, but is afterward the start of fancy, imagination and humor, breathing into its nostrils the breath of life.

AN INDIAN BUREAU REMINISCENCE.

AFTER the close of the Secession War in 1865, I work'd several months (until Mr. Harlan turn'd me out for having written "Leaves of Grass") in the Interior Department at Washington, in the Indian Bureau. Along this time there came to see their Great Father an unusual number of aboriginal visitors, delegations for treaties, settlement of lands, &c.—some young or middle-aged, but mainly old men, from the West, North, and occasionally from the South—parties of from five to twenty each—the most wonderful proofs of what Nature can produce, (the survival of the fittest, no doubt—all the frailer samples dropt, sorted out by death)—as if to show how the earth and woods, the attrition of storms and elements, and the exigencies of life at first hand, can train and fashion men, indeed *chiefs*, in heroic massiveness, imperturbability, muscle, and that last and highest beauty consisting of strength—the full exploitation and fruitage of a human identity, not from the culmination-points of "culture" and artificial civilization, but tallying our race, as it were, with giant, vital, gnarl'd, enduring trees, or monoliths of separate hardest rocks, and humanity holding its own with the best of the said trees or rocks, and outdoing them.

There were Omahas, Poncas, Winnebagoes, Cheyennes, Navahos, Apaches, and many others. Let me give a running account of what I see and hear through one of these conference collections at the Indian Bureau, going back to the present tense. Every head and face is impressive, even artistic; Nature redeems herself out of her crudest recesses. Most have red paint on their cheeks, however, or some other paint. ("Little Hill" makes the opening speech, which the interpreter translates by scraps.) Many wear head tires of gaudy-color'd braid, wound around thickly—some with circlets of eagles' feathers. Necklaces of bears' claws are plenty around their necks. Most of the chiefs are wrapt in large blankets of the brightest scarlet. Two or three have blue, and I see one black. (A wise man call'd "the Flesh" now makes a short speech, apparently asking something. Indian Commissioner Dole answers him, and the interpreter translates in scraps again.) All the principal chiefs have toma-

hawks or hatchets, some of them very richly ornamented and costly. Plaid shirts are to be observ'd—none too clean. Now a tall fellow, "Hole-in-the-Day," is speaking. He has a copious head-dress composed of feathers and narrow ribbon, under which appears a countenance painted all over a bilious yellow. Let us note this young chief. For all his paint, "Hole-in-the-Day" is a handsome Indian, mild and calm, dress'd in drab buckskin leggings, dark gray surtout, and a soft black hat. His costume will bear full observation, and even fashion would accept him. His apparel is worn loose and scant enough to show his superb physique, especially in neck, chest, and legs. ("The Apollo Belvidere!" was the involuntary exclamation of a famous European artist when he first saw a full-grown young Choctaw.)

One of the red visitors—a wild, lean-looking Indian, the one in the black woolen wrapper—has an empty buffalo head, with the horns on, for his personal surmounting. I see a markedly Bourbonish countenance among the chiefs—(it is not very uncommon among them, I am told.) Most of them avoided resting on chairs during the hour of their "talk" in the Commissioner's office; they would sit around on the floor, leaning against something, or stand up by the walls, partially wrapt in their blankets. Though some of the young fellows were, as I have said, magnificent and beautiful animals, I think the palm of unique picturesqueness, in body, limb, physiognomy, etc., was borne by the old or elderly chiefs, and the wise men.

My here-alluded-to experience in the Indian Bureau produced one very definite conviction, as follows: There is something about these aboriginal Americans, in their highest characteristic representations, essential traits, and the ensemble of their physique and physiognomy—something very remote, very lofty, arousing comparisons with our own civilized ideals—something that our literature, portrait painting, etc., have never caught, and that will almost certainly never be transmitted to the future, even as a reminiscence. No biographer, no historian, no artist, has grasp'd it—perhaps could not grasp it. It is so different, so far outside our standards of eminent humanity. Their feathers, paint—even the empty buffalo skull—did not, to say the least, seem any more ludicrous to me than many of the fashions I have seen in civilized society. I should not apply the word savage (at any rate, in the usual sense) as a leading word in the description of those great aboriginal specimens, of whom I certainly saw many of the best. There were moments, as I look'd at them or studied them, when our own exemplification of personality, dignity, heroic presentation anyhow (as in the conventions of society, or even in the accepted poems and plays,) seem'd sickly, puny, inferior.

The interpreters, agents of the Indian Department, or other whites accompanying the bands, in positions of responsibility, were always interesting to me; I had many talks with them. Occasionally I would go to the hotels where the bands were quarter'd, and spend an hour or two informally. Of course we could not have much conversation—though (through the interpreters) more of this than might be supposed—sometimes quite animated and significant. I had the good luck to be invariably receiv'd and treated by all of them in their most cordial manner.

[Letter to W. W. from an artist, B. H., who has been much among the American Indians:]

“I have just receiv'd your little paper on the Indian delegations. In the fourth paragraph you say that there is something about the essential traits of our aborigines which 'will almost certainly never be transmitted to the future.' If I am so fortunate as to regain my health I hope to weaken the force of that statement, at least in so far as my talent and training will permit. I intend to spend some years among them, and shall endeavor to perpetuate on canvas some of the finer types, both men and women, and some of the characteristic features of their life. It will certainly be well worth the while. My artistic enthusiasm was never so thoroughly stirr'd up as by the Indians. They certainly have more of beauty, dignity and nobility mingled with their own wild individuality, than any of the other indigenous types of man. Neither black nor Afghan, Arab nor Malay (and I know them all pretty well) can hold a candle to the Indian. All of the other aboriginal types seem to be more or less distorted from the model of perfect human form—as we know it—the blacks, thin-hipped, with bulbous limbs, not well mark'd; the Arabs large-jointed, &c. But I have seen many a young Indian as perfect in form and feature as a Greek statue—very different from a Greek statue, of course, but as satisfying to the artistic perceptions and demand.

“And the worst, or perhaps the best of it all is that it will require an artist—and a good one—to record the real facts and impressions. Ten thousand photographs would not have the value of one really finely felt painting. Color is all-important. No one but an artist knows how much. An Indian is only half an Indian without the blue-black hair and the brilliant eyes shining out of the wonderful dusky ochre and rose complexion.”

SOME DIARY NOTES AT RANDOM.

NEGRO SLAVES IN NEW YORK.—I can myself almost remember negro slaves in New York State, as my grandfather and great-grandfather (at West Hills, Suffolk County, New York) own'd a number. The hard labor of the farm was mostly done by them, and on the floor of the big kitchen, toward sundown, would be squatting a circle of twelve or fourteen "pickaninnies," eating their supper of pudding (Indian corn mush) and milk. A friend of my grandfather, named Wortman, of Oyster Bay, died in 1810, leaving ten slaves. Jeanette Treadwell, the last of them, died suddenly in Flushing last Summer (1884,) at the age of ninety-four years. I remember "old Mose," one of the liberated West Hills slaves, well. He was very genial, correct, manly, and cute, and a great friend of my childhood.

CANADA NIGHTS.—*Late in August.*—Three wondrous nights. Effects of moon, clouds, stars, and night-sheen, never surpass'd. I am out every night, enjoying all. The sunset begins it. (I have said already how long evening lingers here.) The moon, an hour high just after eight, is past her half, and looks somehow more like a human face up there than ever before. As it grows later, we have such gorgeous and broad cloud-effects, with Luna's tawny halos, silver edgings—great fleeces, depths of blue-black in patches, and occasionally long, low bars hanging silently a while, and then gray bulging masses rolling along stately, sometimes in long procession. The moon travels in Scorpion to-night, and dims all the stars of that constellation except fiery Antares, who keeps on shining just to the big one's side.

COUNTRY DAYS AND NIGHTS.—*Sept. 30, '82, 4.30 A. M.*—I am down in Camden County, New Jersey, at the farm-house of the Staffords—have been looking a long while at the comet—have in my time seen longer-tail'd ones, but never one so pronounc'd in cometary character, and so spectral-fierce—so like some great, pale, living monster of the air or sea. The atmosphere and sky, an hour or so before sunrise, so cool, still, translucent, give the

whole apparition to great advantage. It is low in the east. The head shows about as big as an ordinary good-sized saucer—is a perfectly round and defined disk—the tail some sixty or seventy feet—not a stripe, but quite broad, and gradually expanding. Impress'd with the silent, inexplicably emotional sight, I linger and look till all begins to weaken in the break of day.

October 2.—The third day of mellow, delicious, sunshiny weather. I am writing this in the recesses of the old woods, my seat on a big pine log, my back against a tree. Am down here a few days for a change, to bask in the Autumn sun, to idle lusciously and simply, and to eat hearty meals, especially my breakfast. Warm mid-days—the other hours of the twenty-four delightfully fresh and mild—cool evenings, and early mornings perfect. The scent of the woods, and the peculiar aroma of a great yet un-reap'd maize-field near by—the white butterflies in every direction by day—the golden-rod, the wild asters, and sunflowers—the song of the katydid all night.

Every day in Cooper's Woods, enjoying simple existence and the passing hours—taking short walks—exercising arms and chest with the saplings, or my voice with army songs or recitations. A perfect week for weather; seven continuous days bright and dry and cool and sunny. The nights splendid, with full moon—about 10 the grandest of star-shows up in the east and south, Jupiter, Saturn, Capella, Aldebaran, and great Orion. Am feeling pretty well—am outdoors most of the time, absorbing the days and nights all I can.

CENTRAL PARK NOTES.—*American Society from a Park Policeman's Point of View.*—Am in New York City, upper part—visit Central Park almost every day (and have for the last three weeks) off and on, taking observations or short rambles, and sometimes riding around. I talk quite a good deal with one of the Park policemen, C. C., up toward the Ninetieth street entrance. One day in particular I got him a-going, and it proved deeply interesting to me. Our talk floated into sociology and politics. I was curious to find how these things appear'd on their surfaces to my friend, for he plainly possess'd sharp wits and good nature, and had been seeing, for years, broad streaks of humanity somewhat out of my latitude. I found that as he took such appearances the inward caste-spirit of European "aristocracy" pervaded rich America, with cynicism and artificiality at the fore. Of the bulk of official persons, Executives, Congressmen, Legislators, Aldermen, Department heads, etc., etc., or the candidates for those positions, nineteen in twenty, in the policeman's judgment, were just players in a game. Liberty, Equality, Union, and all

the grand words of the Republic, were, in their mouths, but lures, decoys, chisel'd likenesses of dead wood, to catch the masses. Of fine afternoons, along the broad tracks of the Park, for many years, had swept by my friend, as he stood on guard, the carriages, etc., of American Gentility, not by dozens and scores, but by hundreds and thousands. Lucky brokers, capitalists, contractors, grocery-men, successful political strikers, rich butchers, dry goods' folk, &c. And on a large proportion of these vehicles, on panels or horse-trappings, were conspicuously borne *heraldic family crests*. (Can this really be true?) In wish and willingness (and if that were so, what matter about the reality?) titles of nobility, with a court and spheres fit for the capitalists, the highly educated, and the carriage-riding classes—to fence them off from “the common people”—were the heart's desire of the “good society” of our great cities—aye, of North and South.

So much for my police friend's speculations—which rather took me aback—and which I have thought I would just print as he gave them (as a doctor records symptoms.)

PLATE GLASS NOTES.—*St. Louis, Missouri, November, '79.*—What do you think I find manufactur'd out here—and of a kind the clearest and largest, best, and the most finish'd and luxurious in the world—and with ample demand for it too? *Plate glass!* One would suppose that was the last dainty outcome of an old, almost effete-growing civilization; and yet here it is, a few miles from St. Louis, on a charming little river, in the wilds of the West, near the Mississippi. I went down that way to-day by the Iron Mountain Railroad—was switch'd off on a side-track four miles through woods and ravines, to Swash Creëk, so-call'd, and there found Crystal City, and immense Glass Works, built (and evidently built to stay) right in the pleasant rolling forest. Spent most of the day, and examin'd the inexhaustible and peculiar sand the glass is made of—the original whity-gray stuff in the banks—saw the melting in the pots (a wondrous process, a real poem)—saw the delicate preparation the clay material undergoes for these great pots (it has to be kneaded finally by human feet, no machinery answering, and I watch'd the picturesque bare-legged Africans treading it)—saw the molten stuff (a great mass of a glowing pale yellow color) taken out of the furnaces (I shall never forget that Pot, shape, color, concomitants, more beautiful than any antique statue,) pass'd into the adjoining casting-room, lifted by powerful machinery, pour'd out on its bed (all glowing, a newer, vaster study for colorists, indescribable, a pale red-tinged yellow, of tarry consistence, all lambent,) roll'd by a heavy roller into rough plate glass, I should say ten feet by fourteen, then ra-

pidly shov'd into the annealing oven, which stood ready for it. The polishing and grinding rooms afterward—the great glass slabs, hundreds of them, on their flat beds, and the see-saw music of the steam machinery constantly at work polishing them—the myriads of human figures (the works employ'd 400 men) moving about, with swart arms and necks, and no superfluous clothing—the vast, rude halls, with immense play of shifting shade, and slow-moving currents of smoke and steam, and shafts of light, sometimes sun, striking in from above with effects that would have fill'd Michel Angelo with rapture.

Coming back to St. Louis this evening, at sundown, and for over an hour afterward, we follow'd the Mississippi, close by its western bank, giving me an ampler view of the river, and with effects a little different from any yet. In the eastern sky hung the planet Mars, just up, and of a very clear and vivid yellow. It was a soothing and pensive hour—the spread of the river off there in the half-light—the glints of the down-bound steamboats plodding along—and that yellow orb (apparently twice as large and significant as usual) above the Illinois shore. (All along, these nights, nothing can exceed the calm, fierce, golden, glistening domination of Mars over all the stars in the sky.)

As we came nearer St. Louis, the night having well set in, I saw some (to me) novel effects in the zinc smelting establishments, the tall chimneys belching flames at the top, while inside through the openings at the façades of the great tanks burst forth (in regular position) hundreds of fierce tufts of a peculiar blue (or green) flame, of a purity and intensity, like electric lights—illuminating not only the great buildings themselves, but far and near outside, like hues of the aurora borealis, only more vivid. (So that—remembering the Pot from the crystal furnace—my jaunt seem'd to give me new revelations in the color line.)

SOME WAR MEMORANDA.

JOTTED DOWN AT THE TIME.

I FIND this incident in my notes (I suppose from "chinning" in hospital with some sick or wounded soldier who knew of it):

When Kilpatrick and his forces were cut off at Brandy Station (last of September, '63, or thereabouts,) and the bands struck up "Yankee Doodle," there were not cannon enough in the Southern Confederacy to keep him and them "in." It was when Meade fell back. K. had his large cavalry division (perhaps 5000 men,) but the rebs, in superior force, had surrounded them. Things look'd exceedingly desperate. K. had two fine bands, and order'd them up immediately; they join'd and play'd "Yankee Doodle" with a will! It went through the men like lightning—but to inspire, not to unnerve. Every man seem'd a giant. They charged like a cyclone, and cut their way out. Their loss was but 20. It was about two in the afternoon.

WASHINGTON STREET SCENES.

April 7, 1864.—WALKING DOWN PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.—Warmish forenoon, after the storm of the past few days. I see, passing up, in the broad space between the curbs, a big squad of a couple of hundred conscripts, surrounded by a strong cordon of arm'd guards, and others interspers'd between the ranks. The government has learn'd caution from its experiences; there are many hundreds of "bounty jumpers," and already, as I am told, eighty thousand deserters! Next (also passing up the Avenue,) a cavalry company, young, but evidently well drill'd and service-harden'd men. Mark the upright posture in their saddles, the bronz'd and bearded young faces, the easy swaying to the motions of the horses, and the carbines by their right knees; handsome and reckless, some eighty of them, riding with rapid gait, clattering along. Then the tinkling bells of passing cars, the many shops (some with large show-windows, some with swords, straps for the shoulders of different ranks, hat-cords with acorns, or other insignia,) the military patrol marching along, with the orderly or second-lieutenant stopping different ones to examine passes—the forms, the faces, all sorts crowded together, the worn and pale, the pleas'd, some on their way to the railroad depot going home,

the cripples, the darkeys, the long trains of government wagons, or the sad strings of ambulances conveying wounded—the many officers' horses tied in front of the drinking or oyster saloons, or held by black men or boys, or orderlies.

THE 195TH PENNSYLVANIA.

Tuesday, Aug. 1, 1865.—About 3 o'clock this afternoon (sun broiling hot) in Fifteenth street, by the Treasury building, a large and handsome regiment, 195th Pennsylvania, were marching by—as it happen'd, receiv'd orders just here to halt and break ranks, so that they might rest themselves awhile. I thought I never saw a finer set of men—so hardy, candid, bright American looks, all weather-beaten, and with warm clothes. Every man was home-born. My heart was much drawn toward them. They seem'd very tired, red, and streaming with sweat. It is a one-year regiment, mostly from Lancaster County, Pa.; have been in Shenandoah Valley. On halting, the men unhitch'd their knapsacks, and sat down to rest themselves. Some lay flat on the pavement or under trees. The fine physical appearance of the whole body was remarkable. Great, very great, must be the State where such young farmers and mechanics are the practical average. I went around for half an hour and talk'd with several of them, sometimes squatting down with the groups.

LEFT-HAND WRITING BY SOLDIERS.

April 30, 1866.—Here is a single significant fact, from which one may judge of the character of the American soldiers in this just concluded war: A gentleman in New York City, a while since, took it into his head to collect specimens of writing from soldiers who had lost their right hands in battle, and afterwards learn'd to use the left. He gave public notice of his desire, and offer'd prizes for the best of these specimens. Pretty soon they began to come in, and by the time specified for awarding the prizes three hundred samples of such left-hand writing by maim'd soldiers had arrived.

I have just been looking over some of this writing. A great many of the specimens are written in a beautiful manner. All are good. The writing in nearly all cases slants backward instead of forward. One piece of writing, from a soldier who had lost both arms, was made by holding the pen in his mouth.

CENTRAL VIRGINIA IN '64.

Culpeper, where I am stopping, looks like a place of two or three thousand inhabitants. Must be one of the pleasantest

towns in Virginia. Even now, dilapidated fences, all broken down, windows out, it has the remains of much beauty. I am standing on an eminence overlooking the town, though within its limits. To the west the long Blue Mountain range is very plain, looks quite near, though from 30 to 50 miles distant, with some gray splashes of snow yet visible. The show is varied and fascinating. I see a great eagle up there in the air sailing with pois'd wings, quite low. Squads of red legged soldiers are drilling: I suppose some of the new men of the Brooklyn 14th; they march off presently with muskets on their shoulders. In another place, just below me, are some soldiers squaring off logs to build a shanty—chopping away, and the noise of the axes sounding sharp. I hear the bellowing, unmusical screech of the mule. I mark the thin blue smoke rising from camp fires. Just below me is a collection of hospital tents, with a yellow flag elevated on a stick, and moving languidly in the breeze. Two discharged men (I know them both) are just leaving. One is so weak he can hardly walk: the other is stronger, and carries his comrade's musket. They move slowly along the muddy road toward the depot. The scenery is full of breadth, and spread on the most generous scale (everywhere in Virginia this thought fill'd me.) The sights, the scenes, the groups, have been varied and picturesque here beyond description, and remain so.

I heard the men return in force the other night—heard the shouting, and got up and went out to hear what was the matter. That night scene of so many hundred tramping steadily by, through the mud (some big flaring torches of pine knots,) I shall never forget. I like to go to the paymaster's tent, and watch the men getting paid off. Some have furloughs, and start at once for home, sometimes amid great chaffing and blarneying. There is every day the sound of the wood-chopping axe, and the plentiful sight of negroes, crows, and mud. I note large droves and pens of cattle. The teamsters have camps of their own, and I go often among them. The officers occasionally invite me to dinner or supper at headquarters. The fare is plain, but you get something good to drink, and plenty of it. Gen. Meade is absent; Sedgwick is in command.

PAYING THE 1ST U. S. C. T.

One of my war time reminiscences comprises the quiet side scene of a visit I made to the First Regiment U. S. Color'd Troops, at their encampment, and on the occasion of their first paying off, July 11, 1863. Though there is now no difference of opinion worth mentioning, there was a powerful opposition to enlisting blacks during the earlier years of the secession war. Even then,

however, they had their champions. "That the color'd race," said a good authority, "is capable of military training and efficiency, is demonstrated by the testimony of numberless witnesses, and by the eagerness display'd in the raising, organizing, and drilling of African troops. Few white regiments make a better appearance on parade than the First and Second Louisiana Native Guards. The same remark is true of other color'd regiments. At Milliken's Bend, at Vicksburg, at Port Hudson, on Morris Island, and wherever tested, they have exhibited determin'd bravery, and compell'd the plaudits alike of the thoughtful and thoughtless soldiery. During the siege of Port Hudson the question was often ask'd those who beheld their resolute charges, how the 'niggers' behav'd under fire; and without exception the answer was complimentary to them. 'O, tip-top!' 'first-rate!' 'bully!' were the usual replies." But I did not start out to argue the case—only to give my reminiscence literally, as jotted on the spot at the time.

I write this on Mason's (otherwise Analostan) Island, under the fine shade trees of an old white stucco house, with big rooms; the white stucco house, originally a fine country seat (tradition says the famous Virginia Mason, author of the Fugitive Slave Law, was born here.) I reach'd the spot from my Washington quarters by ambulance up Pennsylvania avenue, through Georgetown, across the Aqueduct bridge, and around through a cut and winding road, with rocks and many bad gullies not lacking. After reaching the island, we get presently in the midst of the camp of the 1st Regiment U. S. C. T. The tents look clean and good; indeed, altogether, in locality especially, the pleasantest camp I have yet seen. The spot is umbrageous, high and dry, with distant sounds of the city, and the puffing steamers of the Potomac, up to Georgetown and back again. Birds are singing in the trees, the warmth is endurable here in this moist shade, with the fragrance and freshness. A hundred rods across is Georgetown. The river between is swell'd and muddy from the late rains up country. So quiet here, yet full of vitality, all around in the far distance glimpses, as I sweep my eye, of hills, verdure-clad, and with plenteous trees; right where I sit, locust, sassafras, spice, and many other trees, a few with huge parasitic vines; just at hand the banks sloping to the river, wild with beautiful, free vegetation, superb weeds, better, in their natural growth and forms, than the best garden. Lots of luxuriant grape vines and trumpet flowers; the river flowing far down in the distance.

Now the paying is to begin. The Major (paymaster) with his clerk seat themselves at a table—the rolls are before them—the

money box is open'd—there are packages of five, ten, twenty-five cent pieces. Here comes the first Company (B), some 82 men, all blacks. Certes, we cannot find fault with the appearance of this crowd—negroes though they be. They are manly enough, bright enough, look as if they had the soldier-stuff in them, look hardy, patient, many of them real handsome young fellows. The paying, I say, has begun. The men are march'd up in close proximity. The clerk calls off name after name, and each walks up, receives his money, and passes along out of the way. It is a real study, both to see them come close, and to see them pass away, stand counting their cash—(nearly all of this company get ten dollars and three cents each.) The clerk calls George Washington. That distinguish'd personage steps from the ranks, in the shape of a very black man, good sized and shaped, and aged about 30, with a military moustache; he takes his "ten three," and goes off evidently well pleas'd. (There are about a dozen Washingtons in the company. Let us hope they will do honor to the name.) At the table, how quickly the Major handles the bills, counts without trouble, everything going on smoothly and quickly. The regiment numbers to-day about 1,000 men (including 20 officers, the only whites.)

Now another company. These get \$5.36 each. The men look well. They, too, have great names; besides the Washingtons aforesaid, John Quincy Adams, Daniel Webster, Calhoun, James Madison, Alfred Tennyson, John Brown, Benj. G. Tucker, Horace Greeley, etc. The men step off aside, count their money with a pleas'd, half-puzzled look. Occasionally, but not often, there are some thoroughly African physiognomies, very black in color, large, protruding lips, low forehead, etc. But I have to say that I do not see one utterly revolting face.

Then another company, each man of this getting \$10.03 also. The pay proceeds very rapidly (the calculation, roll-signing, etc., having been arranged before hand.) Then some trouble. One company, by the rigid rules of official computation, gets only 23 cents each man. The company (K) is indignant, and after two or three are paid, the refusal to take the paltry sum is universal, and the company marches off to quarters unpaid.

Another company (I) gets only 70 cents. The sullen, lowering, disappointed look is general. Half refuse it in this case. Company G, in full dress, with brass scales on shoulders, look'd, perhaps, as well as any of the companies—the men had an unusually alert look.

These, then, are the black troops,--or the beginning of them. Well, no one can see them, even under these circumstances—their military career in its novitiate--without feeling well pleas'd with them.

As we enter'd the island, we saw scores at a little distance, bathing, washing their clothes, etc. The officers, as far as looks go, have a fine appearance, have good faces, and the air military. Altogether it is a significant show, and brings up some "abolition" thoughts. The scene, the porch of an Old Virginia slave-owner's house, the Potomac rippling near, the Capitol just down three or four miles there, seen through the pleasant blue haze of this July day.

After a couple of hours I get tired, and go off for a ramble. I write these concluding lines on a rock, under the shade of a tree on the banks of the island. It is solitary here, the birds singing, the sluggish muddy-yellow waters pouring down from the late rains of the upper Potomac; the green heights on the south side of the river before me. The single cannon from a neighboring fort has just been fired, to signal high noon. I have walk'd all around Analostan, enjoying its luxuriant wildness, and stopt in this solitary spot. A water snake wriggles down the bank, disturb'd, into the water. The bank near by is fringed with a dense growth of shrubbery, vines, etc.

FIVE THOUSAND POEMS.

THERE have been collected in a cluster nearly five thousand big and little American poems—all that diligent and long-continued research could lay hands on! The author of 'Old Grimes is Dead' commenced it, more than fifty years ago; then the cluster was pass'd on and accumulated by C. F. Harris; then further pass'd on and added to by the late Senator Anthony, from whom the whole collection has been bequeath'd to Brown University. A catalogue (such as it is) has been made and publish'd of these five thousand poems—and is probably the most curious and suggestive part of the whole affair. At any rate it has led me to some abstract reflection like the following.

I should like, for myself, to put on record my devout acknowledgment not only of the great masterpieces of the past, but of the benefit of *all* poets, past and present, and of *all* poetic utterance—in its entirety the dominant moral factor of humanity's progress. In view of that progress, and of evolution, the religious and æsthetic elements, the distinctive and most important of any, seem to me more indebted to poetry than to all other means and influences combined. In a very profound sense *religion is the poetry of humanity*. Then the points of union and rapport among all the poems and poets of the world, however wide their separations of time and place and theme, are much more numerous and weighty than the points of contrast. Without relation as they may seem at first sight, the whole earth's poets and poetry—*en masse*—the Oriental, the Greek, and what there is of Roman—the oldest myths—the interminable ballad-romances of the Middle Ages—the hymns and psalms of worship—the epics, plays, swarms of lyrics of the British Islands, or the Teutonic old or new—or modern French—or what there is in America, Bryant's, for instance, or Whittier's or Longfellow's—the verse of all tongues and ages, all forms, all subjects, from primitive times to our own day inclusive—really combine in one aggregate and electric globe or universe, with all its numberless parts and radiations held together by a common centre or verteber. To repeat it, all poetry thus has (to the point of view comprehensive enough) more features of resemblance than difference, and becomes essentially, like the planetary globe itself, compact and orbic and whole. Nature seems to sow countless seeds—makes incessant crude attempts—thankful to get now and then, even at rare and long intervals, something approximately good.

THE OLD BOWERY.

A Reminiscence of New York Plays and Acting Fifty Years Ago.

IN an article not long since, "Mrs. Siddons as Lady Macbeth," in "The Nineteenth Century," after describing the bitter regretfulness to mankind from the loss of those first-class poems, temples, pictures, gone and vanish'd from any record of men, the writer (Fleeming Jenkin) continues :

If this be our feeling as to the more durable works of art, what shall we say of those triumphs which, by their very nature, last no longer than the action which creates them—the triumphs of the orator, the singer or the actor? There is an anodyne in the words, "must be so," "inevitable," and there is even some absurdity in longing for the impossible. This anodyne and our sense of humor temper the unhappiness we feel when, after hearing some great performance, we leave the theatre and think, "Well, this great thing has been, and all that is now left of it is the feeble print upon my brain, the little thrill which memory will send along my nerves, mine and my neighbors, as we live longer the print and thrill must be feebler, and when we pass away the impress of the great artist will vanish from the world." The regret that a great art should in its nature be transitory, explains the lively interest which many feel in reading anecdotes or descriptions of a great actor.

All this is emphatically my own feeling and reminiscence about the best dramatic and lyric artists I have seen in bygone days—for instance, Marietta Alboni, the elder Booth, Forrest, the tenor Bettini, the baritone Badiali, "old man Clarke"—(I could write a whole paper on the latter's peerless rendering of the Ghost in "Hamlet" at the Park, when I was a young fellow)—an actor named Ranger, who appear'd in America forty years ago in *genre* characters; Henry Placide, and many others. But I will make a few memoranda at least of the best one I knew.

For the elderly New Yorker of to-day, perhaps, nothing were more likely to start up memories of his early manhood than the mention of the Bowery and the elder Booth. At the date given, the more stylish and select theatre (prices, 50 cents pit, \$1 boxes) was "The Park," a large and well-appointed house on Park Row, opposite the present Post-office. English opera and the old comedies were often given in capital style; the principal foreign stars appear'd here, with Italian opera at wide intervals. The Park held a large part in my boyhood's and young manhood's

life. Here I heard the English actor, Anderson, in "Charles de Moor," and in the fine part of "Gisippus." Here I heard Fanny Kemble, Charlotte Cushman, the Seguins, Daddy Rice, Hackett as Falstaff, Nimrod Wildfire, Rip Van Winkle, and in his Yankee characters. (See pages 19, 20, *Specimen Days*.) It was here (some years later than the date in the headline) I also heard Mario many times, and at his best. In such parts as Genaro, in "Lucrezia Borgia," he was inimitable—the sweetest of voices, a pure tenor, of considerable compass and respectable power. His wife, Grisi, was with him, no longer first-class or young—a fine Norma, though, to the last.

Perhaps my dearest amusement reminiscences are those musical ones. I doubt if ever the senses and emotions of the future will be thrill'd as were the auditors of a generation ago by the deep passion of Alboni's contralto (at the Broadway Theatre, south side, near Pearl street)—or by the trumpet notes of Badiali's baritone, or Bettini's pensive and incomparable tenor in Fernando in "Favorita," or Marini's bass in "Faliero," among the Havana troupe, Castle Garden.

But getting back more specifically to the date and theme I started from—the heavy tragedy business prevail'd more decidedly at the Bowery Theatre, where Booth and Forrest were frequently to be heard. Though Booth *pere*, then in his prime, ranging in age from 40 to 44 years (he was born in 1796,) was the loyal child and continuer of the traditions of orthodox English play-acting, he stood out "himself alone" in many respects beyond any of his kind on record, and with effects and ways that broke through all rules and all traditions. He has been well describ'd as an actor "whose instant and tremendous concentration of passion in his delineations overwhelm'd his audience, and wrought into it such enthusiasm that it partook of the fever of inspiration surging through his own veins." He seems to have been of beautiful private character, very honorable, affectionate, good-natured, no arrogance, glad to give the other actors the best chances. He knew all stage points thoroughly, and curiously ignored the mere dignities. I once talk'd with a man who had seen him do the Second Actor in the mock play to Charles Kean's Hamlet in Baltimore. He was a marvellous linguist. He play'd Shylock once in London, giving the dialogue in Hebrew, and in New Orleans Oreste (Racine's "Andromaque") in French. One trait of his habits, I have heard, was strict vegetarianism. He was exceptionally kind to the brute creation. Every once in a while he would make a break for solitude or wild freedom, sometimes for a few hours, sometimes for days. (He illustrated Plato's rule that to the forming an artist of the very highest rank a dash of in-

sanity or what the world calls insanity is indispensable.) He was a small-sized man—yet sharp observers noticed that however crowded the stage might be in certain scenes, Booth never seem'd overtop or hidden. He was singularly spontaneous and fluctuating; in the same part each rendering differ'd from any and all others. He had no stereotyped positions and made no arbitrary requirements on his fellow-performers.

As is well known to old play-goers, Booth's most effective part was Richard III. Either that, or Iago, or Shylock, or Pescara in "The Apostate," was sure to draw a crowded house. (Remember heavy pieces were much more in demand those days than now.) He was also unapproachably grand in Sir Giles Overreach, in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," and the principal character in "The Iron Chest."

In any portraiture of Booth, those years, the Bowery Theatre, with its leading lights, and the lessee and manager, Thomas Hamblin, cannot be left out. It was at the Bowery I first saw Edwin Forrest (the play was John Howard Payne's "Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin," and it affected me for weeks; or rather I might say permanently filter'd into my whole nature,) then in the zenith of his fame and ability. Sometimes (perhaps a veteran's benefit night,) the Bowery would group together five or six of the first-class actors of those days—Booth, Forrest, Cooper, Hamblin, and John R. Scott, for instance. At that time and here George Jones ("Count Joannes") was a young, handsome actor, and quite a favorite. I remember seeing him in the title role in "Julius Cæsar," and a capital performance it was.

To return specially to the manager. Thomas Hamblin made a first-rate foil to Booth, and was frequently cast with him. He had a large, shapely, imposing presence, and dark and flashing eyes. I remember well his rendering of the main role in Maturin's "Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand." But I thought Tom Hamblin's best acting was in the comparatively minor part of Faulconbridge in "King John"—he himself evidently revell'd in the part, and took away the house's applause from young Kean (the King) and Ellen Tree (Constance,) and everybody else on the stage—some time afterward at the Park. Some of the Bowery actresses were remarkably good. I remember Mrs. Pritchard in "Tour de Nesle," and Mrs. McClure in "Fatal Curiosity," and as Millwood in "George Barnwell." (I wonder what old fellow reading these lines will recall the fine comedietta of "The Youth That Never Saw a Woman," and the jolly acting in it of Mrs. Herring and old Gates.)

The Bowery, now and then, was the place, too, for spectacular pieces, such as "The Last Days of Pompeii," "The Lion-

Doom'd" and the yet undying "Mazeppa." At one time "Jonathan Bradford, or the Murder at the Roadside Inn," had a long and crowded run; John Sefton and his brother William acted in it. I remember well the Frenchwoman Celeste, a splendid pantomimist, and her emotional "Wept of the Wish-ton-Wish." But certainly the main "reason for being" of the Bowery Theatre those years was to furnish the public with Forrest's and Booth's performances—the latter having a popularity and circles of enthusiastic admirers and critics fully equal to the former—though people were divided as always. For some reason or other, neither Forrest nor Booth would accept engagements at the more fashionable theatre, the Park. And it is a curious reminiscence, but a true one, that both these great actors and their performances were taboo'd by "polite society" in New York and Boston at the time—probably as being too robustuous. But no such scruples affected the Bowery.

Recalling from that period the occasion of either Forrest or Booth, any good night at the old Bowery, pack'd from ceiling to pit with its audience mainly of alert, well dress'd, full-blooded young and middle-aged men, the best average of American-born mechanics—the emotional nature of the whole mass arous'd by the power and magnetism of as mighty mimes as ever trod the stage—the whole crowded auditorium, and what seeth'd in it, and flush'd from its faces and eyes, to me as much a part of the show as any—bursting forth in one of those long-kept-up tempests of hand-clapping peculiar to the Bowery—no dainty kid-glove business, but electric force and muscle from perhaps 2000 full-sinew'd men—(the inimitable and chromatic tempest of one of those ovations to Edwin Forrest, welcoming him back after an absence, comes up to me this moment)—Such sounds and scenes as here resumed will surely afford to many old New Yorkers some fruitful recollections.

I can yet remember (for I always scann'd an audience as rigidly as a play) the faces of the leading authors, poets, editors, of those times—Fenimore Cooper, Bryant, Paulding, Irving, Charles King, Watson Webb, N. P. Willis, Hoffnan, Halleck, Mumford, Morris, Leggett, L. G. Clarke, R. A. Locke and others, occasionally peering from the first tier boxes; and even the great National Eminences, Presidents Adams, Jackson, Van Buren and Tyler, all made short visits there on their Eastern tours.

Awhile after 1840 the character of the Bowery as hitherto described completely changed. Cheap prices and vulgar programmes came in. People who of after years saw the pandemonium of the pit and the doings on the boards must not gauge

by them the times and characters I am describing. Not but what there was more or less rankness in the crowd even then. For types of sectional New York those days—the streets East of the Bowery, that intersect Division, Grand, and up to Third Avenue—types that never found their Dickens, or Hogarth, or Balzac, and have pass'd away unportraited—the young ship-builders, cartmen, butchers, firemen (the old-time “soap-lock” or exaggerated “Mose” or “Sikesey,” of Chanfrau’s plays,) they, too, were always to be seen in these audiences, racy of the East River and the Dry Dock. Slang, wit, occasional shirt sleeves, and a picturesque freedom of looks and manners, with a rude good-nature and restless movement, were generally noticeable. Yet there never were audiences that paid a good actor or an interesting play the compliment of more sustain’d attention or quicker rapport. Then at times came the exceptionally decorous and intellectual congregations I have hinted at; for the Bowery really furnish’d plays and players you could get nowhere else. Notably, Booth always drew the best hearers; and to a specimen of his acting I will now attend in some detail.

I happen’d to see what has been reckon’d by experts one of the most marvelous pieces of histrionism ever known. It must have been about 1834 or '35. A favorite comedian and actress at the Bowery, Thomas Flynn and his wife, were to have a joint benefit, and, securing Booth for Richard, advertised the fact many days before-hand. The house fill’d early from top to bottom. There was some uneasiness behind the scenes, for the afternoon arrived, and Booth had not come from down in Maryland, where he lived. However, a few minutes before ringing-up time he made his appearance in lively condition.

After a one-act farce over, as contrast and prelude, the curtain rising for the tragedy, I can, from my good seat in the pit, pretty well front, see again Booth’s quiet entrance from the side, as, with head bent, he slowly and in silence, (amid the tempest of boisterous hand-clapping,) walks down the stage to the foot-lights with that peculiar and abstracted gesture, musingly kicking his sword, which he holds off from him by its sash. Though fifty years have pass’d since then, I can hear the clank, and feel the perfect following hush of perhaps three thousand people waiting. (I never saw an actor who could make more of the said hush or wait, and hold the audience in an indescribable, half-delicious, half-irritating suspense.) And so throughout the entire play, all parts, voice, atmosphere, magnetism, from

“Now is the winter of our discontent,”

to the closing death fight with Richmond, were of the finest and

grandest. The latter character was play'd by a stalwart young fellow named Ingersoll. Indeed, all the renderings were wonderfully good. But the great spell cast upon the mass of hearers came from Booth. Especially was the dream scene very impressive. A shudder went through every nervous system in the audience; it certainly did through mine.

Without question Booth was royal heir and legitimate representative of the Garrick-Kemble-Siddons dramatic traditions; but he vitalized and gave an unnamable *race* to those traditions with his own electric personal idiosyncrasy. (As in all art-utterance it was the subtle and powerful something *special to the individual* that really conquer'd.)

To me, too, Booth stands for much else besides theatricals. I consider that my seeing the man those years glimps'd for me, beyond all else, that inner spirit and form—the unquestionable charm and vivacity, but intrinsic sophistication and artificiality—crystallizing rapidly upon the English stage and literature at and after Shakspeare's time, and coming on accumulatively through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the beginning, fifty or forty years ago, of those disintegrating, decomposing processes now authoritatively going on. Yes; although Booth must be class'd in that antique, almost extinct school, inflated, stagy, rendering Shakspeare (perhaps inevitably, appropriately) from the growth of arbitrary and often cockney conventions, his genius was to me one of the grandest revelations of my life, a lesson of artistic expression. The words fire, energy, *abandon*, found in him unprecedented meanings. I never heard a speaker or actor who could give such a sting to hauteur or the taunt. I never heard from any other the charm of unswervingly perfect vocalization without trenching at all on mere melody, the province of music.

So much for a Thespian temple of New York fifty years since, where "sceptred tragedy went trailing by" under the gaze of the Dry Dock youth, and both players and auditors were of a character and like we shall never see again. And so much for the grandest histrion of modern times, as near as I can deliberately judge (and the phrenologists put my "caution" at 7)—grander, I believe, than Kean in the expression of electric passion, the prime eligibility of the tragic artist. For though those brilliant years had many fine and even magnificent actors, undoubtedly at Booth's death (in 1852) went the last and by far the noblest Roman of them all.

NOTES TO LATE ENGLISH BOOKS.

“SPECIMEN DAYS IN AMERICA,” LONDON EDITION,
JUNE, 1887. PREFACE TO THE READER IN THE
BRITISH ISLANDS.

If you will only take the following pages, as you do some long and gossippy letter written for you by a relative or friend traveling through distant scenes and incidents, and jotting them down lazily and informally, but ever veraciously (with occasional diversions of critical thought about somebody or something,) it might remove all formal or literary impediments at once, and bring you and me close together in the spirit in which the jottings were collated to be read. You have had, and have, plenty of public events and facts and general statistics of America;—in the following book is a common individual New World *private life*, its birth and growth, its struggles for a living, its goings and comings and observations (or representative portions of them) amid the United States of America the last thirty or forty years, with their varied war and peace, their local coloring, the unavoidable egotism, and the lights and shades and sights and joys and pains and sympathies common to humanity. Further introductory light may be found in the paragraph, “A Happy Hour’s Command,” and the bottom note belonging to it, at the beginning of the book. I have said in the text that if I were required to give good reason-for-being of “Specimen Days,” I should be unable to do so. Let me fondly hope that it has at least the reason and excuse of such off-hand gossippy letter as just alluded to, portraying American life-sights and incidents as they actually occurred—their presentation, making additions as far as it goes, to the simple experience and association of your soul, from a comrade soul;—and that also, in the volume, as below any page

of mine, anywhere, ever remains, for seen or unseen basis-phrase, GOOD-WILL BETWEEN THE COMMON PEOPLE OF ALL NATIONS.

ADDITIONAL NOTE, 1887, TO ENGLISH EDITION
"SPECIMEN DAYS."

As I write these lines I still continue living in Camden, New Jersey, America. Coming this way from Washington City, on my road to the sea-shore (and a temporary rest, as I supposed) in the early summer of 1873, I broke down disabled, and have dwelt here, as my central residence, all the time since—almost 14 years. In the preceding pages I have described how, during those years, I partially recuperated (in 1876) from my worst paralysis by going down to Timber Creek, living close to Nature, and domiciling with my dear friends, George and Susan Stafford. From 1877 or '8 to '83 or '4 I was well enough to travel around, considerably—journey'd westward to Kansas, leisurely exploring the Prairies, and on to Denver and the Rocky Mountains; another time north to Canada, where I spent most of the summer with my friend Dr. Bucke, and jaunted along the great lakes, and the St. Lawrence and Saguenay rivers; another time to Boston, to properly print the final edition of my poems (I was there over two months, and had a "good time.") I have so brought out the completed "Leaves of Grass" during this period; also "Specimen Days," of which the foregoing is a transcript; collected and re-edited the "Democratic Vistas" cluster (see companion volume to the present)—commemorated Abraham Lincoln's death, on the successive anniversaries of its occurrence, by delivering my lecture on it ten or twelve times; and "put in," through many a month and season, the aimless and resultless ways of most human lives.

Thus the last 14 years have pass'd. At present (end-days of March, 1887—I am nigh entering my 69th year) I find myself continuing on here, quite dilapidated and even wreck'd bodily from the paralysis, &c.—but in *good heart* (to use a Long Island country phrase,) and with about the same mentality as ever. The worst of it is, I have been growing feebler quite rapidly for a year, and now can't walk around—hardly from one room to the next. I am forced to stay in-doors and in my big chair nearly all the time. We have had a sharp, dreary winter too, and it has pinch'd me. I am alone most of the time; every week, indeed almost every day, write some—reminiscences, essays, sketches, for the magazines; and read, or rather I should

say dawdle over books and papers a good deal—spend half the day at that.

Nor can I finish this note without putting on record—wafting over sea from hence—my deepest thanks to certain friends and helpers (I would specify them all and each by name, but imperative reasons, outside of my own wishes, forbid,) in the British Islands, as well as in America. Dear, even in the abstract, is such flattering unction always no doubt to the soul! Nigher still, if possible, I myself have been, and am to-day indebted to such help for my very sustenance, clothing, shelter, and continuity. And I would not go to the grave without briefly, but plainly, as I here do, acknowledging—may I not say even glorying in it?

PREFACE TO "DEMOCRATIC VISTAS" WITH OTHER PAPERS.—ENGLISH EDITION.

MAINLY I think I should base the request to weigh the following pages on the assumption that they present, however indirectly, some views of the West and Modern, or of a distinctly western and modern (American) tendency, about certain matters.

Then, too, the pages include (by attempting to illustrate it,) a theory herein immediately mentioned. For another and different point of the issue, the Enlightenment, Democracy and Fair-show of the bulk, the common people of America (from sources representing not only the British Islands, but all the world,) means, at least, eligibility to Enlightenment, Democracy and Fair-show for the bulk, the common people of all civilized nations.

That positively "the dry land has appeared," at any rate, is an important fact.

America is really the great test or trial case for all the problems and promises and speculations of humanity, and of the past and present.

I say, too, we* are not to look so much to changes, ameliorations, and adaptations in Politics as to those of Literature and (thence) domestic Sociology. I have accordingly in the following melange introduced many themes besides political ones.

Several of the pieces are ostensibly in explanation of my own writings; but in that very process they best include and set forth their side of principles and generalities pressing vehemently for consideration our age.

Upon the whole, it is on the atmosphere they are born in, and,

* We who, in many departments, ways, make *the building up of the masses, by building up grand individuals*, our shibboleth: and in brief that is the marrow of this book.

(I hope) give out, more than any specific piece or trait, I would care to rest.

I think Literature—a new, superb, democratic literature—is to be the medicine and lever, and (with Art) the chief influence in modern civilization. I have myself not so much made a dead set at this theory, or attempted to present it directly, as admitted it to color and sometimes dominate what I had to say. In both Europe and America we have serried phalanxes who promulge and defend the political claims: I go for an equal force to uphold the other.

WALT WHITMAN.

CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY,
April, 1888.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

GLAD am I to give—were anything better lacking—even the most brief and shorn testimony of Abraham Lincoln. Everything I heard about him authentically, and every time I saw him (and it was my fortune through 1862 to '65 to see, or pass a word with, or watch him, personally, perhaps twenty or thirty times,) added to and anneal'd my respect and love at the moment. And as I dwell on what I myself heard or saw of the mighty Westerner, and blend it with the history and literature of my age, and of what I can get of all ages, and conclude it with his death, it seems like some tragic play, superior to all else I know—vaster and fierier and more convulsionary, for this America of ours, than Eschylus or Shakspeare ever drew for Athens or for England. And then the Moral permeating, underlying all! the Lesson that none so remote—none so illiterate—no age, no class—but may directly or indirectly read!

Abraham Lincoln's was really one of those characters, the best of which is the result of long trains of cause and effect—needing a certain spaciousness of time, and perhaps even remoteness, to properly enclose them—having unequal'd influence on the shaping of this Republic (and therefore the world) as to-day, and then far more important in the future. Thus the time has by no means yet come for a thorough measurement of him. Nevertheless, we who live in his era—who have seen him, and heard him, face to face, and are in the midst of, or just parting from, the strong and strange events which he and we have had to do with—can in some respects bear valuable, perhaps indispensable testimony concerning him.

I should first like to give a very fair and characteristic likeness of Lincoln, as I saw him and watch'd him one afternoon in Washington, for nearly half an hour, not long before his death. It was as he stood on the balcony of the National Hotel, Pennsylvania Avenue, making a short speech to the crowd in front, on the occasion either of a set of new colors presented to a famous Illinois regiment, or of the daring capture, by the Western men, of some flags from "the enemy," (which latter phrase, by the by, was not used by him at all in his remarks.) How the picture happen'd to be made I do not know, but I bought it a few days

afterward in Washington, and it was endor's'd by every one to whom I show'd it. Though hundreds of portraits have been made, by painters and photographers, (many to pass on, by copies, to future times,) I have never seen one yet that in my opinion deserv'd to be called a perfectly *good likeness*; nor do I believe there is really such a one in existence. May I not say too, that, as there is no entirely competent and emblematic likeness of Abraham Lincoln in picture or statue, there is not—perhaps cannot be—any fully appropriate literary statement or summing-up of him yet in existence?

The best way to estimate the value of Lincoln is to think what the condition of America would be to-day, if he had never lived—never been President. His nomination and first election were mainly accidents, experiments. Severely view'd, one cannot think very much of American Political Parties, from the beginning, after the Revolutionary War, down to the present time. Doubtless, while they have had their uses—have been and are “the grass on which the cow feeds”—and indispensable economies of growth—it is undeniable that under flippant names they have merely identified temporary passions, or freaks, or sometimes prejudice, ignorance, or hatred. The only thing like a great and worthy idea vitalizing a party, and making it heroic, was the enthusiasm in '64 for re-electing Abraham Lincoln, and the reason behind that enthusiasm.

How does this man compare with the acknowledg'd “Father of his country?” Washington was model'd on the best Saxon, and Franklin—of the age of the Stuarts (rooted in the Elizabethan period)—was essentially a noble Englishman, and just the kind needed for the occasions and the times of 1776-'83. Lincoln, underneath his practicality, was far less European, was quite thoroughly Western, original, essentially non-conventional, and had a certain sort of out-door or prairie stamp. One of the best of the late commentators on Shakspeare, (Professor Dowden,) makes the height and aggregate of his quality as a poet to be, that he thoroughly blended the ideal with the practical or realistic. If this be so, I should say that what Shakspeare did in poetic expression, Abraham Lincoln essentially did in his personal and official life. I should say the invisible foundations and vertebra of his character, more than any man's in history, were mystical, abstract, moral and spiritual—while upon all of them was built, and out of all of them radiated, under the control of the average of circumstances, what the vulgar call *horse-sense*, and a life often bent by temporary but most urgent materialistic and political reasons.

He seems to have been a man of indomitable firmness (even

obstinacy) on rare occasions, involving great points; but he was generally very easy, flexible, tolerant, almost slouchy, respecting minor matters. I note that even those reports and anecdotes intended to level him down, all leave the tinge of a favorable impression of him. As to his religious nature, it seems to me to have certainly been of the amplest, deepest-rooted, loftiest kind.

Already a new generation begins to tread the stage, since the persons and events of the Secession War. I have more than once fancied to myself the time when the present century has closed, and a new one open'd, and the men and deeds of that contest have become somewhat vague and mythical—fancied perhaps in some great Western city, or group collected together, or public festival, where the days of old, of 1863 and '4 and '5 are discuss'd—some ancient soldier sitting in the background as the talk goes on, and betraying himself by his emotion and moist eyes—like the journeying Ithacan at the banquet of King Alcinoüs, when the bard sings the contending warriors and their battles on the plains of Troy:

“So from the sluices of Ulysses' eyes
Fast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs.”

I have fancied, I say, some such venerable relic of this time of ours, preserv'd to the next or still the next generation of America. I have fancied, on such occasion, the young men gathering around; the awe, the eager questions: “What! have you seen Abraham Lincoln—and heard him speak—and touch'd his hand? Have you, with your own eyes, look'd on Grant, and Lee, and Sherman?”

Dear to Democracy, to the very last! And among the paradoxes generated by America, not the least curious was that spectacle of all the kings and queens and emperors of the earth, many from remote distances, sending tributes of condolence and sorrow in memory of one rais'd through the commonest average of life—a rail-splitter and flat-boatman!

Consider'd from contemporary points of view—who knows what the future may decide?—and from the points of view of current Democracy and The Union, (the only thing like passion or infatuation in the man was the passion for the Union of These States,) Abraham Lincoln seems to me the grandest figure yet, on all the crowded canvas of the Nineteenth Century.

[From the *New Orleans Picayune*, Jan. 25, 1887.]

NEW ORLEANS IN 1848.

WALT WHITMAN GOSSIPS OF HIS SOJOURN HERE YEARS AGO
AS A NEWSPAPER WRITER. NOTES OF HIS TRIP UP THE
MISSISSIPPI AND TO NEW YORK.

AMONG the letters brought this morning (Camden, New Jersey, Jan. 15, 1887,) by my faithful post-office carrier, J. G., is one as follows :

"NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 11, '87.—We have been informed that when you were younger and less famous than now, you were in New Orleans and perhaps have helped on the *Picayune*. If you have any remembrance of the *Picayune's* young days, or of journalism in New Orleans of that era, and would put it in writing (verse or prose) for the *Picayune's* fiftieth year edition, Jan. 25, we shall be pleased," etc.

In response to which : I went down to New Orleans early in 1848 to work on a daily newspaper, but it was not the *Picayune*, though I saw quite a good deal of the editors of that paper, and knew its personnel and ways. But let me indulge my pen in some gossip recollections of that time and place, with extracts from my journal up the Mississippi and across the great lakes to the Hudson.

Probably the influence most deeply pervading everything at that time through the United States, both in physical facts and in sentiment, was the Mexican War, then just ended. Following a brilliant campaign (in which our troops had march'd to the capital city, Mexico, and taken full possession,) we were returning after our victory. From the situation of the country, the city of New Orleans had been our channel and *entrepot* for everything, going and returning. It had the best news and war correspondents ; it had the most to say, through its leading papers, the *Picayune* and *Delta* especially, and its voice was readiest listen'd to ; from it "Chapparal" had gone out, and his army and battle letters were copied everywhere, not only in the United States, but in Europe. Then the social cast and results ; no one who has never seen the society of a city under similar circumstances can understand what a strange vivacity and *rattle*

were given throughout by such a situation. I remember the crowds of soldiers, the gay young officers, going or coming, the receipt of important news, the many discussions, the returning wounded, and so on.

I remember very well seeing Gen. Taylor with his staff and other officers at the St. Charles Theatre one evening (after talking with them during the day.) There was a short play on the stage, but the principal performance was of Dr. Colyer's troupe of "Model Artists," then in the full tide of their popularity. They gave many fine groups and solo shows. The house was crowded with uniforms and shoulder-straps. Gen. T. himself, if I remember right, was almost the only officer in civilian clothes; he was a jovial, old, rather stout, plain man, with a wrinkled and dark-yellow face, and, in ways and manners, show'd the least of conventional ceremony or etiquette I ever saw; he laugh'd unrestrainedly at everything comical. (He had a great personal resemblance to Fenimore Cooper, the novelist, of New York.) I remember Gen. Pillow and quite a cluster of other militaires also present.

One of my choice amusements during my stay in New Orleans was going down to the old French Market, especially of a Sunday morning. The show was a varied and curious one; among the rest, the Indian and negro hucksters with their wares. For there were always fine specimens of Indians, both men and women, young and old. I remember I nearly always on these occasions got a large cup of delicious coffee with a biscuit, for my breakfast, from the immense shining copper kettle of a great Creole mulatto woman (I believe she weigh'd 230 pounds.) I never have had such coffee since. About nice drinks, anyhow, my recollection of the "cobblers" (with strawberries and snow on top of the large tumblers,) and also the exquisite wines, and the perfect and mild French brandy, help the regretful reminiscence of my New Orleans experiences of those days. And what splendid and roomy and leisurely bar-rooms! particularly the grand ones of the St. Charles and St. Louis. Bargains, auctions, appointments, business conferences, &c., were generally held in the spaces or recesses of these bar-rooms.

I used to wander a midday hour or two now and then for amusement on the crowded and bustling levees, on the banks of the river. The diagonally wedg'd-in boats, the stevedores, the piles of cotton and other merchandise, the carts, mules, negroes, etc., afforded never-ending studies and sights to me. I made acquaintances among the captains, boatmen, or other characters, and often had long talks with them—sometimes finding a real rough diamond among my chance encounters. Sundays I sometimes went

forenoon to the old Catholic Cathedral in the French quarter. I used to walk a good deal in this arrondissement; and I have deeply regretted since that I did not cultivate, while I had such a good opportunity, the chance of better knowledge of French and Spanish Creole New Orleans people. (I have an idea that there is much and of importance about the Latin race contributions to American nationality in the South and Southwest that will never be put with sympathetic understanding and tact on record.)

Let me say, for better detail, that through several months (1848) I work'd on a new daily paper, *The Crescent*; my situation rather a pleasant one. My young brother, Jeff, was with me; and he not only grew very homesick, but the climate of the place, and especially the water, seriously disagreed with him. From this and other reasons (although I was quite happily fix'd) I made no very long stay in the South. In due time we took passage northward for St. Louis in the "Pride of the West" steamer, which left her wharf just at dusk. My brother was unwell, and lay in his berth from the moment we left till the next morning; he seem'd to me to be in a fever, and I felt alarm'd. However, the next morning he was all right again, much to my relief.

Our voyage up the Mississippi was after the same sort as the voyage, some months before, down it. The shores of this great river are very monotonous and dull—one continuous and rank flat, with the exception of a meagre stretch of bluff, about the neighborhood of Natchez, Memphis, etc. Fortunately we had good weather, and not a great crowd of passengers, though the berths were all full. The "Pride" jogg'd along pretty well, and put us into St. Louis about noon Saturday. After looking around a little I secured passage on the steamer "Prairie Bird," (to leave late in the afternoon,) bound up the Illinois River to La Salle, where we were to take canal for Chicago. During the day I rambled with my brother over a large portion of the town, search'd after a refectory, and, after much trouble, succeeded in getting some dinner.

Our "Prairie Bird" started out at dark, and a couple of hours after there was quite a rain and blow, which made them haul in along shore and tie fast. We made but thirty miles the whole night. The boat was excessively crowded with passengers, and had withal so much freight that we could hardly turn around. I slept on the floor, and the night was uncomfortable enough. The Illinois River is spotted with little villages with big names, Marseilles, Naples, etc.; its banks are low, and the vegetation excessively rank. Peoria, some distance up, is a pleasant town; I

went over the place; the country back is all rich land, for sale cheap. Three or four miles from P., land of the first quality can be bought for \$3 or \$4 an acre. (I am transcribing from my notes written at the time.)

Arriving at La Salle Tuesday morning, we went on board a canal-boat, had a detention by sticking on a mud bar, and then jogg'd along at a slow trot, some seventy of us, on a moderate-sized boat. (If the weather hadn't been rather cool, particularly at night, it would have been insufferable.) Illinois is the most splendid agricultural country I ever saw; the land is of surpassing richness; the place par excellence for farmers. We stopt at various points along the canal, some of them pretty villages.

It was 10 o'clock A. M. when we got in Chicago, too late for the steamer; so we went to an excellent public house, the "American Temperance," and I spent the time that day and till next morning, looking around Chicago.

At 9 the next forenoon we started on the "Griffith" (on board of which I am now inditing these memoranda,) up the blue waters of Lake Michigan. I was delighted with the appearance of the towns along Wisconsin. At Milwaukee I went on shore, and walk'd around the place. They say the country back is beautiful and rich. (It seems to me that if we should ever remove from Long Island, Wisconsin would be the proper place to come to.) The towns have a remarkable appearance of good living, without any penury or want. The country is so good naturally, and labor is in such demand.

About 5 o'clock one afternoon I heard the cry of "a woman overboard." It proved to be a crazy lady, who had become so from the loss of her son a couple of weeks before. The small boat put off, and succeeded in picking her up, though she had been in the water 15 minutes. She was dead. Her husband was on board. They went off at the next stopping place. While she lay in the water she probably recover'd her reason, as she toss'd up her arms and lifted her face toward the boat.

Sunday Morning, June 11.—We pass'd down Lake Huron yesterday and last night, and between 4 and 5 o'clock this morning we ran on the "flats," and have been vainly trying, with the aid of a steam tug and a lumbering lighter, to get clear again. The day is beautiful and the water clear and calm. Night before last we stopt at Mackinaw, (the island and town,) and I went up on the old fort, one of the oldest stations in the Northwest. We expect to get to Buffalo by to-morrow. The tug has fasten'd lines to us, but some have been snapt and the others have no effect. We seem to be firmly imbedded in the sand. (With the exception of a larger boat and better accom-

modations, it amounts to about the same thing as a becalmment I underwent on the Montauk voyage, East Long Island, last summer.) Later.—We are off again—expect to reach Detroit before dinner.

We did not stop at Detroit. We are now on Lake Erie, jogging along at a good round pace. A couple of hours since we were on the river above. Detroit seem'd to me a pretty place and thrifty. I especially liked the looks of the Canadian shore opposite and of the little village of Windsor, and, indeed, all along the banks of the river. From the shrubbery and the neat appearance of some of the cottages, I think it must have been settled by the French. While I now write we can see a little distance ahead the scene of the battle between Perry's fleet and the British during the last war with England. The lake looks to me a fine sheet of water. We are having a beautiful day.

June 12.—We stopt last evening at Cleveland, and though it was dark, I took the opportunity of rambling about the place; went up in the heart of the city and back to what appear'd to be the court-house. The streets are unusually wide, and the buildings appear to be substantial and comfortable. We went down through Main Street and found, some distance along, several squares of ground very prettily planted with trees and looking attractive enough. Return'd to the boat by way of the lighthouse on the hill.

This morning we are making for Buffalo, being, I imagine, a little more than half across Lake Erie. The water is rougher than on Michigan or Huron. (On St. Clair it was smooth as glass.) The day is bright and dry, with a stiff head wind.

We arriv'd in Buffalo on Monday evening; spent that night and a portion of next day going round the city exploring. Then got in the cars and went to Niagara; went under the falls—saw the whirlpool and all the other sights.

Tuesday night started for Albany; travel'd all night. From the time daylight afforded us a view of the country all seem'd very rich and well cultivated. Every few miles were large towns or villages.

Wednesday late we arriv'd at Albany. Spent the evening in exploring. There was a political meeting (Hunker) at the capitol, but I pass'd it by. Next morning I started down the Hudson in the "Alida;" arriv'd safely in New York that evening.

SMALL MEMORANDA.

Thousands lost—here one or two preserv'd.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, *Washington, Aug. 22, 1865.*—As I write this, about noon, the suite of rooms here is fill'd with southerners, standing in squads, or streaming in and out, some talking with the Pardon Clerk, some waiting to see the Attorney General, others discussing in low tones among themselves. All are mainly anxious about their pardons. The famous 13th exception of the President's Amnesty Proclamation of _____, makes it necessary that every secessionist, whose property is worth \$20,000 or over, shall get a special pardon, before he can transact any legal purchase, sale, &c. So hundreds and thousands of such property owners have either sent up here, for the last two months, or have been, or are now coming personally here, to get their pardons. They are from Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and every southern State. Some of their written petitions are very abject. Secession officers of the rank of Brigadier General, or higher, also need these special pardons. They also come here. I see streams of the \$20,000 men, (and some women,) every day. I talk now and then with them, and learn much that is interesting and significant. All the southern women that come (some splendid specimens, mothers, &c.) are dress'd in deep black.

Immense numbers (several thousands) of these pardons have been pass'd upon favorably; the Pardon Warrants (like great deeds) have been issued from the State Department, on the requisition of this office. But for some reason or other, they nearly all yet lie awaiting the President's signature. He seems to be in no hurry about it, but lets them wait.

The crowds that come here make a curious study for me. I get along, very sociably, with any of them—as I let them do all the talking; only now and then I have a long confab, or ask a suggestive question or two.

If the thing continues as at present, the property and wealth of the Southern States is going to legally rest, for the future, on

these pardons. Every single one is made out with the condition that the grantee shall respect the abolition of slavery, and never make an attempt to restore it.

Washington, Sept. 8, 9, &c., 1865.—The arrivals, swarms, &c., of the \$20,000 men seeking pardons, still continue with increas'd numbers and pertinacity. I yesterday (I am a clerk in the U. S. Attorney General's office here) made out a long list from Alabama, nearly 200, recommended for pardon by the Provisional Governor. This list, in the shape of a requisition from the Attorney General, goes to the State Department. There the Pardon Warrants are made out, brought back here, and then sent to the President, where they await his signature. He is signing them very freely of late.

The President, indeed, as at present appears, has fix'd his mind on a very generous and forgiving course toward the return'd secessionists. He will not countenance at all the demand of the extreme Philo-African element of the North, to make the right of negro voting at elections a condition and *sine qua non* of the reconstruction of the United States south, and of their resumption of co-equality in the Union.

A glint inside of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet appointments. One item of many.—While it was hanging in suspense who should be appointed Secretary of the Interior, (to take the place of Caleb Smith,) the choice was very close between Mr. Harlan and Col. Jesse K. Dubois, of Illinois. The latter had many friends. He was competent, he was honest, and he was a *man*. Mr. Harlan, in the race, finally gain'd the Methodist interest, and got himself to be consider'd as identified with it; and his appointment was apparently ask'd for by that powerful body. Bishop Simpson, of Philadelphia, came on and spoke for the selection. The President was much perplex'd. The reasons for appointing Col. Dubois were very strong, almost insuperable—yet the argument for Mr. Harlan, under the adroit position he had plac'd himself, was heavy. Those who press'd him adduc'd the magnitude of the Methodists as a body, their loyalty, more general and genuine than any other sect—that they represented the West, and had a right to be heard—that all or nearly all the other great denominations had their representatives in the heads of the government—that they as a body and the great sectarian power of the West, formally ask'd Mr. Harlan's appointment—that he was of them, having been a Methodist minister—that it would not do to offend them, but was highly necessary to propitiate them.

Mr. Lincoln thought deeply over the whole matter. He was in more than usual tribulation on the subject. Let it be enough to say that though Mr. Harlan finally receiv'd the Secretaryship, Col. Dubois came as near being appointed as a man could, and not be. The decision was finally made one night about 10 o'clock. Bishop Simpson and other clergymen and leading persons in Mr. Harlan's behalf, had been talking long and vehemently with the President. A member of Congress who was pressing Col. Dubois's claims, was in waiting. The President had told the Bishop that he would make a decision that evening, and that he thought it unnecessary to be press'd any more on the subject. That night he call'd in the M. C. above alluded to, and said to him: "Tell Uncle Jesse that I want to give him this appointment, and yet I cannot. I will do almost anything else in the world for him I am able. I have thought the matter all over, and under the circumstances think the Methodists too good and too great a body to be slighted. They have stood by the government, and help'd us their very best. I have had no better friends; and as the case stands, I have decided to appoint Mr. Harlan."

NOTE TO A FRIEND.

[Written on the fly-leaf of a copy of "Specimen Days," sent to Peter Doyle, at Washington, June, 1883.]

Pete, do you remember—(of course you do—I do well)—those great long jovial walks we had at times for years, (1866-'72) out of Washington City—often moonlight nights—'way to "Good Hope";—or, Sundays, up and down the Potomac shores, one side or the other, sometimes ten miles at a stretch? Or when you work'd on the horse-cars, and I waited for you, coming home late together—or resting and chatting at the Market, corner 7th Street and the Avenue, and eating those nice musk or watermelons? Or during my tedious sickness and first paralysis ('73) how you used to come to my solitary garret-room and make up my bed, and enliven me, and chat for an hour or so—or perhaps go out and get the medicines Dr. Drinkard had order'd for me—before you went on duty?..... Give my love to dear Mrs. and Mr. Nash, and tell them I have not forgotten them, and never will.

W. W.

WRITTEN IMPROMPTU IN AN ALBUM.

GERMANTOWN, PHILA., Dec. 26, '83.

In memory of these merry Christmas days and nights—to my

friends Mr. and Mrs. Williams, Churchie, May, Gurney, and little Aubrey.....A heavy snow-storm blocking up everything, and keeping us in. But souls, hearts, thoughts, unloos'd. And so—one and all, little and big—hav'n't we had a good time?
W. W.

From the Philadelphia Press, Nov. 27, 1884, (Thanksgiving number.)

THE PLACE GRATITUDE FILLS IN A FINE CHARACTER.

Scene.—A large family supper party, a night or two ago, with voices and laughter of the young, mellow faces of the old, and a by-and-by pause in the general jovialty. "Now, Mr. Whitman," spoke up one of the girls, "what have you to say about Thanksgiving? Won't you give us a sermon in advance, to sober us down?" The sage nodded smilingly, look'd a moment at the blaze of the great wood fire, ran his forefinger right and left through the heavy white moustache that might have otherwise impeded his voice, and began: "Thanksgiving goes probably far deeper than you folks suppose. I am not sure but it is the source of the highest poetry—as in parts of the Bible. Ruskin, indeed, makes the central source of all great art to be praise (gratitude) to the Almighty for life, and the universe with its objects and play of action.

"We Americans devote an official day to it every year; yet I sometimes fear the real article is almost dead or dying in our self-sufficient, independent Republic. Gratitude, anyhow, has never been made half enough of by the moralists; it is indispensable to a complete character, man's or woman's—the disposition to be appreciative, thankful. That is the main matter, the element, inclination—what geologists call the *trend*. Of my own life and writings I estimate the giving thanks part, with what it infers, as essentially the best item. I should say the quality of gratitude rounds the whole emotional nature; I should say love and faith would quite lack vitality without it. There are people—shall I call them even religious people, as things go?—who have no such trend to their disposition."

LAST OF THE WAR CASES

Memorandized at the time, Washington, 1865-'66.

[OF reminiscences of the Secession War, after the rest is said, I have thought it remains to give a few special words—in some respects at the time the typical words of all, and most definite—of the samples of the kill'd and wounded in action, and of soldiers who linger'd afterward, from these wounds, or were laid up by obstinate disease or prostration. The general statistics have been printed already, but can bear to be briefly stated again. There were over 3,000,000 men (for all periods of enlistment, large and small) furnish'd to the Union army during the war, New York State furnishing over 500,000, which was the greatest number of any one State. The losses by disease, wounds, kill'd in action, accidents, &c., were altogether about 600,000, or approximating to that number. Over 4,000,000 cases were treated in the main and adjudicatory army hospitals. The number sounds strange, but it is true. More than two-thirds of the deaths were from prostration or disease. To-day there lie buried over 300,000 soldiers in the various National army Cemeteries, more than half of them (and that is really the most significant and eloquent bequest of the War) mark'd "unknown." In full mortuary statistics of the war, the greatest deficiency arises from our not having the rolls, even as far as they were kept, of most of the Southern military prisons—a gap which probably both adds to, and helps conceal, the indescribable horrors of those places; it is, however, (restricting one vivid point only) certain that over 30,000 Union soldiers died, largely of actual starvation, in them. And now, leaving all figures and their "sum totals," I feel sure a few genuine memoranda of such things—some cases jotted down '64, '65, and '66—made at the time and on the spot, with all the associations of those scenes and places brought back, will not only go directest to the right spot, but give a clearer and more actual sight of that period, than anything else. Before I give the last cases I begin with verbatim extracts from letters home to my mother in Brooklyn, the second year of the war.—W. W.]

Washington, Oct. 13, 1863.—There has been a new lot of
(109)

wounded and sick arriving for the last three days. The first and second days, long strings of ambulances with the sick. Yesterday the worst, many with bad and bloody wounds, inevitably long neglected. I thought I was cooler and more used to it, but the sight of some cases brought tears into my eyes. I had the luck yesterday, however, to do lots of good. Had provided many nourishing articles for the men for another quarter, but, fortunately, had my stores where I could use them at once for these new-comers, as they arrived, faint, hungry, fagg'd out from their journey, with soil'd clothes, and all bloody. I distributed these articles, gave partly to the nurses I knew, or to those in charge. As many as possible I fed myself. Then I found a lot of oyster soup handy, and bought it all at once.

It is the most pitiful sight, this, when the men are first brought in, from some camp hospital broke up, or a part of the army moving. These who arrived yesterday are cavalry men. Our troops had fought like devils, but got the worst of it. They were Kilpatrick's cavalry; were in the rear, part of Meade's retreat, and the reb cavalry, knowing the ground and taking a favorable opportunity, dash'd in between, cut them off, and shell'd them terribly. But Kilpatrick turn'd and brought them out mostly. It was last Sunday. (One of the most terrible sights and tasks is of such receptions.)

Oct. 27, 1863.—If any of the soldiers I know (or their parents or folks) should call upon you—as they are often anxious to have my address in Brooklyn—you just use them as you know how, and if you happen to have pot-luck, and feel to ask them to take a bite, don't be afraid to do so. I have a friend, Thomas Neat, 2d N. Y. Cavalry, wounded in leg, now home in Jamaica, on furlough; he will probably call. Then possibly a Mr. Haskell, or some of his folks, from western New York: he had a son died here, and I was with the boy a good deal. The old man and his wife have written me and ask'd me my Brooklyn address; he said he had children in New York, and was occasionally down there. (When I come home I will show you some of the letters I get from mothers, sisters, fathers, &c. They will make you cry.)

How the time passes away! To think it is over a year since I left home suddenly—and have mostly been down in front since. The year has vanish'd swiftly, and oh, what scenes I have witness'd during that time! And the war is not settled yet; and one does not see anything certain, or even promising, of a settlement. But I do not lose the solid feeling, in myself, that the Union triumph is assured, whether it be sooner or whether it be later, or whatever roundabout way we may be led there; and I find I don't change that conviction from any reverses we meet.

nor delays, nor blunders. One realizes here in Washington the great labors, even the negative ones, of Lincoln; that it is a big thing to have just kept the United States from being thrown down and having its throat cut. I have not waver'd or had any doubt of the issue, since Gettysburg.

8th September, '63.—Here, now, is a specimen army hospital case: Lorenzo Strong, Co. A, 9th United States Cavalry, shot by a shell last Sunday; right leg amputated on the field. Sent up here Monday night, 14th. Seem'd to be doing pretty well till Wednesday noon, 16th, when he took a turn for the worse, and a strangely rapid and fatal termination ensued. Though I had much to do, I staid and saw all. It was a death-picture characteristic of these soldiers' hospitals—the perfect specimen of physique, one of the most magnificent I ever saw—the convulsive spasms and working of muscles, mouth, and throat. There are two good women nurses, one on each side. The doctor comes in and gives him a little chloroform. One of the nurses constantly fans him, for it is fearfully hot. He asks to be rais'd up, and they put him in a half-sitting posture. He call'd for “Mark” repeatedly, half-deliriously, all day. Life ebbs, runs now with the speed of a mill race; his splendid neck, as it lays all open, works still, slightly; his eyes turn back. A religious person coming in offers a prayer, in subdued tones, bent at the foot of the bed; and in the space of the aisle, a crowd, including two or three doctors, several students, and many soldiers, has silently gather'd. It is very still and warm, as the struggle goes on, and dwindles, a little more, and a little more—and then welcome oblivion, painlessness, death. A pause, the crowd drops away, a white bandage is bound around and under the jaw, the propping pillows are removed, the limpsy head falls down, the arms are softly placed by the side, all composed, all still,—and the broad white sheet is thrown over everything.

April 10, 1864.—Unusual agitation all around concentrated here. Exciting times in Congress. The Copperheads are getting furious, and want to recognize the Southern Confederacy. “This is a pretty time to talk of recognizing such —,” said a Pennsylvania officer in hospital to me to-day, “after what has transpired the last three years.” After first Fredericksburg I felt discouraged myself, and doubted whether our rulers could carry on the war. But that had pass'd away. The war *must* be carried on. I would willingly go in the ranks myself if I thought it would profit more than as at present, and I don't know sometimes but I shall, as it is. Then there is certainly a strange, deep, fervid feeling form'd or arous'd in the land, hard to describe or name; it is not a majority feeling, but it will

make itself felt. M., you don't know what a nature a fellow gets, not only after being a soldier a while, but after living in the sights and influences of the camps, the wounded, &c.—a nature he never experienced before. The stars and stripes, the tune of Yankee Doodle, and similar things, produce such an effect on a fellow as never before. I have seen them bring tears on some men's cheeks, and others turn pale with emotion. I have a little flag (it belong'd to one of our cavalry regiments,) presented to me by one of the wounded; it was taken by the secesh in a fight, and rescued by our men in a bloody skirmish following. It cost three men's lives to get back that four-by-three flag—to tear it from the breast of a dead rebel—for *the name* of getting their little “rag” back again. The man that secured it was very badly wounded, and they let him keep it. I was with him a good deal; he wanted to give me some keepsake, he said,—he didn't expect to live,—so he gave me that flag. The best of it all is, dear M., there isn't a regiment, cavalry or infantry, that wouldn't do the like, on the like occasion.

April 12.—I will finish my letter this morning; it is a beautiful day. I was up in Congress very late last night. The House had a very excited night session about expelling the men that proposed recognizing the Southern Confederacy. You ought to hear (as I do) the soldiers talk; they are excited to madness. We shall probably have hot times here, not in the military fields alone. The body of the army is true and firm as the North Star.

May 6, '64.—M., the poor soldier with diarrhoea, is still living, but, oh, what a looking object! Death would be a relief to him—he cannot last many hours. Cunningham, the Ohio soldier, with leg amputated at thigh, has pick'd up beyond expectation; now looks indeed like getting well. (He died a few weeks afterward.) The hospitals are very full. I am very well indeed. Hot here to-day.

May 23, '64.—Sometimes I think that should it come when it *must*, to fall in battle, one's anguish over a son or brother kill'd might be temper'd with much to take the edge off. Lingered and extreme suffering from wounds or sickness seem to me far worse than death in battle. I can honestly say the latter has no terrors for me, as far as I myself am concern'd. Then I should say, too, about death in war, that our feelings and imaginations make a thousand times too much of the whole matter. Of the many I have seen die, or known of, the past year, I have not seen or known one who met death with terror. In most cases I should say it was a welcome relief and release.

Yesterday I spent a good part of the afternoon with a young

soldier of seventeen, Charles Cutter, of Lawrence City, Massachusetts, 1st Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, Battery M. He was brought to one of the hospitals mortally wounded in abdomen. Well, I thought to myself, as I sat looking at him, it ought to be a relief to his folks if they could see how little he really suffer'd. He lay very placid, in a half lethargy, with his eyes closed. As it was extremely hot, and I sat a good while silently fanning him, and wiping the sweat, at length he open'd his eyes quite wide and clear, and look'd inquiringly around. I said, "What is it, my boy? Do you want anything?" He answer'd quietly, with a good-natured smile, "Oh, nothing; I was only looking around to see who was with me." His mind was somewhat wandering, yet he lay in an evident peacefulness that sanity and health might have envied. I had to leave for other engagements. He died, I heard afterward, without any special agitation, in the course of the night.

Washington, May 26, '63.—M., I think something of commencing a series of lectures, readings, talks, &c., through the cities of the North, to supply myself with funds for hospital ministrations. I do not like to be so beholden to others; I need a pretty free supply of money, and the work grows upon me, and fascinates me. It is the most magnetic as well as terrible sight: the lots of poor wounded and helpless men depending so much, in one ward or another, upon my soothing or talking to them, or rousing them up a little, or perhaps petting, or feeding them their dinner or supper (here is a patient, for instance, wounded in both arms,) or giving some trifle for a novelty or change—anything, however trivial, to break the monotony of those hospital hours.

It is curious: when I am present at the most appalling scenes, deaths, operations, sickening wounds (perhaps full of maggots,) I keep cool and do not give out or budge, although my sympathies are very much excited; but often, hours afterward, perhaps when I am home, or out walking alone, I feel sick, and actually tremble, when I recall the case again before me.

Sunday afternoon, opening of 1865.—Pass'd this afternoon among a collection of unusually bad cases, wounded and sick Secession soldiers, left upon our hands. I spent the previous Sunday afternoon there also. At that time two were dying. Two others have died during the week. Several of them are partly deranged. I went around among them elaborately. Poor boys, they all needed to be cheer'd up. As I sat down by any particular one, the eyes of all the rest in the neighboring cots would fix upon me, and remain steadily riveted as long as I sat within their sight. Nobody seem'd to wish anything special

to eat or drink. The main thing ask'd for was postage stamps, and paper for writing. I distributed all the stamps I had. Tobacco was wanted by some.

One call'd me over to him and ask'd me in a low tone what denomination I belong'd to. He said he was a Catholic—wish'd to find some one of the same faith—wanted some good reading. I gave him something to read, and sat down by him a few minutes. Moved around with a word for each. They were hardly any of them personally attractive cases, and no visitors come here. Of course they were all destitute of money. I gave small sums to two or three, apparently the most needy. The men are from quite all the Southern States, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, &c.

Wrote several letters. One for a young fellow named Thomas J. Byrd, with a bad wound and diarrhoea. Was from Russell county, Alabama; been out four years. Wrote to his mother; had neither heard from her nor written to her in nine months. Was taken prisoner last Christmas, in Tennessee; sent to Nashville, then to Camp Chase, Ohio, and kept there a long time; all the while not money enough to get paper and postage stamps. Was paroled, but on his way home the wound took gangrene; had diarrhoea also; had evidently been very low. Demeanor cool, and patient. A dark-skinn'd, quaint young fellow, with strong Southern idiom; no education.

Another letter for John W. Morgan, aged 18, from Shellot, Brunswick county, North Carolina; been out nine months; gunshot wound in right leg, above knee; also diarrhoea; wound getting along well; quite a gentle, affectionate boy; wish'd me to put in the letter for his mother to kiss his little brother and sister for him. [I put strong envelopes on these, and two or three other letters, directed them plainly and fully, and dropt them in the Washington post-office the next morning myself.]

The large ward I am in is used for Secession soldiers exclusively. One man, about forty years of age, emaciated with diarrhoea, I was attracted to, as he lay with his eyes turn'd up, looking like death. His weakness was so extreme that it took a minute or so, every time, for him to talk with anything like consecutive meaning; yet he was evidently a man of good intelligence and education. As I said anything, he would lie a moment perfectly still, then, with closed eyes, answer in a low, very slow voice, quite correct and sensible, but in a way and tone that wrung my heart. He had a mother, wife, and child living (or probably living) in his home in Mississippi. It was long, long since he had seen them. Had he caus'd a letter to be sent them since he got here in Washington? No answer. I repeated

the question, very slowly and soothingly. He could not tell whether he had or not—things of late seem'd to him like a dream. After waiting a moment, I said: "Well, I am going to walk down the ward a moment, and when I come back you can tell me. If you have not written, I will sit down and write." A few minutes after I return'd; he said he remember'd now that some one had written for him two or three days before. The presence of this man impress'd me profoundly. The flesh was all sunken on face and arms; the eyes low in their sockets and glassy, and with purple rings around them. Two or three great tears silently flow'd out from the eyes, and roll'd down his temples (he was doubtless unused to be spoken to as I was speaking to him.) Sickness, imprisonment, exhaustion, &c., had conquer'd the body, yet the mind held mastery still, and call'd even wandering remembrance back.

There are some fifty Southern soldiers here; all sad, sad cases. There is a good deal of scurvy. I distributed some paper, envelopes, and postage stamps, and wrote addresses full and plain on many of the envelopes.

I return'd again Tuesday, August 1, and moved around in the same manner a couple of hours.

September 22, '65.—Afternoon and evening at Douglas Hospital to see a friend belonging to 2d New York Artillery (Hiram W. Frazee, Serg't,) down with an obstinate compound fracture of left leg receiv'd in one of the last battles near Petersburg. After sitting a while with him, went through several neighboring wards. In one of them found an old acquaintance transferr'd here lately, a rebel prisoner, in a dying condition. Poor fellow, the look was already on his face. He gazed long at me. I ask'd him if he knew me. After a moment he utter'd something, but inarticulately. I have seen him off and on for the last five months. He has suffer'd very much; a bad wound in left leg, severely fractured, several operations, cuttings, extractions of bone, splinters, &c. I remember he seem'd to me, as I used to talk with him, a fair specimen of the main strata of the Southerners, those without property or education, but still with the stamp which comes from freedom and equality. I liked him; Jonathan Wallace, of Hurd Co., Georgia, age 30 (wife, Susan F. Wallace, Houston, Hurd Co., Georgia.) [If any good soul of that county should see this, I hope he will send her this word.] Had a family; had not heard from them since taken prisoner, now six months. I had written for him, and done trifles for him, before he came here. He made no outward show, was mild in his talk and behavior, but I knew he worried much inwardly. But now all would be over very soon. I half sat upon

the little stand near the head of the bed. Wallace was somewhat restless. I placed my hand lightly on his forehead and face, just sliding it over the surface. In a moment or so he fell into a calm, regular-breathing lethargy or sleep, and remain'd so while I sat there. It was dark, and the lights were lit. I hardly know why (death seem'd hovering near,) but I stay'd nearly an hour. A Sister of Charity, dress'd in black, with a broad white linen bandage around her head and under her chin, and a black crape over all and flowing down from her head in long wide pieces, came to him, and moved around the bed. She bow'd low and solemn to me. For some time she moved around there noiseless as a ghost, doing little things for the dying man.

December, '65.—The only remaining hospital is now "Harewood," out in the woods, northwest of the city. I have been visiting there regularly every Sunday, during these two months.

January 24, '66.—Went out to Harewood early to-day, and remain'd all day.

Sunday, February 4, 1866.—Harewood Hospital again. Walk'd out this afternoon (bright, dry, ground frozen hard) through the woods. Ward 6 is fill'd with blacks, some with wounds, some ill, two or three with limbs frozen. The boys made quite a picture sitting round the stove. Hardly any can read or write. I write for three or four, direct envelopes, give some tobacco, &c.

Joseph Winder, a likely boy, aged twenty-three, belongs to 10th Color'd Infantry (now in Texas;) is from Eastville, Virginia. Was a slave; belong'd to Lafayette Homeston. The master was quite willing he should leave. Join'd the army two years ago; has been in one or two battles. Was sent to hospital with rheumatism. Has since been employ'd as cook. His parents at Eastville; he gets letters from them, and has letters written to them by a friend. Many black boys left that part of Virginia and join'd the army; the 10th, in fact, was made up of Virginia blacks from thereabouts. As soon as discharged is going back to Eastville to his parents and home, and intends to stay there.

Thomas King, formerly 2d District Color'd Regiment, discharged soldier, Company E, lay in a dying condition; his disease was consumption. A Catholic priest was administering extreme unction to him. (I have seen this kind of sight several times in the hospitals; it is very impressive.)

Harewood, April 29, 1866. Sunday afternoon.—Poor Joseph Swiers, Company H, 155th Pennsylvania, a mere lad (only eighteen years of age;) his folks living in Reedsburgh, Pennsylvania. I have known him now for nearly a year, transferr'd from hospital to hospital. He was badly wounded in the thigh at Hatcher's Run, February 6, '65.

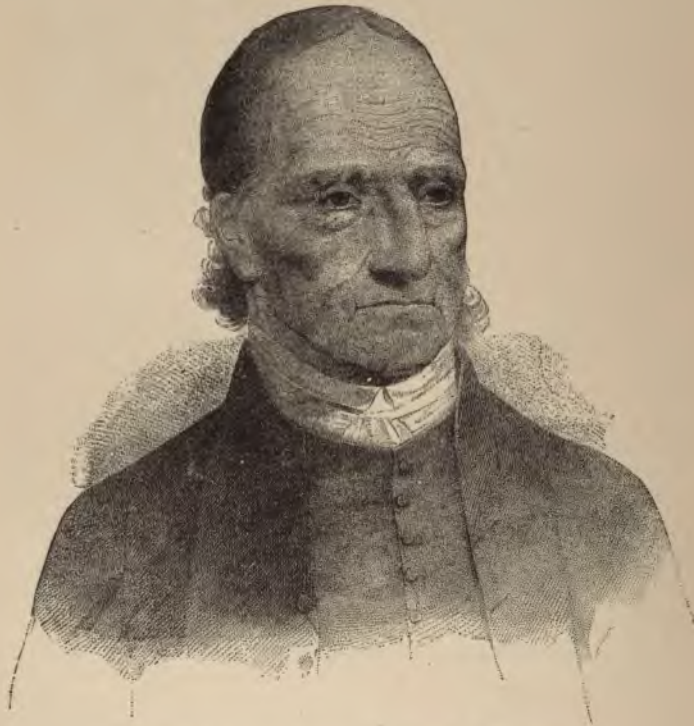
James E. Ragan, Atlanta, Georgia; 2d United States Infantry. Union folks. Brother impress'd, deserted, died; now no folks, left alone in the world, is in a singularly nervous state; came in hospital with intermittent fever.

Walk slowly around the ward, observing, and to see if I can do anything. Two or three are lying very low with consumption, cannot recover; some with old wounds; one with both feet frozen off, so that on one only the heel remains. The supper is being given out: the liquid call'd tea, a thick slice of bread, and some stew'd apples.

That was about the last I saw of the regular army hospitals.

HERE is a portrait of E. H. from life, by Henry Inman, in New York, about 1827 or '28. The painting was finely copper-plated in 1830, and the present is a fac simile. Looks as I saw him in the following narrative.

The time was signalized by the *separation* of the Society of Friends, so greatly talked of—and continuing yet—but so little really explain'd. (All I give of this separation is in a Note following.)



BORN MARCH 19, 1748.

DIED FEBRUARY 20, 1880.

NOTES (*such as they are*) founded on

ELIAS HICKS.

Prefatory Note.—As myself a little boy hearing so much of E. H., at that time, long ago, in Suffolk and Queens and Kings Counties—and more than once personally seeing the old man—and my dear, dear father and mother faithful listeners to him at the meetings—I remember how I dream'd to write perhaps a piece about E. H. and his look and discourses, however long afterward—for my parents' sake—and the dear Friends too! And the following is what has at last but all come out of it—the feeling and intention never forgotten yet!

There is a sort of nature of persons I have compared to little rills of water, fresh, from perennial springs—(and the comparison is indeed an appropriate one)—persons not so very plenty, yet some few certainly of them running over the surface and area of humanity, all times, all lands. It is a specimen of this class I would now present. I would sum up in E. H., and make his case stand for the class, the sort, in all ages, all lands, sparse, not numerous, yet enough to irrigate the soil—enough to prove the inherent moral stock and irrepressible devotional aspirations growing indigenously of themselves, always advancing, and never utterly gone under or lost.

Always E. H. gives the service of pointing to the fountain of all naked theology, all religion, all worship, all the truth to which you are possibly eligible—namely in *yourself* and your inherent relations. Others talk of Bibles, saints, churches, exhortations, vicarious atonements—the canons outside of yourself and apart from man—E. H. to the religion inside of man's very own nature. This he incessantly labors to kindle, nourish, educate, bring forward and strengthen. He is the most *democratic* of the religionists—the prophets.

I have no doubt that both the curious fate and death of his four sons, and the facts (and dwelling on them) of George Fox's strange early life, and permanent "conversion," had much to do with the peculiar and sombre ministry and style of E. H. from the first, and confirmed him all through. One must not be dominated by the man's almost absurd saturation in cut and dried biblical phraseology, and in ways, talk, and standard, regardful mainly of the one need he dwelt on, above all the rest. This main need he drove home to the soul; the canting and sermonizing soon exhale away to any auditor that realizes what E. H. is for and after. The present paper, (a broken memorandum of his formation, his earlier life,) is the cross-notch that rude wanderers make in the woods, to remind them afterward of some matter of first-rate importance and full investigation. (Remember too, that E. H. was a *thorough believer in the Hebrew Scriptures*, in his way.)

The following are really but disjointed fragments recall'd to serve and eke out here the lank printed pages of what I commenc'd unwittingly two months ago. Now, as I am well in for it, comes an old attack, the sixth or seventh recurrence, of my war-paralysis, dulling me from putting the notes in shape, and threatening any further action, head or body.

—W. W., Camden, N. J., July, 1888.

TO BEGIN with, my theme is comparatively featureless. The great historian has pass'd by the life of Elias Hicks quite without glance or touch. Yet a man might commence and overhaul it as furnishing one of the amplest historic and biography's backgrounds. While the foremost actors and events from 1750 to 1830 both in Europe and America were crowding each other on the world's stage—While so many kings, queens, soldiers, philosophers, musicians, voyagers, littérateurs, enter one side, cross the boards, and disappear—amid loudest reverberating names—Frederick the Great, Swedenborg, Junius, Voltaire, Rousseau, Linneus, Herschel—curiously contemporary with the long life of Goethe—through the occupancy of the British throne by George the Third—amid stupendous visible political and social revolutions, and far more stupendous invisible moral ones—while the many quarto volumes of the *Encyclopædia Française* are being published at fits and intervals, by Diderot, in Paris—while Haydn and Beethoven and Mozart and Weber are working out their harmonic compositions—while Mrs. Siddons and Talma and Kean are acting—while Mungo Park explores Africa, and Capt. Cook circumnavigates the globe—through all the fortunes of the American Revolution, the beginning, continuation and end, the battle of Brooklyn, the surrender at Saratoga, the final peace of '83—through the lurid tempest of the French Revolution, the execution of the king and queen, and the Reign of Terror—through the whole of the meteor-career of Napoleon—through all Washington's, Adams's, Jefferson's, Madison's, and Monroe's Presidentiads—amid so many flashing lists of names, (indeed there seems hardly, in any department, any end to them, *Old World or New*,) Franklin, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mirabeau, Fox, Nelson, Paul Jones, Kant, Fichte, and Hegel, Fulton, Walter Scott, Byron, Mesmer, Champollion—Amid pictures that dart upon me even as I speak, and glow and mix and coruscate and fade like aurora boreales—Louis the 16th threaten'd by the mob, the trial of Warren Hastings, the death-bed of Robert Burns, Wellington at Waterloo, Decatur capturing the Macedonian, or the sea-fight between the Chesapeake and the Shannon—During all these whiles, I say, and though on a far different grade, running parallel and contemporary with all—a curious quiet yet busy life centred in a little country village on Long Island, and within sound on still nights of the mystic surf-beat of the sea. About this life, this Personality—neither soldier, nor scientist, nor littérateur—I propose to occupy a few minutes in fragmentary talk, to give some few melanges, disconnected impressions, statistics, resultant groups, pictures, thoughts of him, or radiating from him.

Elias Hicks was born March 19, 1748, in Hempstead township, Queens county, Long Island, New York State, near a village bearing the old Scripture name of Jericho, (a mile or so north and east of the present Hicksville, on the L. I. Railroad.) His father and mother were Friends, of that class working with their own hands, and mark'd by neither riches nor actual poverty. Elias as a child and youth had small education from letters, but largely learn'd from Nature's schooling. He grew up even in his ladhood a thorough gunner and fisherman. The farm of his parents lay on the south or sea-shore side of Long Island, (they had early removed from Jericho,) one of the best regions in the world for wild fowl and for fishing. Elias became a good horseman, too, and knew the animal well, riding races; also a singer, fond of "vain songs," as he afterwards calls them; a dancer, too, at the country balls. When a boy of 13 he had gone to live with an elder brother; and when about 17 he changed again and went as apprentice to the carpenter's trade. The time of all this was before the Revolutionary War, and the locality 30 to 40 miles from New York city. My great-grandfather, Whitman, was often with Elias at these periods, and at merry-makings and sleigh-rides in winter over "the plains."

How well I remember the region—the flat plains of the middle of Long Island, as then, with their prairie-like vistas and grassy patches in every direction, and the 'kill-calf' and herds of cattle and sheep. Then the South Bay and shores and the salt meadows, and the sedgy smell, and numberless little bayous and hummock-islands in the waters, the habitat of every sort of fish and aquatic fowl of North America. And the bay men—a strong, wild, peculiar race—now extinct, or rather entirely changed. And the beach outside the sandy bars, sometimes many miles at a stretch, with their old history of wrecks and storms—the weird, white-gray beach—not without its tales of pathos—tales, too, of grandest heroes and heroisms.

In such scenes and elements and influences—in the midst of Nature and along the shores of the sea—Elias Hicks was fashion'd through boyhood and early manhood, to maturity. But a moral and mental and emotional change was imminent. Along at this time he says:

My apprenticeship being now expir'd, I gradually withdrew from the company of my former associates, became more acquainted with Friends, and was more frequent in my attendance of meetings; and although this was in some degree profitable to me, yet I made but slow progress in my religious improvement. The occupation of part of my time in fishing and fowling had frequently tended to preserve me from falling into hurtful associations; but through the rising intimations and reproofs of divine grace in my heart, I now

began to feel that the manner in which I sometimes amus'd myself with my gun was not without sin; for although I mostly preferr'd going alone, and while waiting in stillness for the coming of the fowl, my mind was at times so taken up in divine meditations, that the opportunities were seasons of instruction and comfort to me; yet, on other occasions, when accompanied by some of my acquaintances, and when no fowls appear'd which would be useful to us after being obtain'd, we sometimes, from wantonness or for mere diversion, would destroy the small birds which could be of no service to us. This cruel procedure affects my heart while penning these lines.

In his 23d year Elias was married, by the Friends' ceremony, to *Jemima Seaman*. His wife was an only child; the parents were well off for common people, and at their request the son-in-law mov'd home with them and carried on the farm—which at their decease became his own, and he liv'd there all his remaining life. Of this matrimonial part of his career, (it continued, and with unusual happiness, for 58 years,) he says, giving the account of his marriage:

On this important occasion, we felt the clear and consoling evidence of divine truth, and it remain'd with us as a seal upon our spirits, strengthening us mutually to bear, with becoming fortitude, the vicissitudes and trials which fell to our lot, and of which we had a large share in passing through this probationary state. My wife, although not of a very strong constitution, liv'd to be the mother of eleven children, four sons and seven daughters. Our second daughter, a very lovely, promising child, died when young, with the small-pox, and the youngest was not living at its birth. The rest all arriv'd to years of discretion, and afforded us considerable comfort, as they prov'd to be in a good degree dutiful children. All our sons, however, were of weak constitutions, and were not able to take care of themselves, being so enfeebl'd as not to be able to walk after the ninth or tenth year of their age. The two-*eldest* died in the fifteenth year of their age, the third in his seventeenth year, and the youngest was nearly nineteen when he died. But, although thus helpless, the innocence of their lives, and the resign'd cheerfulness of their dispositions to their allotments, made the labor and toil of taking care of them agreeable and pleasant; and I trust we were preserv'd from murmuring or repining, believing the dispensation to be in wisdom, and according to the will and gracious disposing of an all-wise providence, for purposes best known to himself. And when I have observ'd the great anxiety and affliction which many parents have with undutiful children who are favor'd with health, especially their sons, I could perceive very few whose troubles and exercises, on that account, did not far exceed ours. The weakness and bodily infirmity of our sons tended to keep them much out of the way of the troubles and temptations of the world; and we believ'd that in their death they were happy, and admitted into the realms of peace and joy: a reflection, the most comfortable and joyous that parents can have in regard to their tender offspring.

Of a serious and reflective turn, by nature, and from his reading and surroundings, Elias had more than once markedly devotional inward intimations. These feelings increas'd in frequency and strength, until soon the following:

About the twenty-sixth year of my age I was again brought, by the operative influence of divine grace, under deep concern of mind; and was led, through adorable mercy, to see, that although I had ceas'd from many sins and vanities of my youth, yet there were many remaining that I was still guilty of, which were not yet aton'd for, and for which I now felt the judgments of God to rest upon me. This caus'd me to cry earnestly to the Most High for pardon and redemption, and he graciously condescended to hear my cry, and to open a way before me, wherein I must walk, in order to experience reconciliation with him; and as I abode in watchfulness and deep humiliation before him, light broke forth out of obscurity, and my darkness became as the noon-day. I began to have openings leading to the ministry, which brought me under close exercise and deep travail of spirit; for although I had for some time spoken on subjects of business in monthly and preparative meetings, yet the prospect of opening my mouth in public meetings was a close trial; but I endeavor'd to keep my mind quiet and resign'd to the heavenly call, if it should be made clear to me to be my duty. Nevertheless, as I was, soon after, sitting in a meeting, in much weightiness of spirit, a secret, though clear, intimation accompanied me to speak a few words, which were then given to me to utter, yet fear so prevail'd, that I did not yield to the intimation. For this omission, I felt close rebuke, and judgment seem'd, for some time, to cover my mind; but as I humbl'd myself under the Lord's mighty hand, he again lifted up the light of his countenance upon me, and enabl'd me to renew covenant with him, that if he would pass by this my offence, I would, in future, be faithful, if he should again require such a service of me.

The Revolutionary War following, tried the sect of Friends more than any. The difficulty was to steer between their convictions as patriots, and their pledges of non-warring peace. Here is the way they solv'd the problem:

A war, with all its cruel and destructive effects, having raged for several years between the British Colonies in North America and the mother country, Friends, as well as others, were expos'd to many severe trials and sufferings; yet, in the colony of New York, Friends, who stood faithful to their principles, and did not meddle in the controversy, had, after a short period at first, considerable favor allow'd them. The yearly meeting was held steadily, during the war, on Long Island, where the king's party had the rule; yet Friends from the Main, where the American army ruled, had free passage through both armies to attend it, and any other meetings they were desirous of attending, except in a few instances. This was a favor which the parties would not grant to their best friends, who were of a warlike disposition; which shows what great advantages would redound to mankind, were they all of this pacific spirit. I pass'd myself through the lines of both armies six times during the war, without molestation, both parties generally receiving me with openness and civility; and although I had to pass over a tract of country, between the two armies, sometimes more than thirty miles in extent, and which was much frequented by robbers, a set, in general, of cruel, unprincipled banditti, issuing out from both parties, yet, excepting once, I met with no interruption even from them. But although Friends in general experienc'd many favors and deliverances, yet those scenes of war and confusion occasion'd many trials and provings in various ways to the faithful. One circumstance I am

willing to mention, as it caus'd me considerable exercise and concern. There was a large cellar under the new meeting-house belonging to Friends in New York, which was generally let as a store. When the king's troops enter'd the city, they took possession of it for the purpose of depositing their warlike stores; and ascertaining what Friends had the care of letting it, their commissary came forward and offer'd to pay the rent; and those Friends, for want of due consideration, accepted it. This caus'd great uneasiness to the concern'd part of the Society, who apprehended it not consistent with our peaceable principles to receive payment for the depositing of military stores in our houses. The subject was brought before the yearly meeting in 1779, and engag'd its careful attention; but those Friends, who had been active in the reception of the money, and some few others, were not willing to acknowledge their proceedings to be inconsistent, nor to return the money to those from whom it was receiv'd; and in order to justify themselves therein, they refer'd to the conduct of Friends in Philadelphia in similar cases. Matters thus appearing very difficult and embarrassing, it was unitedly concluded to refer the final determination thereof to the yearly meeting of Pennsylvania; and several Friends were appointed to attend that meeting in relation thereto, among whom I was one of the number. We accordingly set out on the 9th day of the 9th month, 1779, and I was accompanied from home by my beloved friend John Willis, who was likewise on the appointment. We took a solemn leave of our families, they feeling much anxiety at parting with us, on account of the dangers we were expos'd to, having to pass not only the lines of the two armies, but the deserted and almost uninhabited country that lay between them, in many places the grass being grown up in the streets, and many houses desolate and empty. Believing it, however, my duty to proceed in the service, my mind was so settled and trust-fix'd in the divine arm of power, that faith seem'd to banish all fear, and cheerfulness and quiet resignation were, I believe, my constant companions during the journey. We got permission, with but little difficulty, to pass the outguards of the king's army at Kingsbridge, and proceeded to Westchester. We afterwards attended meetings at Harrison's Purchase, and Oblong, having the concurrence of our monthly meeting to take some meetings in our way, a concern leading thereto having for some time previously attended my mind. We pass'd from thence to Nine Partners, and attended their monthly meeting, and then turn'd our faces towards Philadelphia, being join'd by several others of the Committee. We attended New Marlborough, Hardwick, and Kingswood meetings on our journey, and arriv'd at Philadelphia on the 7th day of the week, and 25th of 9th month, on which day we attended the yearly meeting of Ministers and Elders, which began at the eleventh hour. I also attended all the sittings of the yearly meeting until the 4th day of the next week, and was then so indispos'd with a fever, which had been increasing on me for several days, that I was not able to attend after that time. I was therefore not present when the subject was discuss'd, which came from our yearly meeting; but I was inform'd by my companion, that it was a very solemn opportunity, and the matter was result'd in advising that the money should be return'd into the office from whence it was receiv'd, accompanied with our reasons for so doing: and this was accordingly done by the direction of our yearly meeting the next year.

Then, season after season, when peace and Independence reign'd, year following year, this remains to be (1791) a specimen of his personal labors:

I was from home on this journey four months and eleven days; rode about one thousand five hundred miles, and attended forty-nine particular meetings among Friends, three quarterly meetings, six monthly meetings, and forty meetings among other people.

And again another experience:

In the forepart of this meeting, my mind was reduc'd into such a state of great weakness and depression, that my faith was almost ready to fail, which produc'd great searchings of heart, so that I was led to call in question all that I had ever before experienc'd. In this state of doubting, I was ready to wish myself at home, from an apprehension that I should only expose myself to reproach, and wound the cause I was embark'd in; for the heavens seem'd like brass, and the earth as iron; such coldness and hardness, I thought, could scarcely have ever been experienc'd before by any creature, so great was the depth of my baptism at this time; nevertheless, as I endeavor'd to quiet my mind, in this conflicting dispensation, and be resign'd to my allotment, however distressing, towards the latter part of the meeting a ray of light broke through the surrounding darkness, in which the Shepherd of Israel was pleas'd to arise, and by the light of his glorious countenance, to scatter those clouds of opposition. Then ability was receiv'd, and utterance given, to speak of his marvellous works in the redemption of souls, and to open the way of life and salvation, and the mysteries of his glorious kingdom, which are hid from the wise and prudent of this world, and reveal'd only unto those who are reduc'd into the state of little children and babes in Christ.

And concluding another jaunt in 1794:

I was from home in this journey about five months, and travell'd by land and water about two thousand two hundred and eighty-three miles; having visited all the meetings of Friends in the New England states, and many meetings amongst those of other professions; and also visited many meetings, among Friends and others, in the upper part of our own yearly meeting; and found real peace in my labors.

Another 'tramp' in 1798:

I was absent from home in this journey about five months and two weeks, and rode about sixteen hundred miles, and attended about one hundred and forty-three meetings.

Here are some memoranda of 1813, near home:

First day. Our meeting this day pass'd in silent labor. The cloud rested on the tabernacle; and, although it was a day of much rain outwardly, yet very little of the dew of Hermon appear'd to distil among us. Nevertheless, a comfortable calm was witness'd towards the close, which we must render to the account of unmerited mercy and love.

Second day. Most of this day was occupied in a visit to a sick friend, who appear'd comforted therewith. Spent part of the evening in reading part of Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Third day. I was busied most of this day in my common vocations. Spent the evening principally in reading Paul. Found considerable satisfaction in his first epistle to the Corinthians; in which he shows the danger of some in setting too high a value on those who were instrumental in bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, without looking through and beyond the instrument, to the great first cause and Author of every blessing, to whom all the praise and honor are due.

Fifth day, 1st of 4th month. At our meeting to-day found it, as usual, a very close steady exercise to keep the mind center'd where it ought to be. What a multitude of intruding thoughts imperceptibly, as it were, steal into the mind, and turn it from its proper object, whenever it relaxes its vigilance in watching against them. Felt a little strength, just at the close, to remind Friends of the necessity of a steady perseverance, by a recapitulation of the parable of the unjust judge, showing how men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

Sixth day. Nothing material occur'd, but a fear lest the cares of the world should engross too much of my time.

Seventh day. Had an agreeable visit from two ancient friends, whom I have long lov'd. The rest of the day I employ'd in manual labor, mostly in gardening.

But we find if we attend to records and details, we shall lay out an endless task. We can briefly say, summarily, that his whole life was a long religious missionary life of method, practicality, sincerity, earnestness, and pure piety—as near to his time here, as one in Judea, far back—or in any life, any age. The reader who feels interested must get—with all its dryness and mere dates, absence of emotionality or literary quality, and whatever abstract attraction (with even a suspicion of cant, sniffing,) the “*Journal of the Life and Religious Labours of Elias Hicks, written by himself,*” at some Quaker book-store. (It is from this headquarters I have extracted the preceding quotations.) During E. H.'s matured life, continued from fifty to sixty years—while working steadily, earning his living and paying his way without intermission—he makes, as previously memorandumised, several hundred preaching visits, not only through Long Island, but some of them away into the Middle or Southern States, or north into Canada, or the then far West—extending to thousands of miles, or filling several weeks and sometimes months. These religious journeys—scrupulously accepting in payment only his transportation from place to place, with his own food and shelter, and never receiving a dollar of money for “salary” or preaching—Elias, through good bodily health and strength, continues till quite the age of eighty. It was thus at one of his latest jaunts in Brooklyn city I saw and heard him. This sight and hearing shall now be described.

Elias Hicks was at this period in the latter part (November or December) of 1829. It was the last tour of the many missions

of the old man's life. He was in the 81st year of his age, and a few months before he had lost by death a beloved wife with whom he had lived in unalloyed affection and esteem for 58 years. (But a few months after this meeting Elias was paralyzed and died.) Though it is sixty years ago since—and I a little boy at the time in Brooklyn, New York—I can remember my father coming home toward sunset from his day's work as carpenter, and saying briefly, as he throws down his armful of kindling-blocks with a bounce on the kitchen floor, "Come, mother, Elias preaches to-night." Then my mother, hastening the supper and the table-cleaning afterward, gets a neighboring young woman, a friend of the family, to step in and keep house for an hour or so—puts the two little ones to bed—and as I had been behaving well that day, as a special reward I was allow'd to go also.

We start for the meeting. Though, as I said, the stretch of more than half a century has pass'd over me since then, with its war and peace, and all its joys and sins and deaths (and what a half century! how it comes up sometimes for an instant, like the lightning flash in a storm at night!) I can recall that meeting yet. It is a strange place for religious devotions. Elias preaches anywhere—no respect to buildings—private or public houses, school-rooms, barns, even theatres—anything that will accommodate. This time it is in a handsome ball-room, on Brooklyn Heights, overlooking New York, and in full sight of that great city, and its North and East Rivers fill'd with ships—is (to specify more particularly) the second story of "Morrison's Hotel," used for the most genteel concerts, balls, and assemblies—a large, cheerful, gay-color'd room, with glass chandeliers bearing myriads of sparkling pendants, plenty of settees and chairs, and a sort of velvet divan running all round the side-walls. Before long the divan and all the settees and chairs are fill'd; many fashionables out of curiosity; all the principal dignitaries of the town, Gen. Jeremiah Johnson, Judge Furman, George Hall, Mr. Willoughby, Mr. Pierrepont, N. B. Morse, Cyrus P. Smith, and F. C. Tucker. Many young folks too; some richly dress'd women; I remember I noticed with one party of ladies a group of uniform'd officers, either from the U. S. Navy Yard, or some ship in the stream, or some adjacent fort. On a slightly elevated platform at the head of the room, facing the audience, sit a dozen or more Friends, most of them elderly, grim, and with their broad-brimm'd hats on their heads. Three or four women, too, in their characteristic Quaker costumes and bonnets. All still as the grave.

At length after a pause and stillness becoming almost painful, Elias rises and stands for a moment or two without a word. A

tall, straight figure, neither stout nor very thin, dress'd in drab cloth, clean-shaved face, forehead of great expanse, and large and clear black eyes,* long or middling-long white hair; he was at this time between 80 and 81 years of age, his head still wearing the broad-brim. A moment looking around the audience with those piercing eyes, amid the perfect stillness. (I can almost see him and the whole scene now.) Then the words come from his lips, very emphatically and slowly pronounc'd, in a resonant, grave, melodious voice, *What is the chief end of man? I was told in my early youth, it was to glorify God, and seek and enjoy him forever.*

I cannot follow the discourse. It presently becomes very fervid, and in the midst of its fervor he takes the broad-brim hat from his head, and almost dashing it down with violence on the seat behind, continues with uninterrupted earnestness. But, I say, I cannot repeat, hardly suggest his sermon. Though the differences and disputes of the formal division of the Society of Friends were even then under way, he did not allude to them at all. A pleading, tender, nearly agonizing conviction, and magnetic stream of natural eloquence, before which all minds and natures, all emotions, high or low, gentle or simple, yielded entirely without exception, was its cause, method, and effect. Many, very many were in tears. Years afterward in Boston, I heard Father Taylor, the sailor's preacher, and found in his passionate unstudied oratory the resemblance to Elias Hicks's—not argumentative or intellectual, but so penetrating—so different from anything in the books—(different as the fresh air of a May morning or sea-shore breeze from the atmosphere of a perfumer's shop.) While he goes on he falls into the nasality and sing-song tone sometimes heard in such meetings; but in a moment or two more, as if recollecting himself, he breaks off, stops, and resumes in a natural tone. This occurs three or four times during the talk of the evening, till all concludes.

Now and then, at the many scores and hundreds—even thousands—of his discourses—as at this one—he was very mystical and radical,† and had much to say of “the light within.” Very

* In Walter Scott's reminiscences he speaks of Burns as having the most eloquent, glowing, flashing, illuminated dark-orbed eyes he ever beheld in a human face; and I think Elias Hicks's must have been like them.

† The true Christian religion, (such was the teaching of Elias Hicks,) consists neither in rites or Bibles or sermons or Sundays—but in noiseless secret ecstasy and unremitted aspiration, in purity, in a good practical life, in charity to the poor and toleration to all. He said, “A man may keep the Sabbath, may belong to a church and attend all the observances, have regular family prayer, keep a well-bound copy of the Hebrew Scriptures in a conspicuous

likely this same *inner light*, (so dwelt upon by newer men, as by Fox and Barclay at the beginning, and all Friends and deep thinkers since and now,) is perhaps only another name for the religious conscience. In my opinion they have all diagnos'd, like superior doctors, the real inmost disease of our times, probably any times. Amid the huge inflammation call'd society, and that other inflammation call'd politics, what is there to-day of moral power and ethic sanity as antiseptic to them and all? Though I think the essential elements of the moral nature exist latent in the good average people of the United States of to-day, and sometimes break out strongly, it is certain that any mark'd or dominating National Morality (if I may use the phrase) has not only not yet been develop'd, but that—at any rate when the point of view is turn'd on business, politics, competition, practical life, and in character and manners in our New World—there seems to be a hideous depletion, almost absence, of such moral nature. Elias taught throughout, as George Fox began it, or rather reiterated and verified it, the Platonic doctrine that the ideals of character, of justice, of religious action, whenever the highest is at stake, are to be conform'd to no outside doctrine of creeds, Bibles, legislative enactments, conventionalities, or even decorums, but are to follow the inward Deity-planted law of the emotional soul. In this only the true Quaker, or Friend, has faith; and it is from rigidly, perhaps strainingly carrying it out, that both the Old and New England records of Quakerdom show some unseemly and insane acts.

In one of the lives of Ralph Waldo Emerson is a list of lessons or instructions, ("seal'd orders" the biographer calls them,) prepar'd by the sage himself for his own guidance. Here is one:

Go forth with thy message among thy fellow-creatures; teach them that they must trust themselves as guided by that inner light which dwells with the pure in heart, to whom it was promis'd of old that they shall see God.

How thoroughly it fits the life and theory of Elias Hicks. Then in Omar Khayyam:

place in his house, and yet not be a truly religious person at all." E. believ'd little in a church as organiz'd—even his own—with houses, ministers, or with salaries, creeds, Sundays, saints, Bibles, holy festivals, &c. But he believ'd always in the universal church, in the soul of man, invisibly rapt, ever-waiting, ever responding to universal truths.—He was fond of pithy proverbs. He said, "It matters not where you live, but how you live." He said once to my father, "They talk of the devil—I tell thee, Walter, there is no worse devil than man."

I sent my soul through the Invisible,
 Some letter of that after-life to spell,
 And by-and-by my soul return'd to me,
 And answer'd, "I myself am Heaven and Hell."

Indeed, of this important element of the theory and practice of Quakerism, the difficult-to-describe "Light within" or "Inward Law, by which all must be either justified or condemn'd," I will not undertake where so many have fail'd—the task of making the statement of it for the average comprehension. We will give, partly for the matter and partly as specimen of his speaking and writing style, what Elias Hicks himself says in allusion to it—one or two of very many passages. Most of his discourses, like those of Epictetus and the ancient peripatetics, have left no record remaining—they were extempore, and those were not the times of reporters. Of one, however, deliver'd in Chester, Pa., toward the latter part of his career, there is a careful transcript; and from it (even if presenting you a sheaf of hidden wheat that may need to be pick'd and thrash'd out several times before you get the grain,) we give the following extract:

"I don't want to express a great many woras; but I want you to be call'd home to the substance. For the Scriptures, and all the books in the world, can do no more; Jesus could do no more than to recommend to this Comforter, which was the light in him. 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all; and if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.' Because the light is one in all, and therefore it binds us together in the bonds of love; for it is not only light, but love—that love which casts out all fear. So that they who dwell in God dwell in love, and they are constrain'd to walk in it; and if they 'walk in it, they have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

"But what blood, my friends? Did Jesus Christ, the Saviour, ever have any material blood? Not a drop of it, my friends—not a drop of it. That blood which cleanseth from the life of all sin, was the life of the soul of Jesus. The soul of man has no material blood; but as the outward material blood, created from the dust of the earth, is the life of these bodies of flesh, so with respect to the soul, the immortal and invisible spirit, its blood is that life which God breath'd into it.

"As we read, in the beginning, that 'God form'd man of the dust of the ground, and breath'd into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul.' He breath'd into that soul, and it became alive to God."

Then, from one of his many letters, for he seems to have delighted in correspondence :

“Some may query, What is the cross of Christ? To these I answer, It is the perfect law of God, written on the tablet of the heart, and in the heart of every rational creature, in such indelible characters that all the power of mortals cannot erase nor obliterate it. Neither is there any power or means given or dispens'd to the children of men, but this inward law and light, by which the true and saving knowledge of God can be obtain'd. And by this inward law and light, all will be either justified or condemn'd, and all made to know God for themselves, and be left without excuse, agreeably to the prophecy of Jeremiah, and the corroborating testimony of Jesus in his last counsel and command to his disciples, not to depart from Jerusalem till they should receive power from on high; assuring them that they should receive power, when they had receiv'd the pouring forth of the spirit upon them, which would qualify them to bear witness of him in Judea, Jerusalem, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth; which was verified in a marvellous manner on the day of Pentecost, when thousands were converted to the Christian faith in one day.

“By which it is evident that nothing but this inward light and law, as it is heeded and obey'd, ever did, or ever can, make a true and real Christian and child of God. And until the professors of Christianity agree to lay aside all their non-essentials in religion, and rally to this unchangeable foundation and standard of truth, wars and fightings, confusion and error, will prevail, and the angelic song cannot be heard in our land—that of ‘glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to men.’

“But when all nations are made willing to make this inward law and light the rule and standard of all their faith and works, then we shall be brought to know and believe alike, that there is but one Lord, one faith, and but one baptism; one God and Father, that is above all, through all, and in all.

“And then will all those glorious and consoling prophecies recorded in the scriptures of truth be fulfill'd—‘He,’ the Lord, ‘shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb; and the cow and the bear shall feed; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the wean'd child put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt

nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth,' that is our earthly tabernacle, 'shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' "

The exposition in the last sentence, that the terms of the texts are not to be taken in their literal meaning, but in their spiritual one, and allude to a certain wondrous exaltation of the body, through religious influences, is significant, and is but one of a great number of instances of much that is obscure, to "the world's people," in the preachings of this remarkable man.

Then a word about his physical oratory, connected with the preceding. If there is, as doubtless there is, an unnameable something behind oratory, a fund within or atmosphere without, deeper than art, deeper even than proof, that unnameable constitutional something Elias Hicks emanated from his very heart to the hearts of his audience, or carried with him, or probed into, and shook and arous'd in them—a sympathetic germ, probably rapport, lurking in every human eligibility, which no book, no rule, no statement has given or can give inherent knowledge, intuition—not even the best speech, or best put forth, but launch'd out only by powerful human magnetism :

Unheard by sharpest ear—unform'd in clearest eye, or cunningest mind,
Nor lore, nor fame, nor happiness, nor wealth,
And yet the pulse of every heart and life throughout the world, incessantly,
Which you and I, and all, pursuing ever, ever miss;
Open, but still a secret—the real of the real—an illusion;
Costless, vouchsafed to each, yet never man the owner;
Which poets vainly seek to put in rhyme—historians in prose;
Which sculptor never chisel'd yet, nor painter painted;
Which vocalist never sung, nor orator nor actor ever utter'd.

That remorse, too, for a mere worldly life—that aspiration towards the ideal, which, however overlaid, lies folded latent, hidden, in perhaps every character. More definitely, as near as I remember (aided by my dear mother long afterward,) Elias Hicks's discourse there in the Brooklyn ball-room, was one of his old never-remitted appeals to that moral mystical portion of human nature, *the inner light*. But it is mainly for the scene itself, and Elias's *personnel*, that I recall the incident.

Soon afterward the old man died :

On first day morning, the 14th of 2d month (February, 1830,) he was engaged in his room, writing to a friend, until a little after ten o'clock, when he return'd to that occupied by the family, apparently just attack'd by a paralytic affection, which nearly deprived him of the use of his right side, and of the power of speech. Being assisted to a chair near the fire, he manifested by signs, that the letter which he had just finish'd, and which had been dropp'd

by the way, should be taken care of; and on its being brought to him, appear'd satisfied, and manifested a desire that all should sit down and be still, seemingly sensible that his labours were brought to a close, and only desirous of quietly waiting the final change. The solemn composure at this time manifest in his countenance, was very impressive, indicating that he was sensible the time of his departure was at hand, and that the prospect of death brought no terrors with it. During his last illness, his mental faculties were occasionally obscured, yet he was at times enabled to give satisfactory evidence to those around him, that all was well, and that he felt nothing in his way.

His funeral took place on fourth day, the 3d of 3d month. It was attended by a large concourse of Friends and others, and a solid meeting was held on the occasion; after which, his remains were interr'd in Friends' burial-ground at this place (Jericho, Queens County, New York.)

I have thought (even presented so incompletely, with such fearful hiatuses, and in my own feebleness and waning life) one might well memorize this life of Elias Hicks. Though not eminent in literature or politics or inventions or business, it is a token of not a few, and is significant. Such men do not cope with statesmen or soldiers—but I have thought they deserve to be recorded and kept up as a sample—that this one specially does. I have already compared it to a little flowing liquid rill of Nature's life, maintaining freshness. As if, indeed, under the smoke of battles, the blare of trumpets, and the madness of contending hosts—the screams of passion, the groans of the suffering, the parching of struggles of money and politics, and all hell's heat and noise and competition above and around—should come melting down from the mountains from sources of unpolluted snows, far up there in God's hidden, untrudged recesses, and so rippling along among us low in the ground, at men's very feet, a curious little brook of clear and cool, and ever-healthy, ever-living water.

Note.—The Separation.—The division vulgarly call'd between Orthodox and Hicksites in the Society of Friends took place in 1827, '8 and '9. Probably it had been preparing some time. One who was present has since described to me the climax, at a meeting of Friends in Philadelphia crowded by a great attendance of both sexes, with Elias as principal speaker. In the course of his utterance or argument he made use of these words: "The blood of Christ—the blood of Christ—why, my friends, the actual blood of Christ in itself was no more effectual than the blood of bulls and goats—not a bit more—not a bit." At these words, after a momentary hush, commenced a great tumult. Hundreds rose to their feet. . . . Canes were thump'd upon the floor. From all parts of the house angry mutterings.

Some left the place, but more remain'd, with exclamations, flush'd faces and eyes. This was the definite utterance, the overt act, which led to the separation. Families diverg'd—even husbands and wives, parents and children, were separated.

Of course what Elias promulg'd spread a great commotion among the Friends. Sometimes when he presented himself to speak in the meeting, there would be opposition—this led to angry words, gestures, unseemly noises, recriminations. Elias, at such times, was deeply affected—the tears roll'd in streams down his cheeks—he silently waited the close of the dispute. “Let the Friend speak; let the Friend speak!” he would say when his supporters in the meeting tried to bluff off some violent orthodox person objecting to the new doctrinaire. But he never recanted.

A reviewer of the old dispute and separation made the following comments on them in a paper ten years ago: “It was in America, where there had been no persecution worth mentioning since Mary Dyer was hang'd on Boston Common, that about fifty years ago differences arose, singularly enough upon doctrinal points of the divinity of Christ and the nature of the atonement. Whoever would know how bitter was the controversy, and how much of human infirmity was found to be still lurking under broad-brim hats and drab coats, must seek for the information in the Lives of Elias Hicks and of Thomas Shillitoe, the latter an English Friend, who visited us at this unfortunate time, and who exercised his gifts as a peacemaker with but little success. The meetings, according to his testimony, were sometimes turn'd into mobs. The disruption was wide, and seems to have been final. Six of the ten yearly meetings were divided; and since that time various sub-divisions have come, four or five in number. There has never, however, been anything like a repetition of the excitement of the Hicksite controversy; and Friends of all kinds at present appear to have settled down into a solid, steady, comfortable state, and to be working in their own way without troubling other Friends whose ways are different.”

Note.—Old persons, who heard this man in his day, and who glean'd impressions from what they saw of him, (judg'd from their own points of view,) have, in their conversation with me, dwelt on another point. They think Elias Hicks had a large element of personal ambition, the pride of leadership, of establishing perhaps a sect that should reflect his own name, and to which he should give especial form and character. Very likely. Such indeed seems the means, all through progress and civilization, by which strong men and strong convictions achieve any-

thing definite. But the basic foundation of Elias was undoubtedly genuine religious fervor. He was like an old Hebrew prophet. He had the spirit of one, and in his later years look'd like one. What Carlyle says of John Knox will apply to him:

“He is an instance to us how a man, by sincerity itself, becomes heroic; it is the grand gift he has. We find in him a good, honest, intellectual talent, no transcendent one;—a narrow, inconsiderable man, as compared with Luther; but in heartfelt instinctive adherence to truth, in *sincerity* as we say, he has no superior; nay, one might ask, What equal he has? The heart of him is of the true Prophet cast. ‘He lies there,’ said the Earl of Morton at Knox’s grave, ‘who never fear’d the face of man.’ He resembles, more than any of the moderns, an old Hebrew Prophet. The same inflexibility, intolerance, rigid, narrow-looking adherence to God’s truth.”

A Note yet. The United States to-day.—While under all previous conditions (even convictions) of society, Oriental, Feudal, Ecclesiastical, and in all past (or present) Despotisms, through the entire past, there existed, and exists yet, in ally and fusion with them, and frequently forming the main part of them, certain churches, institutes, priesthoods, fervid beliefs, &c., practically promoting religious and moral action to the fullest degrees of which humanity there under circumstances was capable, and often conserving all there was of justice, art, literature, and good manners—it is clear I say, that, under the Democratic Institutes of the United States, now and henceforth, there are no equally genuine fountains of fervid beliefs, adapted to produce similar moral and religious results, according to our circumstances. I consider that the churches, sects, pulpits, of the present day, in the United States, exist not by any solid convictions, but by a sort of tacit, supercilious, scornful sufferance. Few speak openly—none officially—against them. But the ostent continuously imposing, who is not aware that any such living fountains of belief in them are now utterly ceas’d and departed from the minds of men?

A Lingering Note.—In the making of a full man, all the other consciences, (the emotional, courageous, intellectual, esthetic, &c.,) are to be crown’d and effused by the religious conscience. In the higher structure of a human self, or of community, the Moral, the Religious, the Spiritual, is strictly analogous to the subtle vitalization and antiseptic play call’d Health in the physiologic structure. To person or State, the main verteber (or rather *the* verteber) is Morality. That is indeed the only real vitalization of character, and of all the supersensual, even heroic and artistic portions of man or nationality. It is to run through

and knit the superior parts, and keep man or State vital and upright, as health keeps the body straight and blooming. Of course a really grand and strong and beautiful character is probably to be slowly grown, and adjusted strictly with reference to itself, its own personal and social sphere—with (paradox though it may be) the clear understanding that the conventional theories of life, worldly ambition, wealth, office, fame, &c., are essentially but glittering mayas, delusions.

Doubtless the greatest scientists and theologians will sometimes find themselves saying, It isn't only those who know most, who contribute most to God's glory. Doubtless these very scientists at times stand with bared heads before the humblest lives and personalities. For there is something greater (is there not?) than all the science and poems of the world—above all else, like the stars shining eternal—above Shakspeare's plays, or Concord philosophy, or art of Angelo or Raphael—something that shines elusive, like beams of Hesperus at evening—high above all the vaunted wealth and pride—prov'd by its practical outcropping in life, each case after its own concomitants—the intuitive blending of divine love and faith in a human emotional character—blending for all, for the unlearn'd, the common, and the poor.

I don't know in what book I once read, (possibly the remark has been made in books, all ages,) that no life ever lived, even the most uneventful, but, probed to its centre, would be found in itself as subtle a drama as any that poets have ever sung, or playwrights fabled. Often, too, in size and weight, that life suppos'd obscure. For it isn't only the palpable stars; astronomers say there are dark, or almost dark, unnotic'd orbs and suns, (like the dusky companion of Sirius, seven times as large as our own sun,) rolling through space, real and potent as any—perhaps the most real and potent. Yet none recks of them. In the bright lexicon we give the spreading heavens, they have not even names. Amid ceaseless sophistications all times, the soul would seem to glance yearningly around for such contrasts—such cool, still offsets.

GEORGE FOX (AND SHAKSPERE.)

WHILE we are about it, we must almost inevitably go back to the origin of the Society of which Elias Hicks has so far prov'd to be the most mark'd individual result. We must revert to the latter part of the 16th, and all, or nearly all of that 17th century, crowded with so many important historical events, changes, and personages. Throughout Europe, and especially in what we

call our Mother Country, men were unusually arous'd—(some would say demented.) It was a special age of the insanity of witch-trials and witch-hangings. In one year 60 were hung for witchcraft in one English county alone. It was peculiarly an age of military-religious conflict. Protestantism and Catholicism were wrestling like giants for the mastery, straining every nerve. Only to think of it—that age! its events, persons—Shakspeare just dead, (his folios publish'd, complete)—Charles 1st, the shadowy spirit and the solid block! To sum up all, it was *the age of Cromwell!*

As indispensable foreground, indeed, for Elias Hicks, and perhaps *sine qua non* to an estimate of the kind of man, we must briefly transport ourselves back to the England of that period. As I say, it is the time of tremendous moral and political agitation; ideas of conflicting forms, governments, theologies, seethe and dash like ocean storms, and ebb and flow like mighty tides. It was, or had been, the time of the long feud between the Parliament and the Crown. In the midst of the sprouts, began George Fox—born eight years after the death of Shakspeare. He was the son of a weaver, himself a shoemaker, and was “converted” before the age of 20. But O the sufferings, mental and physical, through which those years of the strange youth pass'd! He claim'd to be sent by God to fulfil a mission. “I come,” he said, “to direct people to the spirit that gave forth the Scriptures.” The range of his thought, even then, cover'd almost every important subject of after times, anti-slavery, women's rights, &c. Though in a low sphere, and among the masses, he forms a mark'd feature in the age.

And how, indeed, beyond all any, that stormy and perturb'd age! The foundations of the old, the superstitious, the conventionally poetic, the credulous, all breaking—the light of the new, and of science and democracy, definitely beginning—a mad, fierce, almost crazy age! The political struggles of the reigns of the Charleses, and of the Protectorate of Cromwell, heated to frenzy by theological struggles. Those were the years following the advent and practical working of the Reformation—but Catholicism is yet strong, and yet seeks supremacy. We think our age full of the flush of men and doings, and culminations of war and peace; and so it is. But there could hardly be a grander and more picturesque and varied age than that.

Born out of and in this age, when Milton, Bunyan, Dryden and John Locke were still living—amid the memories of Queen Elizabeth and James First, and the events of their reigns—when the radiance of that galaxy of poets, warriors, statesmen, captains, lords, explorers, wits and gentlemen, that crowded the

courts and times of those sovereigns still fill'd the atmosphere—when America commencing to be explor'd and settled commenc'd also to be suspected as destin'd to overthrow the old standards and calculations—when Feudalism, like a sunset, seem'd to gather all its glories, reminiscences, personalisms, in one last gorgeous effort, before the advance of a new day, a new incipient genius—amid the social and domestic circles of that period—indifferent to reverberations that seem'd enough to wake the dead, and in a sphere far from the pageants of the court, the awe of any personal rank or charm of intellect, or literature, or the varying excitement of Parliamentarian or Royalist fortunes—this curious young rustic goes wandering up and down England.

George Fox, born 1624, was of decent stock, in ordinary lower life—as he grew along toward manhood, work'd at shoemaking, also at farm labors—loved to be much by himself, half-hidden in the woods, reading the Bible—went about from town to town, dress'd in leather clothes—walk'd much at night, solitary, deeply troubled (“the inward divine teaching of the Lord”)—sometimes goes among the ecclesiastical gatherings of the great professors, and though a mere youth bears bold testimony—goes to and fro disputing—(must have had great personality)—heard the voice of the Lord speaking articulately to him, as he walk'd in the fields—feels resistless commands not to be explain'd, but follow'd, to abstain from taking off his hat, to say *Thee* and *Thou*, and not bid others Good morning or Good evening—was illiterate, could just read and write—testifies against shows, games, and frivolous pleasures—enters the courts and warns the judges that they see to doing justice—goes into public houses and market-places, with denunciations of drunkenness and money-making—rises in the midst of the church-services, and gives his own explanations of the ministers' explanations, and of Bible passages and texts—sometimes for such things put in prison, sometimes struck fiercely on the mouth on the spot, or knock'd down, and lying there beaten and bloody—was of keen wit, ready to any question with the most apropos of answers—was sometimes press'd for a soldier, (*him* for a soldier!)—was indeed terribly buffeted; but goes, goes, goes—often sleeping out-doors, under hedges, or hay stacks—forever taken before justices—improving such, and all occasions, to *bear testimony*, and give good advice—still enters the “steeple-houses,” (as he calls churches,) and though often dragg'd out and whipt till he faints away, and lies like one dead, when he comes-to—stands up again, and offering himself all bruised and bloody, cries out to his tormenters, “Strike—strike again, here where you have not yet touch'd! my arms, my head, my cheeks.”—Is at length arrested and sent

up to London, confers with the Protector, Cromwell,—is set at liberty, and holds great meetings in London.

Thus going on, there is something in him that fascinates one or two here, and three or four there, until gradually there were others who went about in the same spirit, and by degrees the Society of Friends took shape, and stood among the thousand religious sects of the world. Women also catch the contagion, and go round, often shamefully misused. By such contagion these ministerings, by scores, almost hundreds of poor travelling men and women, keep on year after year, through ridicule, whipping, imprisonment, &c.—some of the Friend-ministers emigrate to New England—where their treatment makes the blackest part of the early annals of the New World. Some were executed, others maim'd, par-burnt, and scourg'd—two hundred die in prison—some on the gallows, or at the stake.

George Fox himself visited America, and found a refuge and hearers, and preach'd many times on Long Island, New York State. In the village of Oysterbay they will show you the rock on which he stood, (1672,) addressing the multitude, in the open air—thus rigidly following the fashion of apostolic times.—(I have heard myself many reminiscences of him.) Flushing also contains (or contain'd—I have seen them) memorials of Fox, and his son, in two aged white-oak trees, that shaded him while he bore his testimony to people gather'd in the highway.—Yes, the American Quakers were much persecuted—almost as much, by a sort of consent of all the other sects, as the Jews were in Europe in the middle ages. In New England, the cruelest laws were pass'd, and put in execution against them. As said, some were whipt—women the same as men. Some had their ears cut off—others their tongues pierc'd with hot irons—others their faces branded. Worse still, a woman and three men had been hang'd, (1660.)—Public opinion, and the statutes, join'd together, in an odious union, Quakers, Baptists, Roman Catholics and Witches.—Such a fragmentary sketch of George Fox and his time—and the advent of 'the Society of Friends' in America.

Strange as it may sound, Shakspeare and George Fox, (think of them! compare them!) were born and bred of similar stock, in much the same surroundings and station in life—from the same England—and at a similar period. One to radiate all of art's, all literature's splendor—a splendor so dazzling that he himself is almost lost in it, and his contemporaries the same—his fictitious Othello, Romeo, Hamlet, Lear, as real as any lords of England or Europe then and there—more real to us, the mind

sometimes thinks, than the man Shakspeare himself. Then the other—may we indeed name him the same day? What is poor plain George Fox compared to William Shakspeare—to fancy's lord, imagination's heir? Yet George Fox stands for something too—a thought—the thought that wakes in silent hours—perhaps the deepest, most eternal thought latent in the human soul. This is the thought of God, merged in the thoughts of moral right and the immortality of identity. Great, great is this thought—aye, greater than all else. When the gorgeous pageant of Art, refulgent in the sunshine, color'd with roses and gold—with all the richest mere poetry, old or new, (even Shakspeare's)—with all that statue, play, painting, music, architecture, oratory, can effect, ceases to satisfy and please—When the eager chase after wealth flags, and beauty itself becomes a loathing—and when all worldly or carnal or esthetic, or even scientific values, having done their office to the human character, and minister'd their part to its development—then, if not before, comes forward this over-arching thought, and brings its eligibilities, germinations. Most neglected in life of all humanity's attributes, easily cover'd with crust, deluded and abused, rejected, yet the only certain source of what all are seeking, but few or none find—in it I for myself clearly see the first, the last, the deepest depths and highest heights of art, of literature, and of the purposes of life. I say whoever labors here, makes contributions here, or best of all sets an incarnated example here, of life or death, is dearest to humanity—remains after the rest are gone. And here, for these purposes, and up to the light that was in him, the man Elias Hicks—as the man George Fox had done years before him—lived long, and died, faithful in life, and faithful in death.