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## GUIDE TO CARLYLE



# GUIDE TO CARLYLE

BY  
AUGUSTUS RALLI

VOL. I



LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.  
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C. 1

*First published in 1920*

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Such harmony is in immortal souls ;  
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Literature of Europe will pass away ; Europe itself, the Earth itself will pass away : this little life-boat of an Earth with its noisy crew of a Mankind, and all their troubled History, will one day have vanished ; faded like a cloud-speck from the azure of the All ! What then is man ! What then is man ! He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time ; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.

CARLYLE ("Death of Goethe").



## PREFACE

THIS book is written primarily for the student, though in the hope that its appeal will extend to the general reader. It was first undertaken as a critical study ; and the inclusion of methodical analyses of all Carlyle's works was a later development. The object of these is to disentangle the main idea ; for Carlyle is foremost among those writers who are not to be conquered by a single reading ; and the stranger, on his first entry into such a thickly populated area, is apt to succumb to feelings of confusion and discouragement. It is hoped that the analyses will help to moderate feelings of this kind, by providing those who are rather dazed by a first experience with a ready means of reconstructing the orderly evolution of thought or narrative.

The biographical chapters have been added for the sake of completeness, that the reader may possess, within the compass of a single work, a compendium of all facts worthy of note relating to Carlyle's life and books. They have been compiled from the *Reminiscences*, and the Letters published at intervals of years down to August 1914, and from the work of Froude, though the latter has been used as sparingly as possible.

Writing for a new generation, largely unacquainted with Froude, I had hoped to make the biography non-controversial. I thought it might be assumed that the battle was over and Froude finally defeated, and that a new start might therefore be made in the treatment of Carlyle's life, as if Froude had never given his theories to the world. If this has proved to be impossible, I at least hope that controversy has been reduced to a minimum.

A. R.





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# GUIDE TO CARLYLE

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY YEARS

1795-1820

THOMAS CARLYLE was born on December 4, 1795, at the small market town of Ecclefechan, in Annandale. He was the son of James Carlyle, a mason, whose portrait has been fixed for ever in the *Reminiscences*. His grandfather and grand-uncles had been known as men of vehement, irascible nature, living unsettled lives, but displaying now and then some sign of culture. The quality of steady adherence to work first appeared in James; he and his brothers in time started business in partnership, and became known for their strong family affection: a trait which persisted in the race. A still more important influence in his life was religion, and he joined a sect known as the "Burghers." The depth of religious fervour in both parents, and the importance of first influences, should be remembered when considering Carlyle's agony of mind under the assaults of scepticism.

James Carlyle had been previously married, but his wife died of fever, leaving one son, John. In 1795 he married Margaret Aitken, and their eldest son, Thomas, was born on December 4th. Three more sons and five daughters, of whom one died in a few months, were born to them.<sup>1</sup> As an example of their

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, born December 4, 1795; died February 5, 1881.  
Alexander, born August 4, 1797; died in Canada March 30, 1876.  
Janet, born September 2, 1799; died February 8, 1801.  
John Aitken, born July 7, 1801; died September 15, 1879.  
Margaret, born September 20, 1803; died June 22, 1830.  
James, born November 12, 1805.  
Mary, born February 2, 1808 (Mrs. James Austin).  
Jean, born September 2, 1810 (Mrs. Aitken).  
Jenny, born July 18, 1813 (Mrs. Robert Hanning).



simple upbringing we may note that oatmeal, milk and potatoes formed their diet, and that they played barefoot about the village streets, but were always cleanly clothed.<sup>1</sup> Carlyle's relations to his family were distinguished through life for the clannishness which has already been noted ; and he and his mother, to borrow a phrase from Froude which for once nobody will feel inclined to controvert, were like "a pair of lovers."<sup>2</sup>

A few quotations from the *Reminiscences* are obligatory in any description of Carlyle's father. "He was a man of perhaps *the* very largest natural endowment of any it has been my lot to converse with." There follows an account of his bold, glowing style of conversation, full of metaphors, "though he knew not what a metaphor was." A tendency to exaggeration is remarked in him, which the son was to inherit. "*He* was never visited with Doubt," his great maxim of philosophy being : "That man was created to work, not to speculate, or feel, or dream." "Any talk that had meaning in it he could listen to : what had *no* meaning in it, above all, what seemed false, he absolutely could and would not hear." "He was irascible, choleric, and we all dreaded his wrath. Yet passion never mastered him, or maddened him ; it rather inspired him with new vehemence of insight, and more piercing emphasis of wisdom."<sup>3</sup> These sentences have a double-edged interest in the agreement or difference they denote with their famous author.

"We had all to complain that we *durst not* freely love him. . . . My Mother has owned to me that she could never understand him."<sup>4</sup> This and the following explain the reaction of James Carlyle's character upon his family. "We were all practically taught that *work* . . . was the only thing we had to do ; and incited always by precept and example to do it *well*. An inflexible element of Authority encircled us all ; we felt from the first . . . that our own *wish* had often nothing to say in the matter. It was not a joyful life . . . yet a safe, quiet one ; above most others . . . a wholesome one. We were taciturn rather than talkative ; but if little were said, that little had generally a meaning."<sup>5</sup>

In his fifth year Carlyle was taught arithmetic by his father ;

<sup>1</sup> Froude, i. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 166.

<sup>3</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 5-9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* i. 44.

his letters he learned from his mother.<sup>1</sup> He first attended the village school, but James Carlyle, with a wise premonition of his son's abilities, transferred him to Annan Grammar School. There he was solitary and persecuted, the usual unhappy lot of the shy, sensitive boy among his fellows. To sensitiveness we must add the family hot temper, mindful of which his mother had exacted a promise from him never to return a blow. It was not till Carlyle transgressed this promise and gave stroke for stroke that his life became endurable. Tradition says that he fought with the biggest bully, and, although worsted, bore himself so that his antagonist and all of kindred mind were ever after ware of him. In matters of education, he acquired Latin and French, considerable knowledge of mathematics, but of Greek only the alphabet. He also devoured any book that came in his way.<sup>2</sup>

In November 1809 Carlyle proceeded to Edinburgh University. His father's decision to send him there had not met with the unqualified approval of neighbours; but he never justified their ground for dissent: "Educate a boy, and he grows up to despise his ignorant parents."<sup>3</sup> The students were mostly poor, each being like himself the member of the family in whom talent was suspected. The distance from Ecclefechan to Edinburgh is a hundred miles, and the journey had to be made on foot. Carlyle's father and mother attended him through the village; and thence he proceeded by stages of twenty miles a day. In Edinburgh he lodged in Simon Square, and his only food was the oatmeal, potatoes and butter that he received from home. It is probable that the moral discipline outweighed in value the intellectual; for instruction seems to have been at a low ebb, and of classics and philosophy he admits having learned little. In mathematics he became fairly proficient, and this preference for certain knowledge is easy to understand in one whose temperament, though poetical, was founded on the rock of positivism. About this time, doubts of his fitness for the ministry, to which his parents destined him, began to cloud his mind. He had many friends interested in learning and things of the spirit, among whom he was something of a leader.<sup>4</sup>

1809-14  
(13-18)

<sup>1</sup> Froude, i. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 19.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 15-16.

<sup>4</sup> Froude, i. 21-3.

1809-14  
(13-18)

In 1814 Carlyle finished his course at the University and was elected to a mathematical tutorship at his old school at Annan. It was the beginning of the hated career as a schoolmaster which occupied his next four years. The salary was between £60 and £70 a year, and this made him independent, and even enabled one of his thrifty habits to save. Meanwhile his father had abandoned his business at Ecclefechan and taken a farm some miles off at Mainhill : a bleak upland, but possessing a panoramic view.<sup>1</sup> "He wisely quitted the Mason trade," writes Carlyle,<sup>2</sup> "at the time when the character of it had changed ; when universal Poverty and Vanity made *show* and *cheapness* be preferred to Substance."

1815-20  
(19-24)

It is at this epoch that Carlyle's correspondence begins. The letters to his friends of University days are frank, unaffected, often written in high spirits, but seldom giving a picture of his daily duties. It is rather to escape from thought of these duties that he converses on paper with a sympathetic soul. "I continue to teach (that I may subsist thereby) with about as much satisfaction as I should beat hemp."<sup>3</sup> He is anxious for the future, but not to a painful degree, being as yet untouched by dyspepsia. He doubts his ability to force his way among the thick-skinned inhabitants of this planet.<sup>4</sup> His plans for happiness are laid always in the future—from which we infer his small satisfaction with the present. Books are his resource in default of society ; and his happiest feelings are awakened by letters from friends. To Johnstone he writes : "Have I not any afternoon these three months turned my eye to the mantelpiece, upon my return from school, to see if peradventure the postman had brought me no word from Hitchill ?"<sup>5</sup> He confesses to dreams of intellectual greatness and the desire for fame. The portrait of Carlyle dependent on his fellow-creatures and aiming at happiness and personal distinction is not one that we are used to consider. Yet is it not, we may ask, the true nature of the man, that in later years shone only through his works, and became eclipsed in life through physical suffering, or shot out the angry rays of exaggeration ? The gloom of the later Carlyle, the preacher of Renunciation, has become fixed in our minds, and we forget

<sup>1</sup> Froude, i. 34-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Early Letters T.C., i. 139.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 280-1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 132.



the more human spiritual adventurer who himself admitted that our wishes are the presentiments of our powers. 1815-20 (19-24)

In 1817 Carlyle exchanged his mastership at Annan for one at a new school at Kirkcaldy, started as a rival to the school already existing, of which Edward Irving was master, by some persons of the neighbourhood who disputed his severe methods with the pupils. And here it may be briefly said that no charges of severity have been preferred against Carlyle; that although he did not succeed as a schoolmaster, he had a moral ascendancy over his scholars and never resorted to physical arguments. Irving was five years older than Carlyle, the son of a tanner; and the two families had been long acquainted. Carlyle had known Irving by sight from early boyhood, but their first meeting did not take place till the winter of 1815 in Edinburgh. It was not prophetic of friendship, as Irving, with a note of superiority, addressed a stream of questions to Carlyle on the small doings of the Annandale folk. Many of these the latter was unable to answer, but he turned the laugh against Irving by styling him the Grand Inquisitor. In August of the following year they met again, at Kirkcaldy, on the occasion of Carlyle's first visit preparatory to his election as master of the new school. Irving now was abundantly kind; and, with no hint of jealousy, begged him, in the event of his settlement at Kirkcaldy, to make free use of his house and library. Carlyle's removal thither from Annan took place in the autumn of 1816; and as the setting of his friendship with Irving it is for ever memorable to us.<sup>1</sup> 1815-18 (19-22)

Carlyle himself has told us how from the first they liked one another and grew intimate, how they walked and communed on the long, sandy beach. "Blessed conquest of a Friend in this world! That was mainly all the wealth I had for five or six years coming."<sup>2</sup> Irving's library for the first time placed books within his reach, and among the many which he devoured were Hume and Gibbon. The effect of Gibbon was to extirpate his belief in miracles, and probably influence him against becoming a minister.<sup>3</sup> The mile of smooth sand in the summer twilight, with its long wave breaking into what Carlyle beautifully calls 1817-18 (21-2)

<sup>1</sup> Froude, i. 39-43.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Edinburgh Sketches and Memories*, by David Masson, 263-4.

1817-18 a "mane" of foam,<sup>1</sup> was their favourite walk ; but the two  
 (21-2) friends often went further afield, or made little excursions to places of interest in the neighbourhood. On one occasion a frail boat carried them to Inchkeith, where they inspected the lighthouse. Of another kind was the pilgrimage to Dunfermline to hear Dr. Chalmers preach. Twice during vacation time there were walking tours, through such impressive scenery as the Trossachs and Loch Lomond, with incidents at humble inns and meetings with strange people. But Carlyle mostly spent his holidays at Mainhill, where his great-hearted father was cultivating the clayey soil with success, assisted by his other sons ; the housework and lighter farm duties being performed by the mother and daughters.

We can understand that Carlyle did not succeed in his present vocation, and that the task of urging knowledge upon minds indifferent to it was distasteful to him. If boys do not dislike their master, the tie of affection is at least not strong ; and one with the sensibility of a poet feels keenly the smallest rebuff, no matter how ignoble is the hand that inflicts it. But that Carlyle could maintain excellent relations with the young we shall see in the case of his tutorship to the Bullers, where sympathy and politeness were not lacking. The legendary figure of Carlyle, morose, complaining, dissociated from the world's pleasures, has too long obstructed the student's vision ; and if on the one hand he appears to us groaning over the task laid upon him by fate, on the other we see him casting longing glances towards the fairer population. Kirkcaldy, he tells us, had its "West-End," which, rather to his sorrow, he did not frequent ; his social distractions being limited to the Manse. There Mr. Martin, the minister—a name to be remembered in connection with Irving—made him welcome for the latter's sake. To Carlyle, as to all sensitive men, the companionship of women was the more pleasing because the barrier of sex operates against familiarity. It was at this time took place that singularly gracious episode—acquaintance with Margaret Gordon. Poor, proud, high-bred, possessed of insight, she felt the attraction of genius in one who was socially far below her. We have pleaded for the human Carlyle, we have deprecated the Carlyle of legend risen from the exaggerations of

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, li. 29.



speech in which he strove to relieve his dyspeptic irritability; and yet we must concede that he never was quite near his fellow-creatures, as the following sentences, from Margaret Gordon's letter of farewell, indicate: "Cultivate the milder dispositions of your heart. . . . Remove the awful distance between you and ordinary men by kind and gentle manners. . . . Why conceal the real goodness that flows in your heart?"<sup>1</sup>

By the middle of 1818 Carlyle confesses that his position was not an enviable one. He had now definitely abandoned thoughts of the ministry, and he felt no love for his own "paltry trade." The departure of Irving, likewise tired of schoolmastering, and, what he considered, some convincing proofs of his own unpopularity, contributed further to his decision. In a letter to his friend Mitchell he estimates the profits and losses of his condition, and, against the profit of a scanty and precarious livelihood, weighs "the destruction of benevolent feeling, that searing of the heart, which misery, especially of a petty kind, sooner or later, will never fail to effect." He speaks of his desire for social intercourse, and how it is thwarted by his undefined station in society. "If I continue a schoolmaster, I fear there is little reason to doubt that these feelings will increase, and at last drive me entirely from the kindly sympathies of life to brood in silence over the bitterness into which my friendly propensities must be changed."<sup>2</sup> He has thoughts of writing for the booksellers, although to live by authorship is far from his mind. He passes in review various professions, such as that of lawyer or civil engineer, but is diffident of his power to conquer the initial worldly stages.

In November Carlyle removed to Edinburgh. Exclusive of a present of £15 which he made at this time to his father, he had a sum of about £90 saved, and this, with the supplies of oatmeal, butter, etc., which he received from home, would enable him to live for two years. Besides, he added to his resources by taking private pupils in such subjects as mathematics and astronomy. Poor, unknown, without influence, his position was precarious and yet not desperate; although hope, which still shines through his letters, was soon to be overclouded by the beginning of that dyspepsia which he likens to "a rat gnawing at the pit of his

<sup>1</sup> Froude, i. 52-3.

<sup>2</sup> Early Letters T.C., i. 178-9.

1818-19 stomach." It is at the foot of the most toilsome ascent of his  
(22-3) life that we see him now. His mother, though disappointed of her fond hope that he would become a minister, never ceased to urge him towards religion. She had taught herself writing in order to correspond with him, and we find her exhorting him to read his chapter daily. She writes: "Do make religion your great study, Tom; if you repent it, I will bear the blame for ever." <sup>1</sup>

1819-20 In the autumn of 1819 Irving was chosen as assistant by  
(23-4) Dr. Chalmers, of Glasgow. Irving's views were orthodox, he had entered the ministry, and his fortunes, unlike those of Carlyle in the next years, were to approach their zenith. Material cares were now the least that Carlyle had to bear, for he earned enough money by private teaching to avoid making inroads upon his slender capital; and he was used to life without luxuries. But there was the oppression of religious doubt, the irritability of dyspepsia, and the shrouding of the whole world in the gloom of his own mind. These were the years following the Napoleonic wars; wages were low, food dear, and many were haunted by the spectres of unemployment and starvation. The worn nerves of a sensitive, imaginative man offer small resistance to such troublous tidings, especially when, as in Carlyle's case, he has "no hand in the game of life." He is willing to work but is denied the opportunity; he speaks of his "strenuous idleness," his "frigid impotence," and how the powers of his mind are all "festering and corroding each other in the miserable strife of inward will against outward necessity." <sup>2</sup> Bacon tells us that there are times when, if a man has no friend, he had better quit the stage; and such would have been Carlyle's condition without Irving. That sore question of the state of the people was a frequent subject of discourse between them, besides more personal matters. Irving encouraged his literary ambition, predicted his success, explained to him how the wide range of his study, joined with his independent character, had unfitted him for professional advancement. But the most memorable of their walks and talks followed a visit of Carlyle's to Glasgow in April 1820, when the two, having proceeded fifteen miles towards Ecclefechan, were about parting on Drumclog Moss at sunset, when—Carlyle

<sup>1</sup> Early Letters T.C., i. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Froude, i. 93.



says—Irving “actually drew from me by degrees, in the softest manner, the confession that I did *not* think as he of Christian religion, and that it was vain for me to expect I ever could or should.” <sup>1</sup>

1819-20  
(23-4)

And yet the shadow did not always lie upon Carlyle, nor was his grief of the selfish kind which excludes thought of others. One of the attributes of the Scottish character is a disinterested scrupulousness in giving advice ; its many admirers cannot fail to be impressed by a letter of Carlyle's at this time presenting the two sides of emigration to his friend Johnstone, who cherished that project.<sup>2</sup> He takes the keenest interest in the mental expansion of his brothers John and Alick, advising them what books to read and how to read them. He warns John “that continuous study will waste away the very best constitution ;”<sup>3</sup> and the sum total of human knowledge will not requite the loss of health. He reminds him that there is a learning more valuable than that of books—the ways of men. “Speak with all honest men, enter into their views, and be one of them.”<sup>4</sup> And again : “There is no real happiness out of the common routines of life.”<sup>5</sup> Writing to his father he lets appear what is ever the deepest wish of his heart, “of gaining for myself some permanent employment, so that I may no longer wander about the earth a moping hypochondriac, the soul eating up itself for want of something else to act upon.”<sup>6</sup>

1819-21  
(23-5)

We saw Carlyle, having done with teaching and the ministry, anxious to make trial of another profession and inclining towards law. This he embraced at first with some satisfaction, under the direction of David Hume, a nephew of the great sceptic. But too quickly he discovered that Hume had no spark of his uncle's genius, and that law was “a shapeless mass of absurdity and chicane.”<sup>7</sup> We are apt, in contemplating the height and extent of Carlyle's intellect, to forget that his nature was saturated with poetry, that his longings were for the picturesque, and that here, therefore, is the first of his many dolorous outcries against Dryasdust. The gradual elimination of other professions and chances drove him into literature. Of its perils he was well

1819-20  
(23-4)

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 90.

<sup>2</sup> *Early Letters T.C.*, i. 203-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 309.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 330.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 358.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 326.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* i. 281

1819-20  
(23-4) aware, and he had no pretensions to genius. These years saw emerge the first small runlet that for the next half-century was to swell into such Amazonian breadth. It was as contributor to the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, under the editorship of Dr. Brewster, to whom he had brought a letter of introduction from Kirkcaldy, that he first found employment.

1820  
(24) These articles are interesting as the first fine threads of the sacred river distilling from its mountain rocks, but the interest is scarcely intrinsic. They are mostly biographical—their subjects being Nelson, Chatham, Pitt, Sir John Moore, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, etc. The style is clear, straightforward, pedestrian, with no premonition either of the inspiration or the contortions of the Sibyl. Here and there we meet with a curious piece of information : for instance, that Lady M. W. Montague was the first to bring to England inoculation, which she had seen practised by the peasants at Belgrade. A critical verdict on the father of Sir John Moore recalls Dr. Johnson : “As a novelist he showed no extraordinary felicity in the department of invention ; no great power of diversifying his characters, or ease in conducting his narrative.” Or the following moral judgment on Sir John Moore himself may appear of some significance as an adumbration of the Carlyle that was to be : “The intrepidity and manly uprightness of his character, manifested at a time when the British Army was far from being distinguished in these respects, are qualities more endearing and estimable than military fame.” But perhaps the most penetrating remarks are on Nelson, whose limitations, Carlyle says, were due to want of education and intercourse with cultivated men. “His sense of rectitude embodied itself in a feeling of loyalty to the King of England, and of hatred to all Frenchmen.”

For the most part the articles are compilations of facts supplied by others, and do not spring from the deep places of the mind : yet they afford interest as marking the initial stage of the wonderful career of which we are to treat. Indeed, all other paths but that of literature were fast vanishing from Carlyle's prospect, to make but phantom reappearances in future years. In 1819 and 1820 he had learned German by his own efforts, and was now beginning the study of German literature : a noteworthy feat in his struggle

for life, though without immediate result, for the offers of translations which he made to London publishers were declined. 1820 (24)

We have now covered in brief outline nearly twenty-five years of Carlyle's life, and we see him weighed down by doubt and bodily ailments, with no outlet for his powers of mind, and insecure of the material future ; but trusting in his good parents, and not without hope. The point where we pause precedes the arrival of a new influence. But before turning the page, some sentences from the *Reminiscences*,<sup>1</sup> summing up his relations with his father at this time, should not be omitted. Carlyle himself says that his father was a man of action and therefore admired success ; yet, "in after years, when I had peremptorily ceased from being a Schoolmaster, though he inwardly disapproved of the step as imprudent ; and saw me, in successive summers, lingering beside him in sickness of body and mind, without outlook towards any good, he had the forbearance to say at worst nothing, never once to whisper discontent with me. . . . When hope again dawned for me, how hearty was his joy, yet how silent !"

<sup>1</sup> I. 47.



## CHAPTER II

### THE WELSH FAMILY—BULLER TUTORSHIP— FIRST VISIT TO LONDON—HODDAM HILL

1821-5

1821  
(25) THE five years of Carlyle's life, from the spring of 1821 to the autumn of 1826, are still to be reckoned as probationary, though we may trace in them the settling of his mind into the form which it was afterwards to retain. We see the stilling of theological doubt ; the fixing of his mental attitude towards his task ; the convergence of various paths of occupation, including literary-hack work, into the broad road of original composition ; and, above all, the entrance into his life of Jane Welsh.

The Welsh family had lived for many generations in Dumfriesshire, ranking as small gentry ; their family estate being Craigenputtock—a name that has become famous in Carlyle history. Craigenputtock had formerly been encumbered, but was repurchased from his father by the successful Dr. Welsh, medical practitioner at Haddington. His only child, Jane Baillie Welsh, was born on July 14, 1801, and from earliest years she displayed the "intellectual vivacity" which has since been called her predominating trait. Among the many stories of her childhood we may select the following as illustrating her inborn thirst for knowledge. Some difference of opinion existed between her parents as to the desirability of including Latin in her studies ; whereupon one night, after bedtime, she concealed herself beneath the table, and during a moment's pause in the conversation, began to decline a noun which she had succeeded in learning—"Penna, a pen ; pennæ, of a pen," etc. : after which she emerged, and approaching her father, said : "I want to learn Latin ; please let me be a boy." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 55.



She was soon after sent to Haddington school, and therefore in 1811 came under the tutorship of Irving, who was then master. Dr. Welsh perceived that Irving was no ordinary man and engaged him to give private tuition to his daughter; but the following year Irving removed to Kirkcaldy. As much has been written about Irving's future relations with Jane Welsh, it may here be said that the love which arose between them was of the genuine kind, but not serious enough to leave any after effect. In 1812 Irving became engaged to Isabella Martin, daughter of the minister at Kirkcaldy; but some years later, during his Edinburgh residence, when he paid occasional visits to Mrs. Welsh and her daughter at Haddington, and felt the attraction of his former pupil, he made attempts to rupture the Kirkcaldy tie. Kirkcaldy, however, to use Carlyle's phrase, was "peremptory";<sup>1</sup> and we may assume that the wounds on both sides healed quickly; for there is no evidence that Irving ever regretted his own marriage; while of the many love passages of Jane Welsh's early life, the most serious, according to Carlyle, was with George Rennie, afterwards a sculptor—clever but "*unmelodious*."<sup>2</sup>

Deep and lasting grief she was soon to feel when her father died suddenly in 1819 at the early age of forty-four. Carlyle writes: "It was her first sorrow; and her greatest of all. It broke her health, permanently, within the next two or three years; and, in a sense, almost broke her heart. A Father so mourned and loved I have never seen: to the end of her life, his title even to me was 'He' and 'Him'; not above twice or thrice, quite in late years, did she ever mention (and then in what a sweet low tone!), 'my Father.' . . ." <sup>3</sup> Of Mrs. Welsh it may be said that, although relations between mother and daughter were less ideal, she was a thoroughly good-hearted and generous woman, if somewhat whimsical and capricious. That she once, in the course of an evening, appeared in fifteen different humours, like a certain unfortunate story about Keats, is too well known.<sup>4</sup>

The complexity of Jane Welsh's character has blinded many of her critics to its fundamental trait. Her social and intellectual qualities were like strata superimposed upon a bedrock of kindness and capacity to love. We see this as she advances in years, in

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 72.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 70.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 149.

1821  
(25) relation to the undistinguished friends of her girlhood, to the poor dependents of her mother, to the memory of the mother herself. But she had a brilliant and scintillating intellect which played round every side of her subject ; and in using it she spared at times neither herself nor others. She has been accused of heartlessness towards her many suitors, but she was considerate to all except the vain and pretentious ; and she despised no true emotion till she became convinced of its shallow root. Further, in her admirable father she had experienced an example of manhood far surpassing all who crossed her path until the advent of Carlyle ; and she carried this test unconsciously in the depths of her mind. In her correspondence with Carlyle we shall see a nature that had grown accustomed to resist, yielding slowly to the charm less of a great than a good man.

1 Their first meeting took place at the end of May 1821, and was brought about by Irving. Carlyle accompanied Irving to Haddington, and the impression seems to have been immediate. "Happy as a lark in May" <sup>1</sup> he describes himself on his return, and how it was the beginning of a new life to him. We may accept the evidence that Jane Welsh, not Margaret Gordon, was the original of Blumine in *Sartor* ; <sup>2</sup> but we should doubt whether the counter-impression was as favourable. Some months later, in a letter to her school friend, Miss Stodart, Miss Welsh weighed Carlyle's undoubted intellectual gifts against his want of elegance, and accused him of mishandling teacups and fire-irons.<sup>3</sup> However, she accepted his offer to supply her with books from Edinburgh, and so the basis of a correspondence was determined.

It was soon after that Carlyle experienced the spiritual adventure, which he describes as his "rebirth," of which the scene was Leith Walk, Edinburgh. Unorthodox he remained to the end of his life, and a contemner of current theology as Hebrew old clothes ; but no fiercer opponent of materialism ever existed. It was now that the cold damps of materialism were sucked up by the returning sun of faith ; and the conviction of the spiritual origin of the universe rooted itself beyond extraction in his heart.

The correspondence with Miss Welsh was a new interest in

<sup>1</sup> Early Letters T.C., i. 352.

<sup>2</sup> Love Letters: Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup> Early Letters J.W.C., p. 34.

Carlyle's life which, for the remainder of the year, held on the same course. He was teaching mathematics, spending four hours a day on a translation of Legendre's *Geometry*, an reserving the evenings for original composition. He continued to write letters of sound advice to his brothers Alick and John, and of affection, frequently accompanied by gifts, to his parents. 1821  
(25)

The change for the better now about to occur in Carlyle's circumstances was effected by Irving, who, in the last days of 1821, proceeded to London, on the invitation of the directors of a new Scottish Chapel in Hatton Garden, to become their minister. His success as preacher was instantaneous, and one of its results was to make him acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Buller, retired Anglo-Indians of distinction. They consulted him on the subject of their sons' education, of whom the eldest, Charles, aged fifteen, was unusually promising. Irving proposed Edinburgh University, and, as tutor, Carlyle. The arrangement was effected in February 1822; Carlyle was engaged at a salary of £200 a year; and the two boys reached Edinburgh. They lodged with a family in George's Square, so that Carlyle retained the rooms at 3 Moray Street where he had recently settled; but he attended them daily from ten o'clock to one, and from six to eight.<sup>1</sup> From the day of arrival, when Carlyle set out with his charges for a walk by Salisbury Crags and Holyrood and the Castle, the relation was pleasant. He writes: "The two youths both took to me with unhesitating liking, and I to them; and we never had anything of quarrel, or even of weariness and dreariness between us. . . . Charles was actually an entertainment to me. . . . If we walked together . . . he was the best company I could find in Edinburgh."<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of July, Mr. and Mrs. Buller arrived in Edinburgh to make it their temporary home. Carlyle continued to live in lodgings, but they treated him as a friend, took pleasure in his conversation, and even required his presence in the drawing-room of an evening more than was agreeable to him. He describes Mrs. Buller as "one of the most fascinating refined women I have ever seen," while the "Goodman" is "an honest, worthy, straightforward English gentleman."<sup>3</sup> 1822  
(26)

<sup>1</sup> Early Letters T.C., ii. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 104-5.

<sup>3</sup> Early Letters T.C., ii. 98.



1822-3  
(26-7)

His letters of the period breathe a spirit of contentment, with an occasional set-back from an attack of dyspepsia. He has no complaint to make of his pupils, except that his leisure is diminished; and offers from booksellers to undertake editions of works, etc., exceed his power to comply.<sup>1</sup> The position of Moray Street enables "a nervous dyspeptic wretch . . . to escape from the tumult and stench and smoke and squalor of a city out into the pure ether and the blue sky."<sup>2</sup> His health is benefited by bathing, and he observes his mother's caution "not to go too deep in."<sup>3</sup> Yet, writing to his brother John, to advise him about a profession, he regrets his own unfixed method of living.<sup>4</sup> "I expect to find no complete rest," he confides to his father, "until I am fairly overhead in the composition of some *valuable* Book; a project which I have talked about till I am ashamed."<sup>5</sup> He assures his mother that he wants "nothing but steady health of body . . . to be one of the comfortablest persons of my acquaintance."<sup>6</sup> He is tenderly solicitous for her daily wants in the matter of tea. "It would be *such* a thing, if you, who have toiled among us so long and faithfully, were restricted from any comfort . . . which we could procure for you."<sup>7</sup>

Carlyle's solitary life in lodgings was relieved during the winter of 1822-3 by the companionship of his brother John. He had suggested the career of medicine to John, and was now defraying the cost of his studies. His financial position had improved owing to his salary as tutor; he also received £50 for his translation of Legendre; and, ever generous in money matters, he looked upon what any member of the family possessed as "common stock . . . from which all are entitled to draw."<sup>8</sup> His literary labours of the next year or two consisted of the *Life of Schiller* and translation of *Wilhelm Meister*; and both these enterprises were to be carried on under changed conditions.

1823  
(27)

In the spring of 1823 the Bullers took Kinnaird House, Dunkeld, Perthshire; and thither Carlyle proceeded about the middle of May. He took up his quarters in the old mansion, entirely secluded from the new buildings; and, in the winter,

<sup>1</sup> Early Letters, T.C., ii. 58-9.<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 69.<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 73.<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ii. 95.<sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii. 117.<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ii. 91.<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ii. 146.<sup>8</sup> Ibid., ii. 234.

fortified himself by plenteous fires against the sharp winds that invaded him through the many crevices of the walls and the shrunk doors and windows.<sup>1</sup> There he slept, spent his leisure hours, and accomplished his literary labours. Unfortunately, despite diligent walking and riding, his health deteriorated, and he reverted to dyspeptic misery. His relations with the Bullers continued excellent as ever; and, in a letter to Miss Welsh, he describes them as "good people, and what is better, the first hour when they treat me uncivilly shall likewise be the last."<sup>2</sup>

1823  
(27)

Carlyle always felt the pains of composition keenly, and although the *Life of Schiller* belongs to his novitiate, it gave him the first turns of the rack on which mind and body lay stretched during the production of his masterpieces. "My own miserable *Life* gets on drearily," he wrote to Miss Welsh, "I am next to dead every night at six when I begin it; and two pages I reckon a feat extraordinary."<sup>3</sup> The effect of translation was far milder, even beneficial; and he compares his progress to clockwork in the achievement of ten pages a day. *Schiller* was to appear in the *London Magazine* in separate parts, through the agency of Irving, always Carlyle's good friend, though fallen silent as a correspondent during his London apotheosis. Meanwhile, dyspepsia became aggravated, and those near to him were occasionally alarmed by a sentence in one of his letters such as this: "I am bowed down to the earth with such a load of woes as keeps me in continual darkness. I seem as it were *dying by inches*; if I have one good day, it is sure to be followed by three or four ill ones."<sup>4</sup> On the advice of the Bullers he consulted an Edinburgh doctor; but the prescription to take mercury and relinquish tobacco suited him ill, and, long after, drew forth a passage of characteristic scorn in the *Reminiscences*. As proof of the continued improvement of his relations with the Bullers at this time, we may cite the following: "They have all along treated me with the greatest consideration; of late, they even seem to have some glimmer of affection for me. My small *authorial* labours have elevated me in their esteem."<sup>5</sup>

1823-4  
(27-8)

Early in February Carlyle left Kinnaird House and the Bullers for a period of three months. He first remained in Edinburgh

1824  
(28)<sup>1</sup> Early Letters T.C., ii. 235-6.<sup>2</sup> Love Letters, i. 221.<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 308.<sup>4</sup> Early Letters T.C., ii. 244.<sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii. 264.

1824 (28) to superintend the printing of his book, and then hastened home to Mainhill, where in the spring he completed *Meister*, "with my best of nurses and of hostesses, my Mother." <sup>1</sup> Eventually he received £100 for *Schiller* and £180 for *Meister* : important additions to his capital of between three and four hundred pounds, which, as usual, he offered to place at the disposal of his father and brother Alick for the purpose of stocking a farm.

In the first days of June he sailed for London from Leith to rejoin the Bullers. He stayed with Irving, who had married in the preceding October and was living in Islington, and whose heart had not cooled towards his friend, despite his deficient correspondence. Carlyle found Irving in the full tide of popularity, but "inwardly . . . nothing-like so happy as in old days." <sup>2</sup> Of his large circle of friends into which Carlyle was introduced, it is necessary to mention the names only of three : Mrs. Strachey (sister to Mrs. Buller), Mrs. Basil Montagu, afterwards called the "Noble Lady," and Kitty Kirkpatrick, a cousin of Mrs. Strachey's, known colloquially as "dear Kitty" : the offspring of a romantic marriage between a Hindoo Princess and an Englishman. She was mistress of an ample fortune, and it would have pleased Mrs. Strachey to see her and Carlyle come together. Of all his acquaintance, including the Bullers, Carlyle's preference was for Mrs. Strachey, whom he describes as "a singular pearl of a woman ; pure as dew yet full of love." One of the services she rendered him, and, indirectly, all lovers of English literature, was to take him with Irving to see Coleridge at Highgate. We may therefore partially thank her for one of the best chapters in the incomparable *Life of Sterling*.

This first visit of Carlyle's to London, which lasted intermittently till February of the following year, does not seem to have kindled him to any enthusiasm. He was impressed by the sight of St. Paul's piercing the heaven in majestic aloofness from the vain scramble which it overlooked ; <sup>3</sup> and it would be interesting to compare his words with Charlotte Brontë's on the same subject ; but ordinarily he was critical and depreciatory. He finds no "right life" in London ; "the people are situated here like plants in a hot-house, to which the quiet influences of sky and

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, li. 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, li. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Early Letters T.C.*, li. 278.



earth are never in their unadulterated state admitted.”<sup>1</sup> He complains to Miss Welsh that Irving’s circle includes no truly intellectual person, no great man “exercised with sublime thoughts and emotions.”<sup>2</sup> He did not except the literary world in his lament for the absence of intellectuality; in a sharp sentence he dismisses it as “the poorest part of the London population.”<sup>3</sup>

Carlyle was but in his twenty-ninth year at this time; the scene was strange; and the people “reckoned him a kind of genius.”<sup>4</sup> Is it not noteworthy that induction into such a society and meeting with the leaders of a profession, on the threshold of which he was struggling, failed to disturb his balance? He was no misanthrope, and many times he lamented his exclusion from associated men, and urged others to shun his example; but the fact remains broadly true that reading and meditation, not passage through the living world, nourished his genius. Goethe foresaw that he was so mentally and morally constituted as to develop all out of himself.

Carlyle’s connection with the Bullers was now about to terminate. A fortnight spent with Charles Buller at Kew was his last experience as a tutor; and then it was decided that the youth should prepare for Cambridge. Carlyle found himself “without employment,”<sup>5</sup> but financially secure for some years to come.

July and August he spent at Birmingham under the hospitable roof of Dr. Badams. “He promised to cure me of dyspepsia,” wrote Carlyle to Miss Welsh, “or at least to alleviate my curse! . . . Badams and I have been together but three days, yet we are acquaintances as of twenty years’ standing. We have argued and talked about two folio volumes: I feel as if half the house were mine.”<sup>6</sup> More than forty years later he wrote: “Seldom have I seen a franker, trustier, cheerier form of human kindliness than Badams’s: how I remember the laughing eyes and sunny figure of him, breaking into my room on mornings, himself half dressed: ‘What? Not up yet, monster!’”<sup>7</sup> Carlyle followed the prescribed cure, further enlarged his acquaintance, and, in company with Badams, made visits on horseback to places of interest in the neighbourhood, such as Warwick Castle and Kenil-

1824  
(28)<sup>1</sup> Early Letters T.C., ii. 287.<sup>2</sup> Love Letters, ii. 47.<sup>3</sup> Froude, i. 264.<sup>4</sup> Love Letters, ii. 35.<sup>5</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 142.<sup>6</sup> Love Letters, i. 384-5.<sup>7</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 147.

1824 (26) worth. He also visited the iron and coal region, which at night he compared to "a volcano spitting fire from a thousand tubes of brick." He deplored the fate of "the wretched 150,000 mortals that grind out their destiny there," or in the iron mills with "blast furnaces roaring like whirlwinds." <sup>1</sup>

The colours of Carlyle's life were shifting with kaleidoscopic variety. He left Badams at the beginning of September and returned to London; but October saw him at Dover, where were assembled Irving and his wife, the Stracheys, and Kitty Kirkpatrick. The daily sight of the French coast suggested a trip to Paris to Mrs. Strachey; she despatched her husband and Kitty thither, and pressed Carlyle into accompanying them. On the journey, the two younger members frequently sat on the outside of the carriage, and no doubt cultivated each other's society with great mutual pleasure. Mr. Strachey excited amusement by his rapidly deteriorating French: one of his phrases, "Nong, vous avez drive devilish slow!" when refusing a gratuity to a postilion, has survived by a lucky Boswellian accident. Carlyle found Paris "vastly entertaining," <sup>2</sup> delighted in walking about the streets, and unconsciously formed a mental picture which was of use to him when writing of the Revolution. He heard Cuvier lecture, and met Legendre, whose work on Geometry he had translated. But on the moral side he has much to say in depreciation. He notes a deficiency of home-life, and, in a letter to Miss Welsh, condemns Paris as "the shrine of Vanity and Sensuality." <sup>3</sup>

The trip lasted twelve days, and by November 6th the party had recrossed to Dover. Three days later saw Carlyle in London, lodging in Southampton Street, Islington, where he was to spend the next four months. His first business was to attend to the publication, in volume form, of *Schiller* which had now completed its appearance in the *London Magazine*. He resumed intercourse with Irving, but the "copiousness and flowing freedom" of old days was no more, and he could not but perceive his old friend "getting deeper and deeper sunk in manifold cares of his own." <sup>4</sup> Indeed, the ebb of Irving's popularity had set in; and although crowds still thronged his Chapel, they were of another quality

<sup>1</sup> Early Letters, T.C., ii. 279-80.

<sup>2</sup> Love Letters, ii. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 156-65.

<sup>4</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 167.



from those of his first coming, which had included Cabinet Ministers and other persons of first-rate importance. If the depth of a man's dejection at failure is commensurate with the height of his aspiration, what must have been Irving's thoughts on the collapse of a scheme thus outlined by Carlyle! "The thought that Christian religion was again to dominate all minds and the world to become an Eden by his humble thrice-blessed means, was fatally declaring itself to have been a dream."<sup>1</sup> Carlyle's affection for Irving was unabated, despite the change in their relations. He was not blind to Irving's faults, nor to the occasional absurdity of his deportment, as witness the numerous pen-and-ink sketches in the *Love Letters*; but these never transgress the bounds of good nature, and are concerned only with what is outer and unessential. A rich field for Carlyle's humour is Irving's care of his baby, his intimate concern as to the temperature of the water for his infant son's ablutions; while his experiments in dandling were phenomenal. "He maintains that this is exercising generosity and forgetting self," wrote Carlyle to Miss Welsh. And yet, "with all his faults, where shall we find his fellow?"<sup>2</sup>

The chief external event during the remainder of Carlyle's stay in London was the reception of a letter from Goethe in acknowledgment of the translation of *Wilhelm Meister*. But internally, the settling process which we have noted as characteristic of the years 1821-6 was further accomplishing itself. Literature is to be his profession, but the love of fame is gone like the mirage, never to recur in the working scheme of one large-minded enough to live in perpetual consciousness of his own relation to the universe. "Let a man be true in his intentions and his efforts to fulfil them; and the point is gained, whether he succeed or not," he wrote to Miss Welsh.<sup>3</sup> And to his brother Alick: "Literary fame is a thing which I covet little; but I desire to be *working* honestly in my day and generation in this business which has now become my trade. I make no grain of doubt that in time I shall penetrate the fence that keeps me back, and find the place which is due to me among my fellow-men."<sup>4</sup> It is not always easy to

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 173-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 101.

<sup>3</sup> *Love Letters*, ii. 36, 103.

<sup>4</sup> *Early Letters T.C.*, ii. 308.

1825 practise one's theory, but this Carlyle did by failing to be ruffled  
(29) at a hostile criticism of *Meister* in the *London Magazine* from the pen of De Quincey.

Towards the close of February Carlyle prepared to leave London. He did so with regret "for the fraction of true friendship which has been established for me in one or two of its many hearts": an allusion to Mrs. Strachey and Mrs. Montagu.<sup>1</sup> He contrasted their kindness with "icy Edinburgh"; but he had resolved above all things to recover health; and this could be best effected by residence in the home-land. He broke his journey at Birmingham, and there received a superb writing-desk as a present from Mrs. Strachey. "These are the things that make me wonder," is his comment.<sup>2</sup> A further extract from a letter to Alick at this time, explaining itself, deserves quotation: "She [his mother] speaks of knives being cheap in Birmingham; but I fear I am a bad merchant anywhere. The people seem to read in my face that I cannot higggle or beat down their prices; so they almost always overcharge me."<sup>3</sup> By March 19th Carlyle was at Mainhill under the roof of his parents, but he did not continue there long. His father had leased Hoddam Hill for him, a small farm two miles distant; and on May 26th he removed thither, as to a house of his own, with Alick to do the practical farmwork, his mother, and one of his younger sisters; while his second brother John, who had now taken his medical degree, frequently visited him. The situation of Hoddam Hill was high, and its windows commanded a view "fifty miles in radius," not to be matched in Britain or the world, if we may credit Carlyle.<sup>4</sup> The work which now engaged him—last of its kind—was translation from German novelists; but in translation, as we have seen, Carlyle moved at the steady rate of ten pages a day, untroubled by the tremendous spasms of original composition.

He was likewise consolidating the spiritual gains of the Leith Walk victory; and this may be called the climax of the settling period. The full tale is told in the electric sentences of *Sartor*, but the *Reminiscences* add one touch supplied by the experience of age: that his faith, though it never left him, became far oftener "eclipsed" in later years. Orthodox theology Carlyle

<sup>1</sup> Love Letters, ii. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Early Letters T.C., ii. 316-17.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 315.

<sup>4</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 177-8.

<sup>5</sup> ii. 178-81.

never recovered, and he remained scornfully indifferent to dogma and ritual ; but the grand fact emerged that he, “ poor, obscure, without worldly hope, had become independent of the world.” Much of his conversion was owing to Goethe, who had first travelled “ the steep, rocky road ” ; and it is fitting that the good tidings should thus be signalled between the two loftiest beacons of intellectual Europe. No wonder that he describes this year as “ idyllic,” that health began to revisit him, and that he wrote to Miss Welsh : “ It is many a weary year since I have been so idle or so happy.”<sup>1</sup>

We must not omit, in estimating Carlyle's state of mind, the importance of the humbler influences of change of occupation—such as the Buller tutorship—change of scene, and enlarged acquaintanceship. These may not have helped directly to promote his genius, but their cumulative result was a soft reaction, on return to his native soil, in the mind of this Hercules who was restoring to Atlas the burden of the world. One influence, greater than all, has been purposely deferred—the growing intimacy between Carlyle and Miss Welsh—and we must now put back the clock some years and retravel the same ground with attention devoted to that alone.

<sup>1</sup> Love Letters, ii. 132-3.

## CHAPTER III

### CORRESPONDENCE WITH MISS WELSH— MARRIAGE

1821-6

**1821**  
**(25)** THE undertaking to supply Miss Welsh with books from Edinburgh was the foundation of the correspondence, and at the outset it proceeded on formal lines. The enchantment of the first meeting had survived in Carlyle ; but Miss Welsh, though aged only twenty, was used to admiration from earliest girlhood. Moreover, she possessed a touchstone of true affection, and a keen intellect which passed like a rapier through the outer husks of desire for change or excitement which many commonplace persons mistake for love. She was herself an eager student of literature, and ambitious of becoming a writer, and, in the isolation of her unintellectual Haddington circle, she was pleased to meet a man like Carlyle, versed in books. But she discouraged all ardent professions of friendship, hardly acquiesced in his wish to correspond on other than literary subjects, and alleged the hostility of her mother. "What proofs of regard have you given me, greater than I can command from any fool who comes in my way? . . . I will not write again . . . I am as nervous as if I were committing a murder. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

**1822**  
**(26)** On February 1st, 1822, Carlyle paid a second visit to Haddington, but was coldly received ; and it is probable that he then endured the pains described in *Sartor* which followed the loss of Blumine. This would have severed the thread of acquaintance, had not an accident, in the shape of a letter sent by Irving to Carlyle for Miss Welsh, re-started the correspondence. "Forget the roughness of my exterior, if you think me sound within," he writes.<sup>2</sup> He advises her, as to composition, "to express as well as amass

<sup>1</sup> Love Letters, i. 16.

<sup>2</sup> I. 30.



ideas ; as expression is the fruit of art, and languishes when unused.”<sup>1</sup> He even suggests subjects for poems or essays. In return, she fears that she has no gifts, and will never excel the hundreds of female novelists, that she can only be a “fine lady.”<sup>2</sup> By the summer she has become confidential enough to describe her manner of life, how she passes her day, etc.<sup>3</sup> She even laments to him the importunity of an old admirer, and here is a characteristic sentence : “He has got a house and some money lately, and he wants an *agreeable* young woman to look after the cooking of his victuals.”<sup>4</sup> Carlyle writes in answer : “Be sole and absolute mistress of its laws [the correspondence], only *do not renounce it !* . . . I would fain avoid heroics, I know your wicked laugh when I transgress in that particular.”<sup>5</sup>

The object of all others which engrossed Miss Welsh’s energies was the attainment of intellectual distinction ; but, unlike Carlyle, the desire for fame was with her a puissant motive. The wish for personal admiration was not foremost, but to move as an equal in the society of famous men and women. Carlyle combats this motive, while admitting intellectual eminence to be the first of mortal distinctions. He advises her to familiarise herself by study with all the great and noble things that men have done and conceived, but to contemplate failure with a calm mind. In her place he would die “with the spirit of a man that had endeavoured well—and only failed because Nature never meant that he should succeed.”<sup>6</sup> By November Miss Welsh began to admit the powerful effect of his acquaintance upon her : how when she first knew him she was wretched and weakened by bereavement, without a friend to understand her, having lost the pole-star of her life. “You spoke like him [her father]; your eloquence awoke in my soul the slumbering admirations and ambitions that *His* first kindled there.”<sup>7</sup> Carlyle replies in similar strain, dilating on his previous misery, and attributing the return of hope to her who had come as if from another sphere.<sup>8</sup> He further exhorts her to persevere, to set apart four hours daily for study, but never more than six.<sup>9</sup> “Labour, perseverance, moderate but constant industry, these are the means. . . . Avoid

<sup>1</sup> I. 37.<sup>4</sup> I. 61.<sup>7</sup> I. 97-8.<sup>2</sup> I. 43.<sup>5</sup> I. 71.<sup>8</sup> I. 103.<sup>3</sup> I. 53-5.<sup>6</sup> I. 87-8.<sup>9</sup> I. 106.

1822  
(26) excess on both sides . . . be steadfast, neither exhausting your ardour by over-labour nor wasting it in idleness, and be sure the day *will* come when you shall have your reward.”<sup>1</sup> In December Miss Welsh sounds the note of warning, perhaps for the last time : “ You cannot fall on a more effectual plan of making my kindness for you less, than talking so much about it. . . . Would you continue to enjoy the sunshine of my smiles, you must also abstain from flattery. . . .”<sup>2</sup> She laments the interruptions to which she is subject, and describes her devices for economising time—the refusal of invitations being among them. “ Thus I avoid both the misery of sitting for hours stuck up among imbeciles, and the odium which a professed distaste for their amusements would procure me.”<sup>3</sup> Carlyle as usual warns against over-pressure, and begs her, much as he had begged his brother John, not to dissociate herself from the living world. She had already felt a foretaste of melancholy : “ that deep and sad feeling of the nothingness of the world, which is apt to arise from too exclusive a pursuit of things high and spiritual, and too great an isolation from the everyday interests and enjoyments of life.” Let her mix even with the frivolous and shallow. “ It is the inflexible law of nature that *whoever withdraws from them is miserable.*”<sup>4</sup>

1823  
(27) It must be remembered that marriage had not entered even remotely into the conception either of Carlyle or Miss Welsh. Carlyle was in love, but he looked upon Miss Welsh as beyond his sphere ; while she, who had first affected his literary advice, now felt the tenderer attraction of the goodness of his heart. It was the irresistible progress towards each other of sympathetic spirits, with no thought of the economical or conventional barriers that an old civilisation has raised against nature. The note of warning sounded by Miss Welsh in December 1822 was the last of its kind, for about a month later she writes to suggest a visit to Haddington : “ My Mother wonders you do not think of coming out ! ! ! . . . Come when you like, Dear, you are sure of a hearty welcome.”<sup>5</sup> “ The kind hospitality of your Mother,” wrote Carlyle after the visit, “ the affectionate friendship of my own Jane are delightful to look back upon. To *you* I know

<sup>1</sup> I. 112.<sup>4</sup> I. 191-2.<sup>2</sup> I. 127-8.<sup>3</sup> I. 114-15.<sup>5</sup> I. 161-2.



not how I can be grateful enough for the pleasure which you have both the power and the will to diffuse over even the most desolate portions of my existence.”<sup>1</sup> Of her prospective visit to Edinburgh he writes : “ You need not fear that I will incommode you too much. You must if possible contrive to get me some employment that will keep me beside you some hours every day. . . . You have undertaken to manage the *commonwealth*.”<sup>2</sup> As opinions expressed to third persons are always of interest, we may quote a passage from a letter of Miss Welsh’s written at this time to her friend Eliza Stodart : “ Often at the end of the week my spirits and my industry begin to flag ; but then comes one of Mr. Carlyle’s brilliant letters, that inspires me with new resolution, and brightens all my hopes and prospects with the golden hues of his own imagination.”<sup>3</sup>

Miss Welsh expected to be in Edinburgh at the close of April, with her mother, who would leave her and proceed on a visit to relations in Dumfriesshire. A little Paradise was anticipated by the friends, a succession of daily meetings to read German : for such was the employment beside her at which Carlyle had hinted. “ When my mother goes to Dumfriesshire, I will see you as often as you please,” she wrote.<sup>4</sup> But this Paradise like many another was not to be ! Miss Welsh’s attendance on the visit was required by her mother ; and a minor distress was the small regard in which she held the relations they were bound for, who had forgotten all her father’s kindness to them. “ A thousand things are harassing my mind at the present moment : my Mother’s unkindness is not the least of it.”<sup>5</sup> Carlyle was keenly disappointed, but his answer was tactful and conciliatory : “ Cast away your anger, clear up your countenance, and accompany your Mother with a cheerful heart. . . . No human being can ever have your interest more truly at heart than she has.”<sup>6</sup> He was about to leave Edinburgh and join the Bullers at Dunkeld, and his farewell letter, dated May 12th, contains sentences of unusual warmth : “ God bless you, my dear Jane !—and keep all evil from you ! Shall we not meet again ? Forget me not, my Dearest ! Farewell and love me !”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. 165.<sup>2</sup> I. 170.<sup>3</sup> Early Letters J.W.C., p. 78.<sup>4</sup> Love Letters, i. 206.<sup>5</sup> I. 210-11.<sup>6</sup> I. 212-13.<sup>7</sup> I. 217.

1823  
(27)

From Kinnaird Carlyle writes of his joy in receiving her letters, how, when the postman brought him a letter, he nearly upset the parti-coloured gentleman (presumably the footman) in his haste to reach his apartment.<sup>1</sup> Again: "The glorious fact that you are my friend is dear to me as his creed is to a bigot."<sup>2</sup> As summer wears on, the word "love" appears more and more in this correspondence. "When your Letter comes," she writes, "when it repeats to me that *One* in the world loves me—will love me ever, ever—and tells me more boldly than Hope, that my future *may* yet be glorious and happy, there is no obstacle I do not feel prepared to meet and conquer. I owe you much! . . . In return I can only love you, and *that* I do, from the bottom of my heart."<sup>3</sup> "Is not all this a dream?" replies Carlyle. "Jane loves me! . . . I swear by the Immortal Powers that she shall yet be mine. . . ." But then he warns her that it is dangerous and useless to love him, as his fate is dreary and obscure and perilous.<sup>4</sup> Miss Welsh was not prepared for this change in their relations, and she blamed herself for the misunderstanding, for having disregarded all maxims of womanly prudence, and shackles of etiquette. "My Friend, I love you. . . . But were you my Brother I would love you the same; were I married to another I would love you the same. . . . Your Wife! Never, never! not though you were as rich as Cræsus, as honoured and renowned as you yet shall be. . . . Your friendship at this time is almost necessary to my existence. Yet I will resign it . . . if it can only be enjoyed at the risk of your future peace."<sup>5</sup> Carlyle replies that he is quite satisfied, that he has been purposely nourishing a pleasurable illusion, that his heart was too old to break in such a juncture. "Had it not been harder than the nether millstone it must have shivered into fragments very long ago."<sup>6</sup> The latter sentiment is characteristic of one whom, on the whole, the world had not treated badly. Starting life on the sound foundation of an excellent family, and attracting to himself generous and helpful friends, he had met with nothing worse than the rebuffs which fall to the share of all men: but he felt them with exaggerated poetic sensibility. More serious was the interior havoc wrought by the gales of social and religious doubt.

<sup>1</sup> I. 224.<sup>4</sup> I. 269-70.<sup>2</sup> I. 241.<sup>5</sup> I. 275-7.<sup>3</sup> I. 265.<sup>6</sup> I. 278-80.

Conventions were soon set aside, and the union of two souls proceeded apace. Carlyle had apparently hinted at cessation of correspondence, in the event of her marriage, to which she replies: "Do you think I will ever marry at such a cost? Where is the Lover on the face of this earth that could console me for the loss of my Friend?"<sup>1</sup> Late in 1823 they discussed the project of meeting in London next summer; as Carlyle was to accompany the Bullers and Miss Welsh might be the guest of Irving and his wife. "I think in my life I was never so glad before . . ." she wrote. "No duties to interfere with the duty of loving each other; no pitiful restraints to vex our happy intercourse. . . . You will go, if for no other reason, because your own Jane desires it."<sup>2</sup> This Paradise, like the other, was never destined to materialise; but in the meanwhile Miss Welsh fell ill, and found her illness of use in improving relations with her mother. She had lately lived without her mother's "good-will," and she assures Carlyle that to continue to do so would soon break her heart. On her side she will henceforth make the important concession of showing her mother Carlyle's letters.<sup>3</sup> As the correspondence proceeded with unabated ardour, despite this censorship, we may augur well of Mrs. Welsh's sympathetic understanding and emotional breadth. A few minor changes were recommended by Miss Welsh—such as diminished use of the word "darling"; but she assured Carlyle that her heart would supply it.<sup>4</sup>

Miss Welsh felt keenly the temporary estrangements with her mother, and they disturbed her course of study by destroying her tranquil frame of mind. "My mother continues to use me kindly," she reports; <sup>5</sup> but she laments the time wasted in receiving visitors, which she does from conciliatory motives. Only she contrives to elude morning callers by remaining in her dressing-gown till after one o'clock.<sup>6</sup> Carlyle had never ceased to condemn total absorption in study, and he writes: "One *should* have company . . . even if it were but with the drivellers of the earth. . . . Never estrange yourself from the beaten ways of men."<sup>7</sup> His outcries against her constant craving for fame do not grow less, while in literary matters his advice ever is

1823-4  
(27-8)1824  
(28)<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, January 1914.<sup>2</sup> I. 319-20.<sup>3</sup> I. 346.<sup>4</sup> I. 345.<sup>5</sup> *Love Letters*, i. 290-1.<sup>6</sup> I. 327.<sup>7</sup> I. 322.



1824 to proceed slowly. "If anything can be attained you attain it ;  
(28) if nothing, nature did not mean it." <sup>1</sup>

The year 1824 brought changes to Carlyle, and February saw him in Edinburgh, after leaving Kinnaird. A precious meeting of two hours with Miss Welsh was unfortunately marred by a lovers' quarrel, the blame for which she generously assumed. "Woe to me then," she wrote, "if I had had any other than the most constant and generous of mortal men to deal with. Blessings on your equanimity and magnanimity." And a further sentence reveals the progress his character was making in the inmost estimation of her soul : "I can never wonder enough at your kindness to me in all things ; it is really very affecting." <sup>2</sup> Later in the year, if she demurs to some fervid expressions used by Carlyle before leaving for London, it is for the future safety of the relation between them, which depends on his appearing as Friend not Lover.<sup>3</sup>

1824-5 Carlyle's changes of residence in 1824 are known to us :  
(28-9) London, Kew, Birmingham, Dover, Paris, etc. He did not see Miss Welsh, but the tide of love continued to rise in the correspondence. "If I did not love you better than anybody in the world, I would not have written to-night at all," is a sentence in one of her letters that by no means stands alone.<sup>4</sup> In November Carlyle returned to London, where he lived in solitary lodgings, and in January 1825 his mind seems to have become definitely preoccupied with the plan of marriage. He was convinced that he must recover health in the country, and that literature "will *not* constitute the sole nourishment of any true human spirit." Miss Welsh had written that she possessed land which needed improvement : why should he not work on that and combine literature with the healthy pursuit of farming ? "In one word, then : Will you go with me, will you be my own for ever ; and I embrace the project with my whole heart" ? He feels that he has ordinary faculties and diligence, and that "the essentials of even elegant comfort are not difficult to procure : it is only vanity that is insatiable in consuming." Twinges of humility he cannot escape when he contrasts her gay cousins and their brilliant equipments with his simple exterior. "But anon in

<sup>1</sup> I. 331-2.

<sup>2</sup> I. 374-5.

<sup>3</sup> I. 342.

<sup>4</sup> II. 41-2.

some moment of self-love, I say proudly there is a spirit in *me* 1824-5  
which is worthy of this maiden." 1 (28-9)

This letter drew forth a characteristic rejoinder. "I little 1825  
thought that my joke about your farming Craigenputtock was (29)  
to be made the basis of such a serious and extraordinary project."  
She continues: "I love you . . . but I am not *in love* with  
you. . . . It is a simple, honest, serene affection made up of  
admiration and sympathy, and better perhaps to found domestic  
enjoyment on than any other." She cares nothing for grandeur,  
but declines to marry into a lower station. Let him use his  
gifts towards attaining a settled income. "Think of some more  
promising plan than farming the most barren spot in the county  
of Dumfriesshire. . . . I could not spend a month at it with  
an angel." She concludes: "At all events I will marry no  
one else." 2

Carlyle, who examined a question from every side, as usual  
accepted the verdict with philosophic calm. In a subsequent  
letter, Miss Welsh speaks of the peculiar nature of her sentiments  
towards him. "I am not sure that they are proper sentiments  
for a Husband; they are proper for a Brother, or Father, etc. . . .  
At the same time, from the change which my sentiments towards  
you have already undergone during the period of our acquaint-  
ance, I have little doubt but that in time I shall be perfectly  
satisfied with them. . . . According as my mind enlarges and  
my heart improves, I become capable of comprehending the  
goodness and greatness which are in you, and my affection for  
you increases." 3

Shortly after the exchange of these letters Carlyle and Miss  
Welsh met again in Edinburgh, after their long separation, on  
the occasion of Carlyle's return from London. On his advice,  
she took a step in the disposal of her property that was to have  
far-reaching consequences. Dr. Welsh had left a small annuity  
to his wife, but Craigenputtock, with its rent of about £200 a  
year, to his daughter. Miss Welsh now made over this property  
to her mother for life, becoming as dependent upon her as, in  
the event of marriage, she would be upon her husband. 4 "I  
would give thousands a year instead of hundreds," she wrote,  
"to buy the conviction of being loved for myself alone." 5

1 II. 62-7. 2 II. 68-71. 3 II. 83-4. 4 II. 116-17. 5 II. 145-6.



1825  
(29)

Carlyle was now established at Hoddam Hill, rejoicing in returning health and peace of mind ; inclined to pity those who sweltered on fiery London pavements, while the circle of his own vision was filled by "a green unmanufactured carpet."<sup>1</sup> He anticipated a visit from Miss Welsh, to become acquainted with his family ; and the most beautiful of his letters speaks of the sights which they will witness together. "The chambers of the East are opened in every land, and the Sun comes forth to sow the Earth with Orient pearl ; Night, the ancient Mother, follows him with her diadem of stars ; and Arcturus and Orion call *me* into the infinitudes of space as they called the Druid Priest or the Shepherd of Chaldea."<sup>2</sup>

Before this visit took place there occurred the avowal to Carlyle by Miss Welsh of her former love for Irving. It was brought about by Mrs. Montagu, who had been placed in correspondence with Miss Welsh, and now persuaded her to take the step. She effectually did so, enclosing Mrs. Montagu's letter, and one by her own hand of self-reproach for the deception. "I loved him [Irving] . . . *once* passionately. . . . If I showed weakness in loving one whom I knew to be engaged to another, I made amends in persuading him to marry that other. . . ." "Never were you so dear as at this moment when I am in danger of losing your affection, or what is still more precious to me, your respect."<sup>3</sup> "You exaggerate this matter greatly," replied Carlyle ; "it is an evil, but it may be borne ; we must bear it *together*." In his usual large-minded manner he calls it "another chastisement to Vanity" ; and remarks that the concealments and reservations must have caused her much suffering. He concludes by speaking of his own case, how he is poor and sick and estranged from men. "I can never make you happy. Leave me then. Why should I destroy you ?"<sup>4</sup> "So we are *not* to part," he wrote a few days later. "O my Darling, how could we ever part ? Do we not love each other ? . . . Who knows, too, but we may still be happy ?"<sup>5</sup>

Miss Welsh's visit to Hoddam Hill took place from September 2nd to 19th, and was so successful that Carlyle compared the whole period to a Sabbath. His was the pleasing experience of daily

<sup>1</sup> II. 125.<sup>4</sup> II. 151-3.<sup>2</sup> II. 131-2.<sup>3</sup> II. 147-8.<sup>5</sup> II. 157-8.

companionship with his beloved, and of witnessing acquaintance forming between those whom he loved best on earth. "Her demeanour among us I could define as unsurpassable," he wrote. "From the first moment, all embarrassment . . . fled away without return. . . ." "On the whole she made clear acquaintance with us all ; saw, face to face, us and the rugged peasant element and way of life we had : and was *not* afraid of it ; but recognised, like her noble self, what of intrinsic worth it might have, what of real human dignity." Like all halcyon periods, the end was marked by sorrow and foreboding ; and all that Carlyle could say at parting was "Espérons." "To her," he adds, "the Haddington, etc., element had grown dreary and unfruitful ; no geniality of life possible there ; and, I doubt not, many petty frets and contradictions." <sup>1</sup>

1825  
(29)

And yet the marriage was a definite thing to be, though another year was to pass, and some further impediments were to be removed, before it might be effected. Among inner difficulties was variation in the humour of Mrs. Welsh, who now favoured the marriage, now objected on the ground of Carlyle's temper : forgetful of her own similar shortcomings. "Your irritability," wrote Miss Welsh, "is the natural consequence of continual suffering." <sup>2</sup> "Do not cease to love your Mother," replied Carlyle, with his usual wisdom. "Her anger at me, her aversion to me, shall never be remembered against her." <sup>3</sup>

A few months later Miss Welsh reports that she is basking in the April sunshine of her mother's smiles ; that an explanation had taken place in which she disclaimed the intention that they should ever part. Mrs. Welsh, with her impulsive generosity, offered to give up all, and live at Templand with her father ; but Miss Welsh was determined rather to endure poverty than encroach on her mother's independence. <sup>4</sup> The question of a home after marriage now became the most pressing one, and various plans were mooted on either side. Carlyle could not welcome the thought of living in the same house as his mother-in-law. "I shall never get any enjoyment of your company till you are all my own," he wrote. "How often have you seen me with pleasure in the presence of others ?" <sup>5</sup> Meanwhile he was

1826  
(30)<sup>1</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 6-8.<sup>2</sup> Love Letters, ii. 178.<sup>3</sup> II. 187-8.<sup>4</sup> II. 225-6.<sup>5</sup> II. 231.

1826 revolving alternate plans of living in the country or Edinburgh,  
(30) and incurred the charge of being whimsical and unstable, which, coming from his beloved, affected him with a sharp distress.<sup>1</sup> She even alluded, in a light vein, to her numerous suitors of by-gone days, and to Kitty Kirkpatrick, with her £50,000.<sup>2</sup> Carlyle replied with exemplary patience and humility, and renewed offers to set her free. "It would be a piece of news for me to learn that I am not the very *worst* you ever thought of."<sup>3</sup> Miss Welsh as usual frankly withdrew her words, confessing that she was provoked at the obstinacy of Fortune, and was venting on him her spleen of the moment.<sup>4</sup>

The important question of a home was still undecided, and suggestion and counter-suggestion succeeded each other. It was determined that the house at Haddington should be relinquished, as both were wearied of it; and Miss Welsh still clung to the idea of her mother and husband living under the same roof in Edinburgh. She put forward this in answer to his desire that she should live with his parents in Annandale. "She is looking forward to my marriage with a more tranquil mind, in the hope that our separation is to be in a great measure nominal; that by living wheresoever my Husband lives, she may at least have every moment of my society which he can spare. . . ." "She would be the most wretched of Mothers, the most desolate woman in the world. O, is it for *me* to make her so? me who am so unspeakably dear to her, in spite of all her caprice; who am her only, only child—and her a widow."<sup>5</sup> But Carlyle, though he loved her better for the love of her mother,<sup>6</sup> would not relax his principle. "*The man should bear rule in the house and not the woman.* . . . It is the nature of a man that if he be controlled by anything but his own reason, he feels himself degraded. . . . It is the nature of the woman . . . to command him by obeying him."<sup>7</sup>

Carlyle had quitted Hoddam Hill on May 26th, owing to differences with the landlord; and Mainhill having lapsed at the same time, his parents took the farm of Scotsbrig, which became their permanent home. It was their sound common sense which now defeated Carlyle's scheme of bringing his bride to live with them; for they foresaw the inevitable hardships to one so delicately

<sup>1</sup> II. 237.<sup>2</sup> II. 235.<sup>3</sup> II. 241.<sup>4</sup> II. 244-6.<sup>5</sup> II. 253-4.<sup>6</sup> II. 257.<sup>7</sup> II. 262-3.



nurtured of life on an upland farm through the varied seasons of the year.<sup>1</sup> But the problem was nearing solution, as Mrs. Welsh had undertaken to live with her aged father at Templand, Dumfriesshire.<sup>2</sup> Carlyle made a last abortive suggestion, that they should settle in the old house at Haddington, and failed to understand the reason of Miss Welsh's unwavering opposition.<sup>3</sup> Finally, a small house in Edinburgh, 21 Comely Bank, at a rent of £32, was selected, and furnished with the Haddington furniture.<sup>4</sup> The much-dreaded wedding ceremony came to pass at Templand on October 17th, and Carlyle and his bride left in a post-chaise for Edinburgh.

1826  
(30)

The trials of material life to the highly developed are inevitably productive of confusion. It is therefore comforting to return from such chroniclings of small beer to the progressive march of mutual esteem in these two souls. A letter from Miss Welsh to one of her aunts, on the eve of marriage, contains a worthy summary of her future husband's character: "He is among the cleverest men of his day; and not the cleverest only but the most enlightened! . . . A scholar, a poet, a philosopher, a wise and noble man, one who holds his patent of nobility from Almighty God. . . ." <sup>5</sup> A year before this, the transformation in her nature had taken place which Carlyle wished to see: the elimination of fame as a necessity to happiness. "Then I . . . laughed at the notion of anything being better than fame. But it is far otherwise with me now; for now I know that the deep blessedness of two souls which live in and for each other, *is* best of all that earth and heaven can bestow." <sup>6</sup> The manysidedness of Miss Welsh's character has blinded critics of fixed ideas or defective insight to its vast depth and its foundation of love; we may therefore attempt to display the root of a desire which has been miscalled vanity. Miss Welsh toiled at literature and hoped to write a worthy book, in order to conquer a place among the great and wise. She craved for their companionship and sympathy much as Charlotte Brontë did in the isolation of Haworth. Miss Welsh had social distractions, but among those who were mentally beneath her; and from the keen misery of this position she turned with longing to those shining figures that people the heaven of the

<sup>1</sup> II. 286.

<sup>4</sup> Froude, i. 332.

<sup>2</sup> II. 266.

<sup>5</sup> Love Letters ii. 329-30.

<sup>3</sup> II. 287-8.

<sup>6</sup> II. 197.

1826 poet's imagination. Madame de Staël and Byron were two of her  
(30) idols ; but the personality rather than the works of each was the ultimate object of her worship. Of Napoleon she wrote in 1822 : " I do not think any human being can love and admire him more than I do. When a mere child I could have sacrificed my life to free him from captivity, and win for my name one line in the history of his life." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. 80.



## CHAPTER IV

### “LIFE OF SCHILLER”—“WILHELM MEISTER”— “CRUTHERS AND JONSON”—“WOTTON REINFRED”

AT this milestone of Carlyle's life we must pause to let his early writings overtake us, to offer a hand even to the stragglers from 1821-2. In October 1821 and April 1822 appeared in the *New Edinburgh Review* articles from his pen on Joanna Baillie's *Metrical Legends*, and Goethe's *Faust*. As none of those at present under discussion have the true Carlylean stamp, we must be content to sift them for indications of the future; and it is therefore with no slight interest that we meet in the first with an idea like the following, which governed his choice of subject through life: "The most hardened novel-reader is now and then assailed by a chilling qualm, even at the very nodus of his story, on reflecting that all this mighty stir around him is but a fantasy; and though he strives to banish such suggestions, they return upon him when the intoxication is over, and never return without a sensible diminution of his pleasure." *Faust* is remarkable for some boldness in criticising one whom Carlyle alleges to have suffered from want of criticism; but it is certain that much of the fault-finding would have been withdrawn in later years, and we will therefore not reproduce it. Worthy of note is the comparison of Mephistopheles to a French *philosophe* of the last century, with his perfection of intellectual faculties and absence of moral.

The most important of these early writings is the *Life of Schiller*. Schiller was born of parents just removed from poverty, and renowned for a piety which permeated his whole nature. But to a happy childhood succeeded a wretched youth, owing to education in a free seminary founded by the Duke of Würtemberg, whose favours might not be declined. From the torments of

uncongenial medical studies he was rescued by the success of his first play, the *Robbers*, written at the age of nineteen—splendid though immature, and portraying characters studied in books rather than the world. The vehemence of its sentiments gave offence in high quarters, and Schiller's peace of mind was wrecked by threats of persecution, till he seized an opportunity of escape from Stuttgart. He was naked in the world's goods, but blessed with a "light from heaven," and conscious of power. He took up his residence at Mannheim, where he found friends and produced two more tragedies, *Fiesco* and *Kabale und Liebe*, displaying a notable advance in the creative faculty as distinguished from the purely intellectual. "Impressiveness and vigour," "dazzling magnificence," are some of the epithets Carlyle bestows upon the plays and their characters. Schiller was now free in circumstances, safe from ducal persecutions, and able to follow his ruling bias towards a life of literary labour.

At the outset of Part 2 Carlyle dwells on the misery of the Man of Letters, who is inevitably made of clay and spirit mixed ; of the failure of his renown to increase his dignity of character or peace of mind ; and there occurs his celebrated aphorism that, except the *Newgate Calendar*, the history of authors is the most sickening chapter in man's history. An edifying discourse follows on the pains of literature, and the frequent wreck of happiness or life among those gifted with the fine sensibility which accompanies genius. Schiller is compared to Milton, the moral king of authors, who made the perilous journey in calm.

Schiller resisted the lures of idleness and applied himself steadfastly to the business of his life. He helped to direct the Mannheim theatre ; and, in the Germany of his day, the theatre played a unique part in stimulating national morality. Despite his occupied life, he could not wholly escape the pains of introspection, and his *Philosophic Letters* portray the mental suffering of one who wills to believe but cannot. However, he continued to write plays ; changed his residence to Leipzig, and then to Dresden ; enjoyed the society of friends ; and looked forward to marriage. He now published *Carlos*, in which, thanks to diligence as much as increase of years, his powers attained maturity. It may have a certain air of stiffness, and absence of Shakespearian freedom ; it may excel in vastness and vigour at the expense

of wit and pathos ; but there is a majesty about Schiller's genius which transports as into a higher world of solemn beauty. He had now reached the supreme position as dramatist ; but time, which had brought laurels, had denied him a home. Casting about for a surer means of livelihood, he turned to history, for which his genius was fitted, as it excelled as much in intellect as imagination, in thought itself as much as thought's drapery. He ultimately accomplished a work on the Netherlands which secured for him a historical professorship at Jena, and enabled him to marry the long-loved Fräulein Lengefeld, with whom he found a haven of domestic comfort. The banks of the Elbe at Dresden saw him no more, where by day he wandered in delicious reveries ; taking pleasure in Nature's diverse moods but especially her tempestuous mood, in which he saw the expression of his own unrest. He left behind him some good friends with whom he had held many an unreserved conversation ; whereas the circles of fashion were not to his mind.

Settlement at Jena afforded easy access to Weimar, and it was now that Schiller's acquaintance with Goethe ripened into friendship. It had promised ill at the outset, for Schiller found Goethe too many-sided ; and Carlyle compares them to Milton and Shakespeare in a passage abounding in happy illustrations. In his lectures to students he showed no distinguished oratorical talent, though the matter was sound ; and his conception of history, as exemplified in his work on the Thirty Years War, was that of “philosophy teaching by experience.” He pleaded for the universal instead of the patriotic interest, for an estimate of remarkable occurrences as they affect mankind rather than one nation. But Carlyle, in recording this, characteristically warns against the danger of “Universal philanthropy,” etc., attenuating our sympathies ; and shows how Schiller's historical writings, though full of energy and vigorous beauty, suffer from over-refined abstractions. Schiller's intellectual activity was now to be suspended by illness, aggravated by anxiety of mind and the habit of nocturnal study. His vigorous spirit saved him from becoming a chronic valetudinarian, though it necessarily relaxed his connexion with the university. He turned his attention to Kant's philosophy, which was then convulsing Germany : only Goethe standing aloof and letting it “have its day.” Schiller



was naturally attracted by its promise to interpret the enigma of man's being ; but he scarcely penetrated beyond the *Æsthetics*. With his usual thoroughness he composed essays on his new subject, which, though distorted in form and difficult reading, reveal flashes of a new and immense hope for the human race. Five years of these studies enriched his understanding with new facts ; but he reverted to his true vocation of poetry. Like all others, he was roused by the French Revolution ; but hope gave place to horror at its crimes ; and a vein of conservatism began to show itself in him. His friendship with Goethe prospered, and he numbered many other celebrated men among his connections. In spite of assured fame and the progress of his malady, he ceased not to produce ; and unfortunately he could not wean himself from the habit of composing at night and repairing bodily weakness with stimulants.

Under these circumstances, in the famous little one-chambered garden house, built for the purpose, he brought forth *Wallenstein*, the *Maid of Orleans* and *Wilhelm Tell*. The first is a work of colossal gloom and splendour, and its conclusion is only equalled by *Macbeth* or *Othello*. Schiller's peculiar province was to excite lofty, earnest, strong emotion, and in that he remains unsurpassed. Of all his plays, perhaps the *Maid of Orleans* contains most of the quality of genius, being illuminated by an ethereal brightness. *Wilhelm Tell* celebrates the first appearance of freedom in the modern world. The peasants are delineated with extraordinary skill, being neither coarse nor insipid ; and the whole, including Tell's character, is informed with the grand simplicity of Nature. It was his last play, as he died in the following year (1805), from the effects of his malady, aged only forty-five. A poet to whom art, like virtue, was its own reward, who shunned popular applause and delighted in domestic and friendly intercourse, he may well be pronounced happy. The volume concludes with a summary of Schiller's character as man and poet ; and once more emphasises his single-minded devotion to art and lofty conception of the artist's aim.

From the above outline it will appear what an admirable introduction is Carlyle's book to the study of Schiller ; how complete is the information which he gives to the English reader of the facts of Schiller's life and the characteristics of his genius.



We rise from its perusal with the impression that he was a poet more like Milton than Shakespeare ; like Milton in his life, which he dedicated to art, but unlike him in domestic manners and in resisting temptation to become embroiled in politics. Like Milton also in his sublime poetical effects, and his lack of humour and sympathy with common things.

And yet the book remains one that the Schools might have produced, and the soul of Carlyle is still not there. He explains the plots of the plays and their characters, and leaves us in no doubt of the essential merit of each, as he does also of the historical and philosophical writings. His criticism is admirable, and was probably in advance of that of his own day, although at the present it could be matched in any first-class weekly review. But the tests which he applies to his judgments are from reading rather than experience. The facts have not reached his subconscious mind or been subdued to the grain of his individual life. When, for instance, he points out that the characters of the *Robbers* have been studied only in books, it is because a certain unsatisfactory impression, common to all, and against which a future reader should be warned, has yielded this explanation on analysis. And yet, now and then a comparison or chance metaphor gives intimations of what was slumbering below.

Of all Carlyle's translations from the German, by far the most important is *Wilhelm Meister* : not only for its intrinsic merit as a model of translation, excelling in ease and clearness, but because there for the first time we meet ideas that grow more and more familiar as we cross the ocean of his mind. First acquaintance with *Meister* had rather repelled Carlyle, and he described it to Miss Welsh<sup>1</sup> as “ bushels of dust and straws and feathers, with here and there a diamond of the purest water.” But a month later he confessed that he had not got as many ideas from any book for six years.<sup>2</sup> It cannot but interest to see some of them side by side.

“ Doubt of any kind can be removed by nothing but activity.”<sup>3</sup>  
 “ Decision and perseverance are . . . the noblest qualities of man.”<sup>4</sup> “ O how sweet is it to hear one's own opinion uttered by a strange tongue ! We are never properly ourselves until

<sup>1</sup> Love Letters, i. 340.

<sup>2</sup> *Meister*, i. 386.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 357.

<sup>4</sup> *I.* 445.

another thinks entirely as we do!"<sup>1</sup> "He in whom there is much to be developed will be later in acquiring true perceptions of himself and of the world."<sup>2</sup> "... good society, where it is reckoned unbecoming to dwell on any subject, or search it to the bottom."<sup>3</sup> "The most entire unbelief, unbelief in myself."<sup>4</sup> "Let a man be attempting or treating what he will, he is not, as an individual, sufficient for himself; and to an honest mind society remains the highest want."<sup>5</sup>

But all these are exceeded in importance by that passage in the *Wanderjahre* defining Goethe's religion. He enjoins reverence for what is above us, around us, and under us. "Man does not willingly submit himself to reverence; or rather he never so submits himself: it is a higher sense, which must be communicated to his nature; which only in some peculiarly favoured individuals unfolds itself spontaneously, who on this account too have of old been looked upon as saints and gods. . . . No religion that grounds itself on fear is regarded among us." He then proceeds to describe the three religions corresponding with the three reverences. First is the Ethnic, depending on reverence for what is above us, common to all nations, including the heathen. The second is the philosophical, or reverence for what is around us: it is a medium station, compelling the descent of the high and the ascent of the low. "The Third Religion, grounded on reverence for what is beneath us: this we name the Christian. . . ." It recognises as divine, humility, poverty, disgrace, suffering, death. "Out of these Three Reverences springs the highest reverence, reverence for oneself, and those again unfold themselves from this; so that man attains the highest elevation of which he is capable, that of being justified in reckoning himself the Best that God and Nature have produced."<sup>6</sup>

Before leaving *Meister* we must mention the translation of Mignon's song, in the third stanza of which, for the only time in his life, Carlyle attained true poetic melody:

Know'st thou the mountain-bridge that hangs on cloud?  
The mules in mist grope o'er the torrent loud,  
In caves lie coil'd the dragon's ancient brood,  
The crag leaps down and over it the flood:  
Know'st thou it, then? 'Tis there! 'tis there  
Our way runs; O my father, wilt thou go?

<sup>1</sup> II. 23. <sup>2</sup> II. 129. <sup>3</sup> II. 137. <sup>4</sup> II. 162. <sup>5</sup> II. 415. <sup>6</sup> II. 265-8.

The two volumes published under the title *German Romance*, begun in 1825 and completed the following year shortly before Carlyle's marriage, comprise translations from Musæus, La Motte Fouqué, Tieck, Richter, Hoffmann. To each is prefixed a brief biography and critical dissertation of the kind noticed in the *Life of Schiller*. The German writer, with his literary characteristics, is introduced as a stranger to the English reader. It is enough to say of these notices that they were commended by the great Goethe.<sup>1</sup>

When the correspondence between Carlyle and Miss Welsh was in its early stage, the project of writing a novel in partnership was discussed between them. It was never achieved, but Carlyle composed a story to which he gave the name of *Cruthers and Jonson*, and ultimately published in *Fraser's Magazine*, January 1831. Cruthers and Jonson are two boys who, from being chief antagonists at school, become close friends. Their paths diverge when school days are over; Cruthers advances in prosperity and Jonson declines. Disgusted at his lot, Jonson joins in the rebellion of 1745, but is taken prisoner at Carlisle and cast into a dungeon to await death. Mindful of his youthful vow, Cruthers seeks out his friend and shares with him the watches of the last awful night. But the rebellion has been so thoroughly quashed that the Court has nothing to fear; and the death sentences are commuted to banishment. Jonson sets out for Jamaica, where he attaches himself to a worthy employer, grows rich, and marries his employer's daughter. In the end he returns to his native land and spends the evening of his life beside Cruthers in peace and honour.

The first thing to strike the reader of this piece is a certain false note in the style; an assumption of ease that Carlyle was probably far from feeling, showing itself in an affected light humour, mock-heroic comparisons, forced paradoxes, degenerating into flippancy; though it must be admitted that these grow less as the tale proceeds. More serious is his failure to achieve unity of effect; for instance, the characters, the story and the descriptions are all interesting; but, like separate streams, they flow on parallel to each other and refuse to mix. It was a noble act of Cruthers to share the terrors of his friend's last night amid

<sup>1</sup> Goethe and Carlyle Correspondence, p. 23.



the horrible surroundings of a dungeon ; but the reader, mindful of the vow of eternal friendship sworn by the two lads at school, would expect active rather than passive help. Interest of another kind is excited by the first presence of ideas destined to germinate thickly in later writings : notably, the contrast which a man doomed to a violent death draws with the time when he lay in his cradle and was cared for by his mother. This thought inspired one of the most moving sentences in *Frederick*.<sup>1</sup>

It may appear strange to mention in the same breath George Eliot's tale of *Amos Barton*. Both are their authors' first essays in narrative, but the points of similarity are not merely external, for in both the structure is faulty and the joins imperfect. And yet the impression left by *Amos Barton* is exactly inverse to *Cruthers and Jonson*. In *Amos Barton* the defects are subdued by a freshness of treatment which creates interest even in mere statements of fact—in such an unimportant matter as the walk of Amos from the workhouse to his own home. We are infected by the joy of one using for the first time her powers of imagination, and conscious of a greater future. But the path which led George Eliot into boundless prairies proved but a blind alley to Carlyle.

We may anticipate events by including in the present survey *Wotton Reinfred*, the novel which Carlyle attempted at Comely Bank in the months following his marriage, and left unfinished. The essence of the book is autobiographical, and tells the story of its author's upbringing. We recognise the miseries of his school-life and the acute sensitiveness which divided him from his fellow-men, making him think himself under a curse, and yet with a secret conviction of his own superiority. Then come the visitations of doubt, the rescue from despair by love, and plunging into deeper misery by forced parting with the loved one. A journey undertaken with a friend to dissipate grief is the means of introducing him to a household of intellectuals who spend their hours in philosophical discussions on life, happiness, reason, understanding, etc. Chance again brings him across the path of his beloved Jane Montagu ; but the tale is cut short before her mystery and that of the rival lover are elucidated.

The task of criticising *Wotton Reinfred* is an ungracious one

<sup>1</sup> VI, xviii. 5.



and must necessarily consist of fault-finding, for it lies too deeply in the shadow of *Sartor*. It does not bear the same relation to *Sartor* that the *Professor* does to *Villette*, for the *Professor* has an independent interest, while all that is good in *Wotton Reinfred* has been absorbed by *Sartor*. Here and there, amid flatter surroundings, we meet a favourite passage, or even a sentence of *Sartor*, and the interest is rather psychological. Had the latter book never been written we might compose a fairer estimate, but, when all the strength has been withdrawn, the fabric that remains threatens to collapse in our hands. Some detached episodes are told with power and beauty, and there are notable descriptions of nature, despite Carlyle's scorn for “view-hunting,” of which the first mention is here. But no great interest is excited either by the story or the characters; and, as to the discussions, there has so far only been one master of the philosophical dialogue, and Carlyle proves himself no rival to Plato. The book must be ranked as a study for *Sartor*, the first hasty overflow of a rich mind, rather than an independent work. From the success or failure of its parts Carlyle learned to co-ordinate his powers, to heighten and recast his thoughts, to fix the subject previously in his mind and work outwards in ever-widening circles. He learned also the limitations of form, and that he must eschew the novel—for, unlike George Eliot, he could not bend his philosophical intellect to small things.

And although the stuff of *Wotton Reinfred* is Carlyle's own experience, immaturity still shows itself in a certain lack of sincerity, by which we mean no failure in veracity, but the absence of that intimate relation between thought and fact which was to distinguish Carlyle above all, and is here replaced, where experience wears thin, by reminiscence. Of this, let the following two sentences be examples: “A gleam of hell passed over the face of my angel, and the pageant was rolled together like a scroll, and thickest darkness fell over me, and I heard the laughter of a demon!” “At an early hour he awoke from vague gorgeous dreams, but depressed and heavy-laden, and with the feeling of a man who has much to do and suffer.”

Of Carlyle's few poems we need say nothing, having already quoted the solitary stanza which possesses the quality without which poetry has no right to be.

## CHAPTER V

### COMELY BANK AND CRAIGENPUTTOCK—VISIT TO LONDON

1826-32

1826  
(30) THE Carlyles spent eighteen months at Comely Bank, and the glimpses which the Letters afford us into their domestic affairs are uniformly pleasant. The basis of their life was an all-sufficing love, and they were most happy when alone ; but loneliness was by no means permitted them, for many friends resorted to their house, including Edinburgh notabilities such as Sir William Hamilton and Dr. Brewster. Now and then a member of the family would pay them a visit : even Carlyle's mother, who thus accomplished the longest journey of her life. Mrs. Carlyle proved an admirable housekeeper, requiring only £2 weekly to meet all expenses,<sup>1</sup> and Scotsbrig still afforded supplies of eggs, butter and oatmeal.

"The house is a perfect model of a house, furnished with every accommodation that heart could desire ; and for my wife I may say in my heart that she is far better than any other wife, and loves me with a devotedness which it is a mystery to me how I have ever deserved." <sup>2</sup> So wrote Carlyle to his mother, and soon after, Mrs. Carlyle wrote to her mother-in-law in the same strain : "We are really very happy ; when he falls upon some work we shall be still happier. Indeed, I should be very stupid or very thankless if I did not congratulate myself every hour of the day on the lot which it has pleased Providence to assign me : my Husband is so kind ! so, in all respects, after my own heart ! I was sick one day, and he nursed me as well as my own Mother could have done." <sup>3</sup> And the following extract gives an idea of the social side of their life : "We give no dinners and take

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 2.

<sup>3</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 17.

none. . . . Only to some three or four chosen people we give notice that on Wednesday nights we shall *always* be at home, and glad if they will call and talk for two hours with no other entertainment but a cordial welcome and a cup of innocent tea.”<sup>1</sup> 1826 (30)

Two of Carlyle’s contemporaries of the Edinburgh period have left judgments upon him that are worthy of consideration. The Rev. David Aitken describes his conversation as frank and picturesque, combined “with the most perfect command of temper in meeting objections, evading attempted slights or provocations to anger”; and he would change the subject “when opposition was becoming noisy or the opponent was evidently a fool.” Dr. John Gordon praises his methodic disposition of time, his dedication of the morning hours to work, and social accessibility in afternoon and evening. He was not gloomy or morose or bitter, but “the pleasantest and heartiest fellow in the world, and most excellent company.”<sup>2</sup>

To Mrs. Montagu, his London friend, Carlyle wrote that he could talk and enjoy himself with his new acquaintances, but the society round his own hearth pleased him most. “And many a still evening, when I stand in our little flower-garden (it is fully larger than two bed-quilts) and smoke my pipe in peace, and look at the reflection of the distant city lamps, and hear the faint murmurs of its tumult, I feel no little pleasure in the thought of “my own four walls and what they hold.”<sup>3</sup>

The letters written by Carlyle on the days when he suffered from biliousness have the old gloomy tinge, but at this epoch they were rare. He still laments lack of employment, but this was remedied by the undertaking of *Wotton Reinfred*. It was now that his correspondence with Goethe began to be regular. Goethe cordially acknowledged *Schiller* and *Meister*; he praised *German Romance*, which had been published; and despatched in return presents of his own poems and other dainty mementoes. “This little drawing-room may now be said to be full of you,” wrote Carlyle. “It is thus that good men raise for themselves a little sanctuary in houses and hearts that lie far away.”<sup>4</sup> In a memorable passage, Carlyle tells Goethe that through him he 1827 (31)

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Edinburgh Sketches and Memories*, by David Masson, 330-1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 329.

<sup>4</sup> Carlyle and Goethe Correspondence, 31-2.



1827 had attained to composure which he once would have thought  
(31) impossible, and had learned that so-called Happiness was neither to be attained nor desired.<sup>1</sup>

Of less spiritual but more material importance was Carlyle's acquaintance with Jeffrey, Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, and a mighty Law Lord. It was brought about by a letter of introduction given to Carlyle by Procter (Barry Cornwall), whom he had known in London through Mrs. Montagu. About eight or ten years previously there had been a passage between Carlyle and Jeffrey which, nearly fifty years later, Carlyle characteristically describes as "bitter";<sup>2</sup> though a nameless author of the present day would think little of it. He alludes to the offer of an article to the *Edinburgh Review*, which had drawn forth no sign of acknowledgment, nor even return of the manuscript. Jeffrey now received Carlyle with great kindness, invited him to his summer residence at Craigmook, visited at Comely Bank, and was much taken with Mrs. Carlyle. "I can fancy he had seldom made such a surprising and agreeable acquaintance as this new one," wrote Carlyle, on the subject of Jeffrey's liking for feminine society. "My little woman perfectly understood all that sort of thing, the methods and the rules of it; and could lead her clever little gentleman a very pretty minuet, as far as she saw good."<sup>3</sup> To Carlyle, Jeffrey's acquaintance seemed an "immense acquisition," linking him at last to the world and its "actualities," although, to his regret, Jeffrey appeared readier to convert him from his "German mysticism" than to speak of his own experiences.<sup>4</sup>

Carlyle's mind, like Aaron's rod, was apt to swallow smaller minds; and he found Jeffrey lacking in depth, though "infinitely witty, ingenious, sharp of fence."<sup>5</sup> But we must never forget that Jeffrey opened to him the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, and it was under such auspices that he conquered the first step on the Purgatorial Mount of his vast literary labours. His articles on German literature began to appear with regularity and to make him famous in a limited sense, though the word "mystic" was used of him in a half condemnatory fashion.

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle and Goethe Correspondence, 34-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 233.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 239.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 240.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 241.



He had now found the true outlet for his powers and also a means of livelihood, but he still doubted the sufficiency of literature. During these months he offered himself as candidate for two Professorships : Moral Philosophy at St. Andrew's, and English Literature at the new Gower Street University. In neither case was he successful ; in the latter, his "exotic predilections" <sup>1</sup> seem to have alarmed Brougham, who was master of the appointment. Among those who gave him testimonials were Goethe and Jeffrey, Goethe describing him as "a man who has fought his way through perplexities and now wishes to lighten the burden for others and save them like sufferings." <sup>2</sup> Carlyle accepted his defeat in the right spirit, and had previously written to his brother John, while the issue was in doubt, that he did not care sixpence either way, that a man's culture is but beginning "if he think that any outward influence, of person or thing, can either make him or mar him." <sup>3</sup>

Save for an occasional set-back from ill-health, Carlyle's life progressed with smoothness ; he worked at his articles for the *Edinburgh*, and for the *Foreign Review*, which had likewise begun to accept them ; and the payment which he received removed all immediate financial anxiety. His habit was to sit alone and write till one or two o'clock, while Mrs. Carlyle remained in the drawing-room ; then take his walk, returning to dinner at four, after which they would spend the evening together in reading "learned languages." <sup>4</sup> Soon after their marriage, John had stayed with them, but before long he departed for Munich to perfect his medical studies, at Carlyle's instigation, and with his help. <sup>5</sup> One of Carlyle's most delightful letters is to invite his little sister Jean—nicknamed "Craw" Jean on account of her thick black hair—but warning her that the reality of Edinburgh might fall below her expectations. "Nevertheless come and try it, my little Jean, and we will be as good to thee as we can." <sup>6</sup> "Craw" Jean did arrive, accompanied by her mother, who greatly enjoyed the sights of Edinburgh, though troubled by frequent fears that things at home would be progressing ill in her absence. <sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 88.    <sup>2</sup> Carlyle and Goethe Correspondence, 76-7.

<sup>3</sup> Letters T.C., i. 121.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 73.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., i. 100.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 112-113.

1827 (31) But the Edinburgh settlement was to be of short duration, and almost from its beginning a scheme was forming destined to make one of the central episodes in Carlyle's life. This was Craigenputtock, the lonely moorland residence, now the property of Mrs. Welsh by her daughter's act of renunciation. The prospect of complete recovery of health, which, judging by his experiences at Hoddam Hill, he thought might only be effected in the country, allured Carlyle; and his wife seemed to favour the scheme.<sup>1</sup> Craigenputtock consisted of a dwelling-house and a farm, and it was agreed that Alick should undertake the farming, Carlyle placing at his disposal the £100 produced by *German Literature* to buy stock.<sup>2</sup> In April Carlyle made his first visit of inspection, and here is a passage from his wife's letter: "If you come not back to poor Goody on Saturday, it will not be for want of will. . . . Oh! I think I shall never be satisfied with looking at you, and holding you in my arms, and covering you with kisses after this. . . . Nay, it is no joke; to be separated from you, even for one week, is *frightful*, as a foretaste of what it *might* be. . . ." <sup>3</sup> To which Carlyle replies: "Not unlike what the drop of water from Lazarus's finger might have been to Dives in the flame, was my dearest Goody's letter to her Husband yesterday afternoon." <sup>4</sup> Many things contributed to favour the transference, including the badness of the then tenants, who paid no rent. At Whitsuntide Alick took up his residence, but not for another year did Carlyle and his wife follow. Their last days at Edinburgh were saddened by the death of Mrs. Carlyle's aunt at Templand—thus leaving Mrs. Welsh the solitary companion of her aged father.

1828 (32) On May 26th the removal took place, with the one servant and the household effects. Craigenputtock is situated midway between Templand and Dumfries, a distance of fifteen to sixteen miles from each. The house stands high on the slope of a hill, its few acres of cultivated land making a bright patch in the surrounding sweep of rugged and desolate moor. Carlyle's object was to recover health and to work, and he was successful in both. "Perhaps these were our happiest days. . . . I found I could do fully *twice* as much work in a given time there, as with my

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 38-41.

<sup>2</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, August 1914.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 58.

<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., i. 54.

best effort was possible in London.”<sup>1</sup> “For living in and thinking in, I have never since found in the world a place so favourable.”<sup>2</sup> (32) Such was Carlyle’s portion in the new life, while Mrs. Carlyle set herself to conquer the “innumerable Practical Problems.” She baked bread of an excellent light quality, and attained “perfection of housekeeping.” Stories have been circulated that she milked cows and cleaned grates, but these are fictitious, or relate to some isolated experiment, having, as Carlyle says, “a spice of frolic or adventure in it.” “Strange,” he writes, “how she made the Desert blossom for herself and me there; what a fairy palace she had made of that wild moorland home of the poor man!”<sup>3</sup>

Two fragments of description will help to bring their life before us; the first occurs in a letter to Goethe: “A green oasis in that desert of heath and rock. . . . We have two swift horses, which, with the mountain air, are better than all physicians for sick nerves. . . .” “Six miles from *any* individual of the formally visiting class.”<sup>4</sup> To John, who was abroad, he wrote: “I sit here in my little library, and laugh at the howling tempests, for there are green curtains and a clear fire. . . . The Goodwife too is happy, and contented with me, and her solitude, which I believe is not to be equalled out of Sahara itself. You cannot figure the stillness of these moors in a November drizzle. . . . I write hard all day; then Jane and I . . . read a chapter of *Don Quixote* between dinner and tea. . . . After tea, I sometimes write again . . . and then generally go over to Alick and Mary; <sup>5</sup> smoke my last pipe with them. . . .”<sup>6</sup> To these, a sentence from a letter of Mrs. Carlyle to Miss Stodart forms a fitting postscript: “On the whole, I was never more contented in my life; one enjoys such freedom and quietude here.”<sup>7</sup>

The stream of Carlyle’s writings was steadily broadening, and his articles were now accepted by *Fraser’s Magazine*, beside the *Edinburgh* and *Foreign Reviews*. From *Fraser’s* he received only ten guineas a sheet, compared to sixteen from the two Reviews; and about three sheets formed an article; but during

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 83-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 244.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 81-2.

<sup>4</sup> Carlyle and Goethe Correspondence, 124-5.

<sup>5</sup> The sister living with Alick.

<sup>6</sup> Letters T.C., i. 175-6.

<sup>7</sup> Early Letters J.W.C., 136.



1828 the early Craigenputtock period he was not hard pressed. From  
(32) German subjects he had turned to those nearer home, the first being his article on Burns, the length of which Jeffrey tried vainly to reduce.

Between Jeffrey and Carlyle there still existed cordiality, and two notable epochs in the Craigenputtock life were Jeffrey's visits, including wife, child, lapdog and maid. Carlyle describes the first as a "fairy time";<sup>1</sup> and on the second Jeffrey delighted them both by a display of his talent for mimicking public speakers.<sup>2</sup> But German mysticism was a barrier, and, in argument, "there was at times an unembarrassment and frankness of hitting and repelling, which did not quite beseem our respective ages and positions."<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey was truly interested in Carlyle, but found him too "dreadfully in earnest,"<sup>4</sup> and also deprecated the eccentricities of his literary style. Carlyle admits that he failed in reverence to one who, though his senior, seemed to him lacking in depth. "I found that essentially he was always as if speaking to a jury; that the thing of which he could not convince fifteen clear-headed men, was to him a no-thing."<sup>5</sup> Jeffrey's interest extended to the offer to Carlyle of an annuity of £100, but Carlyle's principles of "Republican Equality" in economical matters forbade his acceptance.<sup>6</sup>

1828-9 On the conclusion of an article, the Carlyles would make  
(32-3) expeditions on horseback or by gig, either to Templand or Scotsbrig, though the distance of the latter was about thirty-six miles. "The pleasantest journeys I ever made, and the pleasantest visits. Stay perhaps three days; hardly ever more than four; then back to work and silence."<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Carlyle's adoption of the Scotsbrig circle was complete, and she corresponded with the young sisters. "My Father she particularly loved, and recognised all the grand rude worth and immense originality that lay in him."<sup>8</sup> Among the kindnesses interchanged was a present from "Craw" Jean to Mrs. Welsh. "I assure you," wrote Mrs. Carlyle, who had delivered it, "she seemed greatly delighted with your remembrance of her, and charged me to tell you so."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 249.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 241.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 252.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 252-3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 254.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 82-3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 83.

<sup>9</sup> *New Letters J.W.C.*, i. 32.



Some of Carlyle's best letters are to his brother John, who had returned from abroad and was waiting in London for a practice that did not present itself. He also took to writing magazine articles, and thought of adopting literature as a profession; but Carlyle warned him against the "despicable Author trade." "Practise gratis, practise *any* way rather than no way: it is your only chance and hope."<sup>1</sup> And the two following extracts must suffice from a correspondence that it would be pleasant to quote in full: "When your last five-pounds is broken in upon, turn your face hitherward, to a Brother's house and heart, who would rather see you true and wise than chancellor and emperor."<sup>2</sup> "Rough it out, toil it out; other way of making a *man* have I never seen."<sup>3</sup>

1830-1  
(34-5)

In June 1830 died Margaret Carlyle from consumption, the most remarkable of the sisters, at the age of twenty-seven. For years she had suffered, while the doctors, unable to help, attributed her partial recoveries to force of character alone.<sup>4</sup> "The clearest, practically wisest little child in her fourth or fifth years that I can remember to have seen," wrote Carlyle long after. "She had become my father's life-*cloak* . . . his do-all and necessary of life; he visibly sank on loss of her, and died within two years. To me it was the most poignant sorrow I had yet felt." He narrates how towards midnight of June 21-22 he and Alick were summoned by express from Dumfries, and rode thither to find all was over; and how, as they returned, next day about sunset, broken by fatigues and emotions, "I fairly, on getting into the *quite* solitary woods of Irongray, burst into loud weeping, lifted up my voice and wept, for perhaps ten or twenty minutes, never the like since. We all of us mourned long; and the memory of our good Margaret is still solemnly beautiful to all of us."<sup>5</sup>

Six months later, in writing to his sister Jean, Carlyle exhorts her to follow in Margaret's steps. "She had a fairness and loving tolerance in judging of her neighbours, which is perhaps of all virtues the rarest among women." And he concludes by enjoining *Humility*, the highest of all feelings, because it is *denial of self*.<sup>6</sup>

Letters T.C., i. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 294.

<sup>3</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 9-10.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 275.

<sup>5</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 193.

<sup>6</sup> Letters T.C., i. 255-6.

1830-1  
(34-5)

The years were turning badly for Carlyle, with all his domestic happiness, and the satisfaction—despite the pain with which he wrote—of producing worthy work. He had given a year to the composition of a history of German literature, but publishers hesitated to accept it, and he condensed it into a few Review articles, at great loss.<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey had gone to London as Lord Advocate, relinquishing the Editorship of the *Edinburgh* to Macvey Napier; and even the demand for articles was declining; while payment for those already printed was often so long deferred that once Carlyle's stock of ready cash amounted to seven shillings.<sup>2</sup> The farming had prospered ill, Alick, who was now married, having lost at the rate of £80 a year, and it was therefore decided that he should leave Craigenputtock and try his fortune elsewhere—so that life for Carlyle and his wife would become more solitary.<sup>3</sup>

The project of visiting Weimar to exchange living words with his spiritual father was tacitly abandoned, but the letters to Goethe of these years throw a unique light on Carlyle's higher mental evolution. At the close of 1829 he spoke of his solitude as a refuge from the literary men of Edinburgh, whose bent was wholly towards Utility.<sup>4</sup> Some months later he mentions "natural Supernaturalism," and how the Universe is daily growing more mysterious and august to him.<sup>5</sup> Then we hear of "Entsagen" (Renunciation), and that "God is good" is the beginning and end of all our philosophy.<sup>6</sup> But greatest of all is his debt to Goethe which he is never tired of acknowledging: "the all-precious knowledge and experience that Reverence is still possible, nay, Reverence for our fellow-man, as a true emblem of the Highest, even in these perturbed, chaotic times." Goethe, in answering, continued to send graceful presents—poems, medals, a necklace for Mrs. Carlyle: and, in return, Mrs. Carlyle despatched a Scottish bonnet for Ottilie, Goethe's daughter-in-law.<sup>7</sup>

In October 1830 we first hear of *Sartor*, as "a very singular piece," to quote its author's opinion.<sup>8</sup> It originally took the form of a long article, but the onrush of ideas required expansion into a volume. Carlyle, fretted by solitude, and reckoning to possess

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 225.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 278.    <sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 265, 286.

<sup>4</sup> Carlyle and Goethe Correspondence, 163-4.    <sup>5</sup> Ibid., 210-11.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 230.    <sup>7</sup> Ibid., 157 note.    <sup>8</sup> Letters T.C., i. 236-7.

£50 by the autumn of 1831, was planning a visit to London to secure a publisher. Another project existed in his mind, which he confided to John : it was to deliver lectures in London "in my own Annandale accent . . . on some section or aspect of this strange Life in this strange Era ; on which my soul, like Eliphaz the Temanite's, is getting fuller and fuller."<sup>1</sup> And yet the idea of abandoning literature, especially magazine work, "below street-sweeping as a trade,"<sup>2</sup> was becoming insistent in him. To Jeffrey, the ever good-natured and helpful, who wrote suggesting a clerkship in the Excise Office, he replied that he would accept such a post thankfully.<sup>3</sup>

1830-1  
(34-5)

It must always be borne in mind that the wretchedness in Carlyle's life proceeded from physical causes ; he was too deep-minded to be perturbed by the accidents of fortune. He lived in consciousness of the Eternities, and this thought is expressed more often in letters to his mother, whom he wished to soothe in religious matters, and convince that, though failing in orthodoxy, he thought as she did in essentials. "We are *all* in God's hand ; otherwise this world, which is but wholly a valley of the Shadow of Death, were too frightful. Why should we fear ? Let us *hope*."<sup>4</sup> On the eve of departure for London, he writes that he is in high humour, defiant of the Devil and the world. "Our misery is even as you say, when God hides Himself ; there *is* no other misery."<sup>5</sup>

1831  
(35)

In August Carlyle set out for London, travelling by sea to Liverpool, and thence by coach. He lodged in the neighbourhood of Tavistock Square, with his brother John, at the moderate cost of two guineas a week for both.<sup>6</sup> He soon perceived that he would be detained longer than was thought, and began to suggest that his wife should join him ; but we must first see how she bore his absence. On August 6th she wrote : "New trials awaited me when I got out of bed and found some article of your dress in all parts of the room : but the worst of all was when I sat down to breakfast, and noticed the *one* cup and *one* everything, and thought how long *this* must last. . . ." Some days later : "I should be waeest for myself, if it were not that I have the best man living for my Husband. Jeffrey writes me that you

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 268-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 283.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, ii. 153-5.

<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., i. 234-5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 302-3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., i. 311.



1831 (35) 'look very smart and dandyish ; have got your hair cut, and a new suit, and are applying various cosmetics to your complexion.' Moreover, that he 'will *do what he can for the Book*, but fears its extravagance and what will be called its affectation.' " And again, towards the close of August : "I know not what Betty was thinking of yesterday, but she made up my bed with the whole four pillows, as if it had been for two. I was so wae to see it, and could not have the heart to throw out the two I did not need, and got little or no sleep in consequence." When the project was mooted of her joining him in London, she wrote : "Say but this : That you do not for the purpose of procuring *me a pleasure* make any sacrifice of your own wishes or convictions, and without an instant's hesitation I am decided to come. . . ." "All these discouragements," she continued—for *Sartor* was faring ill—"do but increase my confidence . . . for *Dreck* (*Sartor*) is imperishable, indestructible as the substance of the four elements. . . ." <sup>1</sup>

Carlyle was equally homesick in London ; the delay of a letter caused him acute anxiety ; and more than once he performed the miserable task of watching the postman. "O my own Dearest Jeannie, my own Wife, God bless thee, and keep thee for me ! I never knew how I loved thee till now." <sup>2</sup> And again : "Fear nothing, Love ; trust in me and in God : though forsaken of all, have we not in the worst case *one another* ?" <sup>3</sup> *Sartor*, rejected by Longman, was provisionally accepted by Murray on Jeffrey's recommendation, but with no payment for the author. "*Be it so !*" wrote Carlyle to his mother. "The Giver of all Good has enabled me to write the thing ; and also to do *without* any pay for it." <sup>4</sup> Murray's reader furnished an unfavourable report, and Carlyle patiently received back his manuscript and locked it away ; for the agitation of the Reform Bill had gripped the country, and the book trade was at a standstill. <sup>5</sup> The demand for his articles, however, seems again to have risen, and, much to his relief, he was able to repay the £100 which circumstances had compelled him to borrow from Jeffrey. <sup>6</sup> Another stroke of good fortune was John's appointment as Travelling Physician to

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, August 1914.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 316-17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 357.

<sup>2</sup> Letters T.C., i. 311-12.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 346.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 314.



Lady Clare, through Jeffrey's agency, at a salary of three hundred guineas a year.<sup>1</sup> He was also pleased to find that his writings were better known in London than he expected, and many of the younger men looked up to him as a leader.<sup>2</sup> He made acquaintance with J. S. Mill, whom he described as "a fine clear enthusiast, who will one day come to something. Yet to nothing Poetical, I think : his fancy is not rich ; furthermore he cannot *laugh* with any compass."<sup>3</sup>

1831  
(35)

After an exchange of many anxious letters, Mrs. Carlyle set out for London, where she arrived October 1st. "Take every care of thyself, Wifekin : there is more than thy own that thou carriest with thee," were Carlyle's last words to her, voicing their great hope of that which never was to be.<sup>4</sup> They were now lodged comfortably at 4 Ampton Street, Gray's Inn Road ; and, as usual, Mrs. Carlyle established something like a *salon*. Leigh Hunt and Charles Lamb were among their frequenters ; though the latter's genius was condemned by Carlyle as "a small and *Cockney* thing . . . with gin, etc., superadded,"<sup>5</sup> and with a resemblance to "diluted insanity."<sup>6</sup> Jeffrey made regular visits, though prone to lose himself between his fashionable home in Jermyn Street and their northern outpost.<sup>7</sup> Mill and Charles Buller made what Mrs. Carlyle called "pleasant forenoon calls of seven hours and a half."<sup>8</sup> Acquaintance was renewed with Mrs. Montagu, and with Badams, the friend whom Carlyle always remembered with kindness, now sadly eclipsed, "ill-married," plunged in speculations, and thence driven to drink and early death.<sup>9</sup> Irving was often seen, Carlyle's first and closest friend, now forsaken by the great world and the intellectuals and surrounded by fanatics. His themes were Miracles, Gift of the Holy Ghost, and Speaking with Tongues—though he suppressed them in the presence of Carlyle.<sup>10</sup> "He and I have never fastened upon that topic yet," wrote Carlyle, "but by and by he shall hear my whole mind on it. . . ." <sup>11</sup> "I told him with great earnestness," he continues, when the subject of the "Tongues" had been broached between them, "my deep-seated, unhesitating conviction

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., i. 310.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 322, 348.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 336.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 344. Love Letters, i. 318-19 *note*.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 34-5.

<sup>6</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 94.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ii. 262-3.

<sup>8</sup> Froude, ii. 218.

<sup>9</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 93.

<sup>10</sup> Letters T.C., i. 351-2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., i. 343.

1831 (35) that it was *no* special work of the Holy Spirit, or of any spirit, save of that black, frightful, unclean one that dwells in Bedlam.”<sup>1</sup> There were rumours that Irving would be deprived of his Chapel, and to this loss Carlyle feared would be added that of his reason.

To his father, knowing that such topics interested him,<sup>2</sup> he wrote his impressions of London. “It is and continues a wild wondrous chaotic den of discord, this London. I am often *wae* and awestruck at once to wander along its crowded streets, and see and hear the roaring torrent of men and animals and carriages and waggons, all rushing they know not whence, they know not whither. Nevertheless there *is* a deep divine meaning in it, and God is in the midst of it, had we but eyes to see.”<sup>3</sup>

Though he complained of interruptions, Carlyle wrote two of his most striking essays at this period, *Characteristics* and *Boswell’s Johnson*. In the first, undoubtedly one of his masterpieces, he expressed his anxiety at the condition of the people, “strahtened by want,” and ready, as it seemed to him, for revolution. “And now while the dark Winter is setting in, a pestilential malady arrived on our coasts, to carry off doubtless many into the land of Silence!”<sup>4</sup> He here alludes to an outbreak of cholera in the North; and the aim of his essay was to show that “Society (in my view) is utterly condemned to destruction, and even now beginning its long travail-throes of Newbirth.”<sup>5</sup> The ardour of a social reformer was upon him, for, as he had previously written in a letter, many deplored the prevalence of dishonesty, quackery and stupidity, but only he seemed to think it could be resisted.<sup>6</sup>

1831-2 (35-6) Carlyle’s letters to his mother and brothers always contain interesting revelations of character. It seemed to him that he had work to do in the world; that, humbly as he estimated his powers, he might be of use to the “benighted multitude.”<sup>7</sup> But his constant prayer was, “Show me my duty, and enable me to do it. If my Duty be to endure a life of Poverty . . . this also will not terrify me.”<sup>8</sup> “The day is at hand,” he wrote to John at the beginning of 1832, “when it will be asked us, not, What pleasure and prog hadst thou in that world? but, What work didst thou accomplish there?”<sup>9</sup> By the side of these we must

<sup>1</sup> Froude, ii. 218.

<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., i. 360.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 354.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 387.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., i. 348.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, ii. 241.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., i. 319.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., i. 392.

place an extract from his Journal of the year before : " Doubtful it is in the highest degree whether ever I shall make men hear my voice to any purpose or not. Certain only that I shall be a *failure* if I do not, and unhappy." <sup>1</sup>

1831-2  
(35-6)

We must always bear in mind Goethe's saying that Carlyle had the power to develop in himself the essentials of what is good and beautiful. The isolation of his course among men may be measured by the failure to work a change in him of this his successful appearance in London. He continued to decry the literary world, and wrote to John that he had scarcely met a single man who had given him a new idea, and had been called to talk far oftener than listen.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, he tells us that, at a dinner at the house of Drummond the banker, his admirer, where the guests were "Toryish" and "ultra-religious," he emitted "floods of Teufelsdröckhist Radicalism, which seemed to fill them with *wonder* . . . but was not ill-received."<sup>3</sup> His affections were bestowed upon his wife and his family; his work had the sacredness of religion; yet he had a care for mankind in the gross, though in no narrow personal sense. This visit to London brought a rebirth of his social doubts, and the political tinge in his writings, destined to overpower the literary, is first seen upon his page.

And yet the foundations of his own life were settling in accordance with his wishes. He had found his trade, which was to live or die by writing truth, and from this assured centre he surveyed the world with friendliness, conscious of its growing respect, and never striving for mere Promotion.<sup>4</sup> To his mother he wrote that he was not without encouragement for holding on his way. "In all open minds I find ready access; and sometimes even grateful invitation: all people, good and bad, think of me not very much otherwise than I want them to think."<sup>5</sup>

1832  
(36)

In this same letter occur the two following passages: "I esteem it . . . the greatest of all earthly blessings that I was born of parents who were *religious*. . . ." "Tell my Father that I love and honour him."<sup>6</sup> They were written on January 22nd, the

<sup>1</sup> Froude, ii. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, ii. 177.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Letters T.C., i. 392-3.

<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ii. 8, 11.



1832  
(36) very day of his father's death, and would seem to exempt him from any charge of filial shortcoming ; yet there is a suspicion of self-reproach in some words which he devoted to this event in the *Reminiscences*,<sup>1</sup> among the most memorable which he ever used : " In vain did our brave old Father, sinking in the black gulfs of eternity, seek even to convince us that he was sinking. Alone, left alone, with only a tremulous and fitful, though eternal star of hope, *he* had to front that adventure for himself—with an awe-struck imagination of it, such as few or none of men now know." To his mother he wrote : " It is God that has done it, and our part is reverent submission to His Will. . . ." " Our Father is not parted from *us*, but only withdrawn from our bodily eyes : the Dead and the Living . . . are alike with God. . . ." " For myself, I have long continually meditated on Death, till, by God's grace, it has grown transparent for me, and holy and great rather than terrific. . . ." " . . . his Task was well and manfully performed . . . no eye will ever see a hollow deceitful work that *he* did. . . ." " Oh, what were it now to us that he had been a king ; now when the question is not : What *wages* hadst thou for thy work ? But : *How* was thy work done ? . . ." " Could I write my Books, as he built his Houses. . . ." " . . . I have given orders that *no one* is to be admitted here till after the funeral on Friday. . . ." " I shall think every night of the Candle burning in that sheeted room, where our dear Sister also lately lay." <sup>2</sup> It was at this solemn time that Carlyle wrote the account of his father in the *Reminiscences*.

As winter drew to its close, Carlyle began to turn his thoughts towards Craigenputtock. The essay on Johnson occupied his latter weeks ; but from these high themes we must descend to the details of common life, if we wish the picture to be complete ; for to one so sensitively organised as Carlyle, the interruptions to the spirit by the hardships of material existence brought no common pain. He complained of fog and damp, of ill lodging in houses thin as shells, of blue milk and muddy water, of rotten eggs and watery potatoes.<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Carlyle's health had suffered, away from the life-giving air of the Dunscore moors,

<sup>1</sup> II. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 11-19.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 7-8.

but, like her husband, she found compensation in "good talk."<sup>1</sup> 1832  
(36)

The return journey was effected towards the end of March and a short visit paid to Templand, where news reached Carlyle of another sorrow, though a remote one, in the death of Goethe.

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 24-5.

## CHAPTER VI

### EARLY ESSAYS : ANALYSIS

**RICHTER.**—The German novelist Richter is a Philosopher and moral Poet. An intellectual Colossus, he is not easy of approach, and readers are warned to mistrust their first impressions, owing to the imbroglio, the luxuriant Indian jungle, of his style. Only close study reveals the order in his mind, and his ruling quality, which is humour : he loves all living with the heart of a brother. The essence of humour is sensibility, and by humour sensibility is rescued from sentimentalism. True humour is inverse sublimity, exalting into our affections what is below us. Sterne is the first of English humorists, above even Shakespeare, as Cervantes is above Sterne, the first of all. Richter excels all German writers in humour, and his style is forgiven because it bodies forth his true spirit ; it fulfils the law of Culture, which is that each should become what he was created capable of being. His works lack art because they were not previously *fused* in his mind ; but neither were they *riveted* : to say the least, they were *welded*. His philosophy is reverence for the spirit of all goodness. His fame will endure because of that excellence of the inmost nature which alone confers immortality.

**GERMAN LITERATURE.**—German Literature, despised in France, has remained unknown in England through mere incuriosity, despite its excellence of the last fifty years. A nation without a literature famed abroad is unknown, as travellers are impotent to describe the truth ; and from early seventeenth to mid eighteenth century, there was no German literature to speak of. The country was composed of petty states, with no national feeling ; and the French called the people barbarous, and the land one of Cimmerian darkness. Madame de Staël's book has removed this prejudice ; and good must result from extension of knowledge and commerce of ideas. Accusations of bad taste and coarseness have been made against German literature, including even Goethe ; and the condition of German authors is said to be mean. Taste, it must be remembered, comes from within ; it means a finely gifted mind purified into harmony with itself. The charms



of Nature, the majesty of Man, the infinite loveliness of Truth and Virtue, are not hidden from the eye of the poor.

In Germany authors are more esteemed than elsewhere, and Germans are no more deficient in taste than other nations. In criticism they are ahead of others, as they deal not with the garment of poetry nor its body—the laws of diction, or the nature of the poet—but the essence and peculiar life of the poetry itself : how Shakespeare's plays came to be truer than reality. And they do this on scientific principles, though their science may not be complete, and their æsthetic theories vary. They cultivate all literatures, to understand and share in their beauty, and assign due honour to each. Poetic beauty, they say, is underived, born in the inmost Spirit of Man. There is no question of sensation or utility, but Art is Art, and the highest in man. Fichte even says that the poet is the interpreter of the divine idea which pervades the universe and is hidden from the ordinary man. German poets are now the highest, and alone display something of the ethereal glory of the great art of old times. Goethe's poetry is not reminiscence but reality ; he has raised the barren nineteenth century into poetry, and laid open its secret significance.

Mysticism is a further charge brought against German literature, and "mystical" is usually synonymous with what is not understood. Investigations may extend beyond the visible to the invisible world, and if you deny the latter, including God and the soul, we need say nothing more. But it is fair to admit that the charge of mysticism is not baseless, as the vision will not abide with the seer, but darts to and fro in wild gleams of splendour, and is communicated with difficulty. The charge is unfairly extended to German Philosophy, which is distinct and clear, and has an enormously elevating effect on morals and theology. In its search for a principle it rejects that of experience formulated by Locke—which would concede that the sun goes round the earth—and substitutes intuition, in the deepest and purest nature of Man. It distinguishes between Reason and Understanding ; the first discerns Truth, the second only *relations*. The Understanding would disprove religion and reduce virtue to utility ; but the Kantists say that Virtue is Virtue and not Prudence.

WERNER.—Much of the essay on Werner, the German dramatist, is occupied with an account of his life and writings, assisted with long quotations. His mind was deep but not of sufficient strength, his early plays were crude and barbaric, and he desired to be prophet as well as poet. Self-forgetfulness, common to all transcendentalists, was the foundation of his morality ; not happiness, which means enjoyment. He himself departed widely from these principles, lived a dissolute life, and was three times divorced. His mother was the only human

being whom he treated well, watching by her sick-bed, and continuing to love and revere her memory in after-life. The propagation of religion remained his master principle ; he ultimately became a convert to Rome, and was ordained Priest. He spent the remaining years of his life in diligent preaching, dying in 1823. Carlyle defends him from insincerity in rejecting Protestantism and accepting the harder dogmas of Popery ; for, to the German, creeds are ever-changing vestures that clothe the immortal body of religion. As a poet, he had gazed into the deepest regions, but, through weakness of will, he had not learned to dwell there. In character he was selfish and maladroit, yet with a reserve of nobleness, a true love for mankind. In fine, he was a dissolute man, which means literally "loosened asunder," and no longer capable of effort.

GOETHE'S "HELENA."—The author's style is first defended from the charge of obscurity. The grand point is that he has a meaning, and the reader loves the piece more for his labour in deciphering it. He thus actively co-operates with the poet, and almost assists in the process of creation. Passive pleasure cannot continue, and in literature, as in life, what we do rather than what we gain profits us.

*Helena* is a continuation of *Faust*, but, happily for our present purpose, the connexion is loose ; for *Faust*, though much talked of, is little known in England, and inadequately translated owing to the perfection of its art. The story of *Faust* was one of the most remarkable productions of the Middle Ages ; and in times like the present, when Magic is no more, it is hard to imagine how it must have harrowed up the souls of a rude and earnest people. But the mysterious relation which it emblemized still continues, and the difficulty is to body it forth in modern symbols. Goethe's success is due in the first place to his ironical treatment of the supernatural world. His Devil is a cultivated gentleman, who is versed in science and sneers at witchcraft, a scoffer and denier, the Devil not of Superstition but Knowledge, who can neither love nor hate, and tempts Faust by way of experiment.

Faust represents the spirit of Enquiry and Endeavour ; he aims at happiness, is disappointed, and comes to reckon all a delusion. He is stung to fury, and feels himself isolated among men, which is the beginning of madness. He cannot say, "Others do and suffer the like," which is the safeguard of ordinary men. Invest him with supernatural powers, and he would repeat his error on a larger scale. For he wishes to be all-wise and all-powerful ; he struggles towards Infinitude, but is a stranger to the law of Self-denial, by which alone Infinitude may be attained. He unites with the Fiend ; and thus the first part of *Faust* states a high problem without as yet offering a solution.



In the second part, Faust requires Mephistopheles to obliterate three thousand years and give him the love of the Greek Helena. This is done, and Helena and her maidens believe themselves to be denizens of the living world. The story is then told, with the aid of lengthy quotations, but an air of phantasmagoria pervades it ; the reader feels himself on an unfamiliar element, in sharp contrast to the solid land of the first part. At first Helena and the Chorus were Shades, but now they change into Ideas, Metaphors, poetic Thoughts. Helena may be interpreted allegorically as Grecian Art driven to the North by stress of war ; and Faust is to find refuge from worldly life in the lofty regions of Art.

GOETHE.—Of Goethe much ignorance has prevailed in England. He leapt into fame at an early age, and subsequently rose steadily to intellectual kingship, which he held for fifty years : an unexampled supremacy in modern days, when men are connected by more earthly ties, and “inspiration” is little more than a poetic figure. Despite his abstruse sense and cunning style, there is for him, within his own country, an unparalleled universality of admiration, and his readers range from king to peasant, from philosopher to dilettante. The Germans are restlessly struggling forward, and in his mind we see the progress of the nation. Fame is no sure test of merit, and it is the critic’s duty to ascertain the essential grounds for it. We find in Goethe an artist in the ancient meaning of the term : touches of the old divine spirit supposed to be lost. He is a universal *Man*, and his poetry the voice of the whole harmonious manhood. Like Wordsworth, he has cultivated the art of living and writing ; in an unbelieving and utilitarian age he has restored glimpses of the unseen, so that the Actual and Ideal may still meet, and Knowledge be wedded to Religion. He has struggled toughly, he has sorrowed under the spiritual perplexities of his time, but he has mastered them and become a Believer, not by stifling his enquiries but by prosecuting them. He has come to unite the belief of a Saint with the clearness of a Sceptic.

The state of literature, in Germany and elsewhere, before Goethe took the world captive with *Werter*, which was then a new thing—heartily sick as we all now are of Sentimentality—was one of polish and languor, and absence of the creative spirit. In England, for instance, our typical writers were Gray and Johnson, both of whom missed the finer portion of our nature. In philosophy, the religious Locke had unwittingly inaugurated the reign of materialism. Then came Voltaire to prove that Religion was a superfluity and must be exterminated. He fired the jungle of superstition, but a black, chill, ashy swamp remained in its stead. Such a state existed when Goethe first appeared ; man’s finer nature was withered ; life was enjoyable only to



those whom the five senses or vanity sufficed ; but not to persons afflicted with the malady of thought. The poet, most sensitive of men, feels keenest all that is occupying the general mind ; and with his creative gift he bodies it forth. *Werter* was the cry of the universal dim rooted pain which afflicted all thoughtful men. In *Wilhelm Meister*, published twenty years later, the problem is solved and anarchy becomes peace : not by surrender to Necessity compact with Delusion, but with increase of ardour and aspirations.

How has this temper been attained which has built the Ideal on the Actual, and divined the "open secret" of the Universe ? It would be hard to answer this fully, but one noteworthy feature is his disinterested, almost religious, cultivation of Art as the highest good. In a remarkable passage of *Meister*, he sets forth the dignity of the poet and his independence of external circumstances ; but it is still more remarkable, and entitles him to rank as Moralist and Philosopher, that he carried out his theory in practice, and, even in our trivial, jeering days, lived the life he glorifies. *Meister* has been followed by the *Wanderjahre*, one of the most perfect pieces of composition produced by Goethe. In the beauty of its allegory it may be compared to the *Faerie Queene*. But we are here concerned with Goethe the man, and it is therefore the tenth and eleventh chapters that we recommend as worthy of the deepest study. They set forth the present ground of Religious Belief and include the three reverences. His maxims have originated in the depth of his mind and are addressed to the depth of ours ; they take root in our minds and ramify. The *Wanderjahre* was the book of Goethe's old age, and marks the change in one who has attained spiritual manhood. Many fight the battle but few persist ; the majority compromise with the enemy ; and of our own poets only Byron died fighting. Goethe alone attained full victory, and hence the overwhelming importance of his spiritual history.

In analysing his mind, two things are to be remembered : its emblematic nature, tending to transform opinion and feeling into shape and life ; and the universality of his style, its freedom from mannerism. Like Homer or Shakespeare he reveals no individual peculiarities, but is a voice from the Land of Melody. We have dwelt on Goethe's good qualities rather than his faults, believing that it is the best method of judging a man. Besides, before blaming a writer for faults, we should first make plain to ourselves what his aim was and how far he has fulfilled it ; and also how far his aim accorded, not with our individual crotchets, but the universal principles of poetic beauty. Nor should we pronounce on the faults of a poem till we have seen its last and highest beauty ; its beauty as a Whole, not by pieces. Has it

grown up naturally out of the soil of Thought, or been cobbled together like a pasteboard tree? Remember also that the poetry which Masters write is no superficial thing to be seen through at a glance, but aims at incorporating the everlasting Reason of man in forms visible to his Sense.

BURNS.—Carlyle loved Burns as his national poet. He devotes a few paragraphs to the biographers of Burns, and censures them for their airs of patronage, but accords praise to Lockhart. Even so, the prime questions are not answered: what and how produced was his effect on society; what and how produced was the effect of society on him? Let it not be objected to Burns that he did little; for he had to construct his own tools: unlike the educated man who works with a strength borrowed from all past ages. Born in a prosaic age to toil and penury, in spite of all obstructions, his lynx eye discerned the true relations of the world and human life. Time has pronounced his work imperishable, but no wonder it is imperfect. We are more concerned with the man than the poet, for his life was a tragedy deeper than Napoleon's. Conquerors could well be dispensed with, but a true poet is the most precious gift bestowed upon a generation. See his love of nature, his delight even in scenes of desolation; observe him among his fellow-creatures: his trustful boundless love, and exaggeration of the object loved. His works are occasional, unpremeditated, cannot be tried by the strict rules of Art; yet for fifty years their popularity has increased; they are read literally in palace and hut. The cause of this is his absolute sincerity; he tells his own experience; and he speaks because his heart is too full to be silent. The principle appears easy, but the appliance is hard. Byron hated affectation, but his Harolds and Giaours are more like players than real men, and he only attained sincerity in *Don Juan*. So hard is it to read truly one's own consciousness.

Another poetic merit of Burns is his choice of subject from what is around him: unlike those who sigh after heroic ages, forgetting that our own will one day be ancient. The true poet sees the Ideal world in the Actual, if only he have an eye; and, no matter what his social state, he can still "see the world." Note his descriptive power, how he catches the type and essence of a thing amid a thousand accidents. This clearness of vision is the foundation of all talent, for we must first *see* our object. To this, which alone is no very high gift, add his impetuous force and vehemence. He might have succeeded in any walk of ambition, unlike such a poet as Keats. For poetry should be no separate faculty but the result of a general harmony among the rest. Love pervades his writings and adds to his insight, inspiring him even with pity for his sheep amid the storm. Indignation, too, humour, pathos

are among his gifts ; and yet few of his longer pieces can be called Poems, and essentially melodious. Only his Songs are unsurpassable ; in these he has found a tone and words for every mood of man's heart. As a song-writer he equals Shakespeare, and on this his fame will rest : on this and the stimulus he gave to nationality by adopting domestic subjects ; for Scotland was late in developing a national literature.

But the life of Burns, also a fragment of what should have been a mighty edifice, is more interesting than his works. He never attained moral manhood—that is, singleness of aim in the pursuit of poetry ; but wavered between that and the world from which he expected happiness. His life was short, and his soul, like Byron's, too complex for facile adjustment with circumstances. He was fortunate in his father, who was thoughtful, earnest, open-minded—fearing God and fearless of men, therefore a complete *Man*. Had his seven acres prospered, Burns might have been sent to school and the whole course of British Literature changed. But his boyhood, despite poverty, was made happy by domestic affection. As a youth he was initiated into dissipation, that devil's service which false teachers call the test of manhood : but of which the only manly thing is the victim's determination to desert from it. To become a man you must reconcile yourself with Necessity, and understand that the finite world cannot content an infinite soul. Unfortunately, when his passions were raging like demons, he met with religious doubters, and, parting with the old restraints, he committed himself before the world and lost his character for sobriety.

Despair succeeded, the prospect of a wrecked life, perhaps exile, when light, though false light, broke suddenly in floods. This was the extraordinary episode of his visit to Edinburgh, like Napoleon among the crowned heads of Europe. Among the great ones of the earth he remained calm, unaffected, unembarrassed ; but the result was harmful. It kindled worldly ambition and caused him still to halt between two opinions. Yet he returned to his humble tasks, married in his own sphere, and still might have prospered but for the " Picturesque tourists " who sought him out and revived his grudge against Fortune's inequality. He lost his peace of mind and his true loadstar, a life of poetry and poverty. Evil reports arose about him, his Jacobin leanings, etc., and he was abandoned by the " gentility." Poetry, madness, death were the three gates of deliverance, and he passed through the last and mildest.

It is hard to see how Burns's lot could have been bettered in these days when Patronage is twice cursed, when friendship is no more, and each must help himself. Promotion in his own calling might have been given him, but we must not blame the 'nobility



and gentry for neglecting him, for they were mere men of the world. No, the world treated him rather better than it does its Teachers, to whom it usually awards the cross or poison-chalice. The cause of failure lay in himself, for circumstances alone cannot ruin a mind. Nature implants in every creature strength for its action and duration, especially in her masterpiece and darling, the poetic soul. Death is the sum-total of worldly misfortunes, but men have triumphed over death and converted it into a moral victory. Want of unity was the fault of Burns, for true poetry does not mix with the world. And he fell in an age of scepticism and pride when it was abnormally hard to reconcile the two. He was poor, but other poets—Milton, Cervantes—were poorer : but these men were no self-seekers ; they had true religion and a single aim. Part they owed to their time, but part also to themselves ; whereas Burns had the worldly aim of enjoyment, and his religion was an anxious wish, “a great Perhaps.” He might have divided his time between poetry and industry, but not rich men’s banquets ; he should not have mingled his music with the coarse roar of earthly voices. Byron was born an English peer, the favourite of fortune, but he also had a poet’s soul and yearned for the infinite. His celestial element would not mingle with the clay of earth, and like Burns he died with his message undelivered.

HEYNE.—A long extract from Heyne’s autobiography gives point to the criticism that it lacks humane interest ; that Heyne the man has become a mere teaching-machine, and looks back on Heyne the boy as an incipient gerund-grinder. No glimpse is allowed us of the interior of the home, and the struggle of genius with obstacles. At Leipzig University he suffered the miseries of a poor scholar’s life : only meeting one good heart, the servant-girl where he lodged who spent her own money to relieve his necessities. Not ambition but a certain defiance of fate carried him on ; he thirsted for knowledge, but few lecture-rooms were open to him through lack of fees. His best teacher was himself, and for six months he only enjoyed two nights’ sleep a week. He had no clear aim, but instinct drove him on, and a man with a whole volition advances on the roughest road.

At the age of twenty-two he was attracted to Dresden by promises of Count Brühl, the Prime Minister, who had heard of his talents ; but like many of their kind they were not fulfilled. Heyne was reduced to sore straits, sleeping on the floor of a garret, with books for his pillow, and eating empty pease-cods. A miserably paid clerkship saved him from utter destitution, and even enabled him to enter on his proper career. He published an edition of Tibullus, took pupils, though with reluctance, and met Theresa Weiss, whom he afterwards married. The tumult

of the Seven Years War drove him from Dresden, and for some time he roamed about as a fugitive. The war had brought loss of property and other misfortunes upon Theresa, but before long they took the bold step of marriage. Both were quick of temper; her heavenly light a contrast to his hard terrestrial mass; but they fared on amid light and shadow, neither better nor worse than others.

After various dangers from war, Heyne, though little known, found himself chosen as Professor of Eloquence at Göttingen with a good salary, and thenceforward his life was quiet and fruitful. Combined with multifarious duties, he displayed extraordinary diligence in producing works of research, editions of classics, translations by the cartload, reviews. Elegance of composition cannot be expected with such copiousness, yet the metal has been smelted, and is not mere classical ore and slag. He mastered the art of husbanding time, rising at five o'clock and working all day; yet he suffered interruptions patiently and was a regular correspondent. In 1775 he endured the blow of Theresa's death, but he did not brood over sorrow; and in fact, about two years later, we find him leaving his friends to arrange another marriage for him. The result was excellent, and Heyne continued to advance in reputation and in the love and reverence of his townsmen and fellow-collegians, till the occurrence of his eightieth birthday in 1809 was made the occasion of a jubilee. He died peacefully three years later, having completed his work, and with no previous sickness, of which he had been free all his life.

He founded a new epoch in classical study, being the first to penetrate beyond verbal criticism into the way of life and thought of the ancients. Yet he was neither a great nor complete man, lacking clearness, and growing stiff and encrusted. Of his character also is this true, though the death of Theresa drew streams of pure feeling from the rock. The moral of his life is that circumstances are the product of man, not the reverse. It helps to establish the omnipotence of Nature and the majesty of man's soul. Let a man have the right will, and the power is not denied him.

GERMAN PLAYWRIGHTS.—In England the drama is almost dead, while in Germany it enjoys vigorous youth and is sowing its wild oats. One cause is the greater demand for plays in Germany, in default of politics, which consume our leisure hours. As our object is to promote the study of foreign literature, we must say a few words on these poetasters. Kotzebue once enjoyed enormous popularity throughout Europe, but he proved a mere windbag, and now acts like a warning scarecrow. The Austrian Grillpaezer attained nothing beyond pleasing mediocrity; like



all these writers he produced plays by a kind of conjurer's trick. His peculiar knack was quantity of incident without troubling about the soul or meaning. Of Klingemann we must speak even less respectfully, for his method is to accumulate the horrifying externals of tragedy : death's heads, vizards, thunder and lightning, etc. Müllner's great success has been to his detriment, for no popular applause can make a man one hairsbreadth higher than his own stature. Mob-cheers have diverted him from his true vocation of Lawyer to persistence in poetry. His whole soul is prosaic, and his dramas therefore are manufactured rather than created. His recipe for play-making is no mysterious one ; he deals with Fate and Fate only : a recognised branch of the German dramatic business. The result, as of all tricks, is unsatisfactory ; and indeed there is only one effectual secret in poetry : that the poet be a man of a purer, higher, richer nature than other men. We speak in no despite to the German nation, but in our office as watchers on the coast to prevent the landing of improper articles.

VOLTAIRE.—Were will and faculty one, all ambitious men would choose literature, for no power exceeds the promulgation of thought. The life of every man, through its effect on the Universe, is of infinite importance. We see its beginning, but none can see its end ; as we watch the rise of tiny rills and meditate their expansion into great rivers ! Conquerors who fill their age with tumult frequently pass away like forests of gourds ; while things thought to be of little moment live on in the hearts and daily business of men. Tacitus was the wisest man of his generation, and he dismissed the rise of Christianity in a few lines. No influence is more evanescent than the conqueror's. Compare Tamerlane with all his carnage, forgotten on the morrow, and Johannes Faust, the inventor of "movable types." Moral and not Material force governs the world. Thus Voltaire, a private man, not born to great place, has become the most important and characteristic figure of the eighteenth century. He united its spiritual accomplishments, and by his greatness and littleness, including his lack of depth, was fitted to produce an immediate effect.

His life cannot be unimportant, as he spent his best efforts in assaulting the Christian religion. But we must be fair to him ; as, to understand the truth or gain insight into our fellow-men, tolerance is needed above all. No character is rightly understood without sympathy, for the heart sees farther than the head. Be sure our enemy is not as bad as we paint him, for no one can live without approval of conscience. He was not great but adroit, and expert in pushing his aims. From his youth he lived in high circles, the associate of princes, and with his pen he controlled



European Opinion. He wrote books, he studied science and philosophy, he made a fortune by speculation, he practically died of fame, as he had lived for it : all this needs expertness of management. He can bend to occasion, be cunning, mysterious, etc. He had a keen sense for rectitude, was a helper of the poor and oppressed. Love of reputation has been urged as his motive ; but love of *such* reputation is the effect of a social, humane disposition.

He was constant in attachment, without envy, placable : the instant an enemy submits he forgives. But he was no great character ; he had an inborn levity of nature, and lacked earnestness. He was a Mocker, and this became an all-pervading habit. Not that the great should always be solemn, but contempt is a deadly element to live in. The faculty of love and admiration is the sign and measure of high souls. Ridicule is the lowest faculty, and the essence of the scoffer is Denial. Reverence is man's highest feeling, the crown of moral manhood, and this was strange to Voltaire. He sees but a little way into Nature, finds in the world nothing but a reflex of Self with its poor-interests. He ignores the " Divine Idea," and reads history through a pair of anti-Catholic spectacles. In all his writings there is no single great thought ; he was fitful, abrupt, given to violence.

His age of discord and division, in which we now discern the elements of the French Revolution, was partly to blame. When free enquiry was abroad and abuses called loudly for reform, it was natural on which side Voltaire should range himself. He did love truth, but in a party spirit, not like the philosopher who leaves his works to future generations. He loved Truth of the triumphant sort ; his belief was the product of Argument rather than meditation. " Can others be convinced of this ? " would be his first question of any doctrine. Ambition was his motive, and Public Opinion his divinity. He haunted *cafés* in disguise to overhear discussions on his plays—as if there was authority in the multitude of voices. But this was not an age for deep thoughts or high virtues, and Voltaire, who was no Martyr, readily conformed to it. He will lie if needful, and fulfils the old Catholic doctrine in another form—that faith need not be kept with heretics. This doctrine injured his moral nature, and he developed the qualities simply of a Man of the World, which ill fitted a Poet and Philosopher. Of his money-making we say nothing ; but what about his hunt after titles and pensions ! Still, we must not judge him by too high a standard ; he was a mere *Persifleur* enacting his character to perfection. He sees more of farce than tragedy in man's destiny without God. He takes prosaic views, and treats the earth as a corn-producing place.

Yet this power of ridicule was of use in his own misfortunes :

such as his last visit to Frederick, or his adventures with women. The great *Persifleur* skims over the convulsions of his private life which proceed side by side with his public controversies. This was his conception of moral excellence, and he deserves the praise of unity with himself, of having an aim and attaining it ; and the attainment of *Persifleur* was most commonly sought after in his age. Yet he preserved humanity, cherished orphans and outcasts, and was virtuous in spite of himself. Few with such principles and temptations could have come through life with cleaner hands. He is the best as well as the greatest of *Persifleurs*. There is a sort of dramatic justice in the catastrophe of his life, that he should die from excess of public favour. His triumph was the showiest homage ever paid to literature, and therein lies its significance. It proves that man reverences wisdom, and properly nothing else ; for no Xerxes' hosts can bend one thought of our heart. We read that princes and peers thronged his antechamber ; and when he went abroad his carriage was like the nucleus of a comet. The acme of these rejoicings were his visits to the French Academy and the Theatre—and a few months later he was dead.

We must speak of his intellectual endowment, expressed through writings of unexampled extent and diversity. His intellect is the counterpart of his moral character : as the two always are different phases of one mind. As a writer he was not great but expert, not strong but agile, not deep but extensive. His was the unparalleled combination of many common talents ; and he sees deepest at the first glance. He is strangely persevering and has wide knowledge, but it is superficial, remembered knowledge. The typical French power of order and method in knowledge, and the clear quick vision, was his to a more than French degree. He sees through any subject, but only to a short depth, and is convinced that nothing but Superstition and Folly lie beyond. It is Power-knowledge whereby man makes nature his ally and infinitely increases his own small strength. It is neither a poetic nor a philosophic, but a business method, and the order that results is of regularity, not beauty. He pleases the young more than the old, and pleases most on a first perusal. His histories are shallow, his novels, etc., excel in clearness of order, but his wit is among the lowest species even of Ridicule. It is grounded on contempt and has no relation to humour ; but humour, since Montaigne's day, seems to have vanished from France. This logical method and consistency is also the best we can say of his poetry, which leaves the depths of the soul unmoved, and resembles less creation than a process of the toilette. But such was the taste of his day, which repudiated Shakespeare, and he strove only to do better what others did.

His chief reputation was that of a religious Polemic, and his achievement was to make scepticism popular, for he was destitute of original ideas. We blame him for levity, that he warred against Christianity without understanding what it was. The sole point of his attack was the inspiration of the Scriptures ; he never guessed that Christianity has a deeper foundation than Books and is written in the purest nature of man. Christian Humility is the loftiest feeling vouchsafed to us ; and the human species having once attained this height can never retrograde from it. Otherwise, we do not join in the clamour against Voltaire ; his virtues were his own ; his faults those of his age. In contrast of external splendour and internal squalor—refinement of manners and coarseness of morals—the age of Louis XV resembled the Roman Empire. It was a remnant of the old faith that prevented the universal cataclysms that befell the Roman Empire, and made the Revolution a limited thing by comparison. The *Philosophes* set up “ Honour,” “ Force of Public Opinion ” as the directing powers ; but these are mere offsprings of Vanity. They have effected no great thing in the world, and are useless as a Moral foundation ; for without celestial guidance what avails the moral judgments of millions ? It was a barren age, that invented nothing, and where all the good was borrowed. Voltaire belonged to this age, but his light fire-brands kindled fearful conflagrations. The good he did was to give the death-stab to Superstition, and make impossible thumb-screws and Smithfield fires. Let no one fear that he exterminated Religion: like the clown of the story who killed his ass for drinking up the moon.



## CHAPTER VII

### EARLY ESSAYS : ANALYSIS

NOVALIS.—A good book rarely yields its meaning on first perusal, and we must beware of facile writers, and reviewers who deride what they cannot comprehend. Novalis was an abstruse writer, but of too great importance in German literature to be passed over. Born in 1772, his bringing up was secluded and of a religious temper. He attended the Universities, where he preferred metaphysics and learned to admire Fichte and Schlegel. He entered business, and anticipated a commonplace life, but a cruel sorrow befell him in the death of his betrothed. It gave the key to his spiritual history, for henceforth he regarded the visible and invisible worlds as one, and himself as a stranger on the earth. This was the opinion of Tieck, his biographer, but it is likely that a spirit like Novalis would have infallibly learnt otherwise the great doctrine of Renunciation. His speedy re-betrothal is not a matter of blame, for constancy, though good, is not good in passive suffering, and life belongs to the living. He worked at his profession, but had ample leisure to study science and consort with learned men. His death took place in his twenty-ninth year from a decline.

To explain Novalis is a task made almost impossible by his abstruseness. He was a Mystic who sought a new Philosophy, but he followed Kant's fundamental principle—the denial of matter. Those who dispute this theory base their arguments equally on Faith : that the senses are infallible. The Idealist or Transcendentalist claims to ascend beyond the senses and to prove their unreliability. Reverse our nervous structure and you reverse the properties of things external to us. This applies also to the organs of the mind, or what is called the Understanding. Thus, Time and Space have no external existence, apart from the mind of man. This doctrine has an effect of boundless importance on Morals and Religion ; it makes possible our conception of God as omnipresent and eternal ; annihilates the old hostility of Matter, and the black Spectre, Atheism. At this point the Transcendentalists recognise Reason, the sovereign quality of

the mind, above Understanding, and the foundation of Poetry, Virtue, Religion. Novalis is the most ideal of all the Idealists ; the unseen world to him is the only reality. His aim is to establish the majesty of Reason, and reduce Understanding to subjection. As a poet he reverences Nature and regards her as the mysterious veil of the Unseen. As a moralist he prizes only Goodness ; regards ambition and worldly acquirements as shadows ; and aims, even while on earth, at living in the Eternal City.

Some lengthy quotations follow, which justify Carlyle's charge of unintelligibility ; and these he tells us have been selected as comparatively simple. Yet the study of a deep-minded, truth-loving man is recommended to all who prize truth. It is impossible to reduce him to a formula ; but his was the rare power of abstract meditation, of pursuing ideas to the limits of thought. His chief fault was a certain want of energy ; but we must remember that his works were immature and incomplete. This glimpse of a true German mystic may be welcome to such as are beginning to misdoubt the capacity of our insular logic plummets for sounding the deep seas of human Enquiry.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.—Our great business is with the present, but individuals will concern themselves with the future, and the case is worse with nations. The prophets become many ; minds react on one another and produce panics ; and deeds are done collectively by sane men that no solitary maniac would venture on. Such a crisis is now, when a small change, like the removal of Catholic disabilities, is mistaken for a revolution. The present is indeed important, for the poorest day is the conflux of two Eternities, and we will therefore endeavour to resolve its perplexities.

It is a mechanical age ; its great art is to adapt means to end. The living artisan is displaced by a speedier inanimate one. Men are better fed and lodged, and wealth has increased, but the distance between rich and poor has increased also. And the mechanical forces have invaded spiritual regions ; we have education by machinery that ignores individual aptitudes. The individual is powerless single-handed and must unite with a corporation. In default of Raphaels we have Royal Academies of Painting. Men's minds become mechanical, and they struggle not for inward perfection but outer. The physical sciences are displacing the moral and metaphysical ; and the French were the first to effect this change. We ourselves have been misled since the days of Locke, whose doctrine was a genetic history of what we see *in* the mind, and ignored the vital question of the mind's relation to the Universe. Now Dr. Cabanis has discovered that the brain secretes thought as the liver bile ! We admire a man who can walk unwondering through a land of wonders ! So we stand at

present : the outward cultivated on mechanical principles ; the inward abandoned because it yields no results so cultivated.

Politics above all are dominated by Mechanism, and the cry throughout Europe is for reform of Government. The philosophy of Plato has been superseded by Bentham, who declares happiness to depend on circumstances instead of moral goodness and the mind within us. We must remember that there is also a science of *Dynamics* which treats of men's primary energies : Love, Fear, Wonder, Enthusiasm, Poetry, Religion. And to these the wise men of the past were wont to appeal. What has Mechanism done for man's greatest attainments : Science, Art, Poetry, Christianity ? The latter, our crowning glory, arose in the mystic deeps of man's soul, and was spread abroad by the word. Profit and Loss have never been the grand agents with man ; the Crusades had no commercial value. In the French Revolution there was an Idea ; and so in every age man unconsciously vindicates his celestial birthright. The infinitudes of his soul cannot be subjected to formulas of Profit and Loss. He is the creator not the creature of Mechanism ; the noble People make the noble Government. St. Paul and the Apostles were politically slaves ; the nobleness of sixteenth-century Spain coincided with the Inquisition. There must be co-ordination of the two departments ; exclusive care for the dynamic leads to idle visionary courses ; for the mechanic, to destruction of Moral Force.

The latter is our fault, and in dignity of soul and character we are below most civilised ages. We have lost faith in the Invisible, and worship the material, or what we think will profit us. Intellect has become synonymous with logic, and works by argument, not meditation. Wonder is dying out and betokens uncultivation ; a great man is explained away as the product of circumstances. (We hold that one man who has a higher wisdom is stronger than all men who have it not.) Religion is no longer a psalm from the heart to the Invisible Father, but a matter of Expediency and Utility. Literature has become a thing of power ; we praise only what affects us strongly. If morals have improved it is from fear of the Police and Public Opinion. Self-denial, the parent of all virtue, was never rarer ; and beyond money's worth our only aim is Ambition, Honour, Popularity. Truly we are bound hand and foot by the laws of Mechanism, and a nightmare sleep is spreading over our noblest faculties. Yet these features have belonged to other ages, and we need not despair. We believe in man's high vocation, in his continual progress, in the power of education to increase the number of thinking minds. Our maladies are but of Opinion, and the chains are of our own forging. In each of us, as in the first man, dwells the invisible world ; we can regain the heroic worth of our forefathers. Already we see



signs of hope, that Mechanism will become our servant, not our master. Men are straining towards other than political freedom ; and the only true reformation is what each effects on himself.

**HISTORY.**—History is the earliest product of man's spiritual nature, and not only polished nations but the rudest tribes have endeavoured to perpetuate their records by history. Each one of us is born with a talent for history ; for conversation consists all but wholly of narrative ; and all knowledge is recorded experience.

The art of History was never more esteemed than now, since she has added to her former dignities that of " Philosophy teaching by Experience." But there must first be an intelligible record of Experience, which is no easy thing considering the intricacy of human affairs. History is the essence of innumerable biographies ; but much, even in our own biography, is unintelligible to us. Neither is the inward condition of life the same in all ages ; nor the relative importance of its outward variations easy to determine. Battles pass away like tavern-brawls ; laws are but the shell of life ; our daily habits and traditions we owe to philosophers, prophets and nameless benefactors. The most important part of history is lost, and Philosophy must teach by imperfect experience. Even recorded experiences are incomplete, since unbiased witnesses differ. Majorities may be wrong, and events may owe their traditional importance to chance onlookers. Another discrepancy is that a man's observation is successive, while events are simultaneous. Nor does an event spring from one cause, but from every cause prior or contemporaneous. And the historian would thread with a single line this Chaos boundless as man's soul.

Let us nevertheless search the past, and, though the whole is beyond our ken, work with an Idea of the Whole, like artists, not artisans. Proof of the growing feeling that history is infinite exists in the present division of labour. The political historian does not reign alone ; it is recognised that Thought and Action pursue their course whether battles are won or lost. We welcome Church History as promising to record man's inward progress ; but here again we find it too much occupied with externals, such as Cardinals' Conclaves. Less ambitious histories relate to special provinces : science, literature, medicine, etc.

**RICHTER.**—It need not prejudice us against Richter that his reputation remained so long confined to his native land. Popularity is often unrelated to merit, and Newton's fame took fifty years to cross the Channel. Richter is not easy to approach, and that we do so at all proves our insular taste to be developing into a European one. His language is intricate and twisted, and the

abstruseness of his thought exacts laborious meditation from the reader. He lived the eventless life of the true literary man, resisting the allurements of the world. The biographer's duty should be to fill in the ideal outline which a man shadows forth in his writings ; but Richter has been more than usually unfortunate in his biographers. His father was a poor clergyman who dug his own potatoes, but was nevertheless much honoured by his flock. Yet poverty did not prevent happiness, and the picture of childhood presented in a fragment of autobiography has an idyllic touch. At school he distinguished himself in disputation, once even worsting the worthy Pedagogue. This course, continued at Leipzig University, caused him to lose respect for older men and become rather a self-teacher. He had not the means to enter a profession, and was soon threatened by actual Want. Family troubles were also to be endured ; for his father had died some years previously, and his mother became involved in lawsuits and financial distress aggravated by ill management.

He was now the only stay of his mother and brothers, and he accepted his burdens in a spirit of high, cheerful stoicism. At the age of nineteen he set himself to remedy his misfortunes by writing books. With unpaid milkscores and unsoled boots he accomplished his first work, but no Leipzig publisher would accept it. It was, however, accepted and paid for by a Berlin publisher ; and thereupon he determined to become an author. It was mostly ignored or condemned ; no publisher was forthcoming for his second work ; and about one in ten of his essays found a place in Magazines. Yet the trials of poverty brought out what was noblest in his nature ; it taught him what is imperishable in man, confirmed his faith in man's dignity, and his disbelief in the vulgar world. And he drew from it not only strength but tenderness, and sympathy with all created things.

Admiring the English, he affected their style of dress, and scandalised the Leipzig world by appearing without queue and with bare neck. It brought him into conflict with a rich neighbour, who perhaps misliked his broad honest countenance twisted into sardonic wrinkles. As residence at Leipzig was of no advantage, he united his establishment with his mother's at Hof, and continued to toil at authorship in the face of discouragement. They lived in a mean house, and his writing and her cooking and scouring were carried on in the same room. What a contrast is such a life to the "gentility" and spirit of "High Life below Stairs" in English literature. An author here, instead of studying to make his life a heroic poem, needs to put money in his purse. We worship Mammon and Vainglory and forget the wondrous Universe of which we are denizens, Richter was excluded from the



West End of Hof, but admitted to the West End of the Universe, and quite content to work amid the hissing of frying-pans. After ten years' labour he began to impress the world, and the publication of *Hesperus* enforced full recognition of his genius.

In 1797, the year after this success, his mother died, and her kettles hung unscored on the wall ; but she had the satisfaction of knowing that she had borne a mighty man. On his return to Leipzig he was admitted to fellowship with the great, but a piece of still higher good fortune was his marriage the following year. He now settled at Weimar, met Schiller and Goethe, but was chiefly attracted to Herder. Having been granted a pension, he transferred his home to Baireuth and continued to live and write, much loved and honoured, content with simple people and simple pleasures. He held it to be his duty to write, and in his eagerness for work, denied himself all pleasures but the interruptions of his children. He would die, he said, without seeing Switzerland and the Ocean. The death of his only son and his own blindness were the troubles of his latest years ; but he was still at work when death came in 1825.

As a writer he is distinguished for tumultuous strength and a half savage kind of force ; he crushes his subject to pieces rather than deals with it by method. He has a passionate and vehement love of Nature ; but Humour is the essential temper of his mind, penetrating even his philosophical treatises. Quotations follow to illustrate his particular qualities, above all the strange dream world created by his imagination. His great virtue, the foundation of all others, was that he recognised the Invisible, even under the mean forms of these days, and strove to proclaim it to his fellow-men : unlike the Novel-manufacturers of his country and our own.

**LUTHER'S PSALM.**—Like all great men, Luther was a poet at heart. His firm basis in the Spiritual world enabled him to work such changes in the Material. His poems were actions rather than words, and we may find his psalm rugged and broken ; nevertheless it is his genuine voice.

**SCHILLER.**—The publication of the correspondence of Schiller and Goethe allures with its promise of insight into the familiar natures of two such men ; but we forget how ineffectual are letters when the lively dramatic movement is gone, and only the cold historical net product remains. How impalpable are our ideas of Socrates or Luther ! And yet great men are the fire-pillars in mankind's dark pilgrimage. The maxim that close inspection abates admiration is false ; true rather is that which warns of the danger of little knowledge. The merit of these Letters is their sincerity, though they lack the domestic details that would have pleased some readers. Both were literary men,



to whom the spiritual life took precedence of the social, and cultivated men who restrained their emotions. Much may be learned from the correspondence between two great minds bent on self-improvement; but our present object is to introduce Schiller to British readers, Goethe being already better known.

As a poet Schiller has won ready acceptance among foreigners, for his merits lie open. A poet's life is instructive, for he is born in the midst of prose and must struggle towards his ideal, to fulfil the law of his being, and either prevail or be wretched. Amid so many shipwrecks, one who comes safe to port is an object of no common interest. Schiller's life was wholly literary, contemplative, and removed from the tumult of the world. He sought neither money nor promotion, and bound himself to Art as with monastic vows. Of his childhood and the uncongenial Stuttgart system we already know something. He suffered agony from the attempts made by discipline to extinguish his poetical cravings. By means of quotations from his former *Life*, Carlyle then tells the story of Schiller's rise to manhood, and ascribes his triumph to the wholesomeness of his childhood—the most important era of existence—which gave him time to gather force to resist. He emerged from his trials with a strengthened will and a right purpose: the attainment of true spiritual Beauty. This high aim never left him, and inspired him to right action in his passage through life, where he mingled in social pleasures, married, and fulfilled the common destinies of man. Connexion with Goethe was the most important circumstance of his literary life, as it conduced to his spiritual development. His finest plays were produced in his last fifteen years, when he was granted no respite from bodily pain: all which he bore without complaint, unlike such men as Rousseau and Cowper, whom nervous disease drove to madness.

We need not ask if he was happy, for happiness on earth is only for the eupeptic, to whom soul is synonymous with stomach, and meal-time brings visions of heaven three or four times a day. If happiness is the end of man, why are the gross happier than the refined, and the increase of sorrow with knowledge certain? Happiness has been falsely confused with pleasure, although at the present day the pursuit of pleasure is openly admitted as man's duty, and the test of virtue is Utility.

To return to Schiller, his character was less great than holy and Priestlike. Social affections played but a small part with him, and his highest happiness lay in the realm of poetry. All men are born with worldly ambitions, and the completeness of his triumph over them must not blind us to its difficulty. He was not estranged from men, but zealous in their service, and he considered he could most help the world by fulfilling his poet's

vocation. In his relations with men he was philanthropic, humane, avoiding controversy, angry with things rather than persons.

Schiller's intellectual character, by its simplicity, accords with his moral one ; the music of his poetry is true, but there are few tones. Though white flame glows at the summit of the pyre, the whole is not ignited. His genius may even have been philosophic rather than poetic, for understanding is his master-faculty : but here too he shows want of universality and looks aloft rather than around. To him the common is the common : whereas no object is trivial, and every finite thing is a window into Infinitude. Schiller's is the easiest form of greatness, for the perplexities of daily life are those most in need of solution ; and wisdom is most helpful in its weekday vesture : as a Proverb rather than a Philosophical System. He is naturally lacking in humour, and therefore has only half a mind, since he sees only what is above him and not what is about or below ; but he was too honest to affect what he had not. His faults must not blind us to his attainments in the region of sublimity ; and the unexhausted richness of his nature makes us think he might have developed new powers had longer life been granted him. We doubt, too, whether his genius was not essentially lyric or epic rather than dramatic ; for he realised dramatic breadth only with pain and effort. Or even whether his constitution was not primarily philosophic, since his intellect was stronger than his intuitions. He assimilated Kant's Transcendental system, and gave to the world a deep piece of reasoning in the *Æsthetic Letters*. It is idle to ask whether Schiller or Goethe were the greater poet : because Goethe is the born and Schiller the made poet. Only to the young and unpractised Schiller may seem greatest, as the Peak of Teneriffe, because it rises abruptly, may seem higher than Chimborazo, which rises gradually and carries half a world aloft with it.

**NIBELUNGEN LIED.**—The lay of the Nibelungen was reprinted in a collection of German poems from the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It drew attention and has been much commented upon. The result is a searching of old manuscripts and archives, and the discovery of an old German Heroic Age. The *Nibelungen* has an interest for English readers as part of a common inheritance ; and it is the one inhabited poetic spot amid wildernesses of Archæology. Among ancient readers the *Heldenbuch*—abounding in giants, dragons, etc.—was a greater favourite than the *Nibelungen*. An outline of the *Heldenbuch* follows, which, as far as we can see, provides only for the poetical requirements of the “rude man” : to see something going on. But what we possess is only a Medieval version in the Knight-errant dialect.



The chief hero of all these northern traditions, including the *Nibelungen*, was Siegfried. We are told the story of Siegfried's youth, how he slew a dragon and bathed in its blood to make himself invulnerable, and of his other grand adventures : how he courted Queen Brunhild, and captured the Nibelungen land and treasure. This brings us to the *Nibelungen Song*, which has some of the highest characteristics of a true poem. The unknown singer has a true sense of man's relation to the Universe ; his poem is an organic whole ; and he has the minor virtue of Taste. Compared to the doggerel of the *Heldenbuch*, the language of the *Nibelungen* is harmonious at times, diffuse with a garrulous heartiness. There is a high quality of invention, no crude marvels affect us, but the supernatural world does encompass the natural. The poet even exceeds Homer in the skill with which he introduces the mysterious land of the heroes, and makes the wonderful and the common live side by side. An epitome of the story follows : of Siegfried's wooing of Chriemhild, whom he attained by winning Brunhild for her brother Gunther by means of heroic deeds. Then, after a period of happiness, the two Queens dispute about precedence ; Brunhild is worsted ; but Siegfried is calumniated and betrayed to death. The remainder—Chriemhild's vengeance on Hagan, the assassin—is of a more sombre colour, and has a brooding sense of Fate. It terminates with the slaughter of the Nibelungen in the great Hall, and the death by violence of the chief persons of the tale.

Attempts have been made to determine the amount of historical truth in the poem, and coincidences with contemporary events have been noted ; but the light is little better than darkness visible. As to date, none of it precedes the twelfth century ; it is nevertheless the oldest Tradition and the oldest Poem of modern Europe. The poet is no Homer or Shakespeare ; he does not penetrate deep into life, but rejoices in the outward shows of things. He lacks rhetorical devices, yet he is a true poet with a clear eye for the beautiful and true, and a noble sensibility to what is great in man. For the Germans he has a national interest ; for us he opens a Rainbow-land between the Old world and the New.

EARLY GERMAN LITERATURE.—The first era in German Literature was the Swabian, answering to the Troubadour period in general literature. It was a time of universal singing, when not only women and children but even stern men delighted in rhyme. The Swabian era terminated about the middle of the thirteenth century with the death of the crowned poet Conradin, and the convulsions which followed prohibited the cultivation of Court poetry. But it is a mistake to impute the universal decline of poetry to the prevailing disorders ; for the inward and spiritual cannot be deduced exclusively from the outward and material.



Man has a soul as well as a body ; it is the course of his unseen life which rules his external life. The rise of poetry is always a mystery, removed from politics and Court patronage. It flourished after Salamis and not after Bunker's Hill because the Greeks were a poetical people and the Americans were not. It is Inspiration, and arises in the Holy of Holies of man's soul.

The decline of Poetry and Chivalry was general over Europe ; the world had rhymed itself out and had work of the Understanding rather than the Fancy to perform. Contest, rather than communion, with Nature was inaugurated by Physical Science ; men sought to develop the Intellect and attain the Knowledge which is Power. Thus during the fourteenth century what poetry there was became didactic, except in Italy with Dante and Petrarch. Yet we must regard this as progress rather than relapse : like the individual who, after youth's joys, sees an unexpected rigour in life, cannot solve the problem of translating noble thought into action, and must struggle to attain manhood.

The didactic spirit, expressed in the Fable, Satire, etc., predominated in poetry till the Reformation. Between the Minnesinger or Troubadour Period and that of Church Reform is a space of two to three centuries. A certain Hugo was the chief of these writers, and his book *Renner*, though it lacks poetical or even logical unity, is still pleasant reading. A schoolmaster by profession, he sneered at Chivalry, and was the leading moral poet. Fifty years later came Boner, who translated some edifying Fables out of the then inaccessible Latin. The Fable embodied the spirit of the fourteenth century ; it was didactic and addressed to the Understanding ; whereas Imagination had withdrawn from poetry to religion. The collection called *Gesta Romanorum*, devised by the Monks, circulated over all Europe and became the parent of modern fiction, even the Minerva Press. The drama had likewise a didactic origin in the form of Mystery plays contrived by the clergy. From the amount of literature in circulation it was obvious that the spirit of poetry was still alive, though its form might be imperfect. A deep-thinking, devout temper distinguished the people who were to give to Europe the Reformation. We may mention the names of the Dominican Monk Tauler, known throughout Germany, and the world-famous Thomas à Kempis, to complete the spiritual history of the times.

In active life, the practical spirit which had touched even poetry began to work wonders. The rise of the middle class led to the growth of Free Towns and the suppression of the Robber Barons ; while commerce was bringing such wealth that a stranger described Germany as a nation of merchants. Schools and Universities, hitherto lacking, began to spring up over the land and sow the

seeds of what was to become the best education in Europe. The quiet, persevering Teutonic spirit likewise prevailed in the practical arts, as we may see from its predominant share in World-Inventions ; but it is uncertain whether Schwartz has made good his claim to be the inventor of gunpowder—which, after all, has mitigated the horrors of war—or whether it was previously known in the East. In any case, Printing, 1440-9, derives from Germany, whereby man can send his voice through space and time.

In literature the spirit of observation and comparison continued, to the detriment of poetry ; but the famous Apologue of *Reynard the Fox* was a product of this time. Universally current, and adapted by various authors, its origin has been disputed, but the true, Low German version dates from 1498. It has since been copiously translated and enjoyed by the youth of every country in Europe. In spite of its broad mirth and mummeries, it is the work of a poetic soul and supplies a moral which still comes home to us. It shows the contrast between Object and Effort, when human passions are transferred to animals and their interests. Of modern versions Goethe's is the best ; but the age of Apologue is gone, and Fancy, Humour, Imagination—the elements of spiritual life—have yielded to logic. We can but pray for their return with an improved Understanding.

HISTORIC SURVEY OF GERMAN POETRY.—German literature, with various set-backs, has been advancing in England for fifty years. Some have compared it to a more deadly invasion of Huns and Vandals, but this charge of barbarism has been sufficiently refuted. Among the many signs of growth of interest is the present important critical work by William Taylor. Literature is a means of extending knowledge and even affection among peoples, who are naturally interested in their fellow-passengers of this Ship or Planet. The present book is certainly above all other works on German things ; its virtues are precision, decisive conviction on tangible grounds, vigour, honesty. It will be of more use to the general reader than the student, as authorities are not cited. The author admits he has failed to make his history complete from lack of books ; but a complete history of a national poetry is an impossible enterprise ; for true poetry is the music of man's whole manner of being ; and we must first know how far his situation could produce the fine emotions. It is the essence of a nation's history : the perception of man's highest aim in each period.

But even a partial survey brings out many objects of interest. The Germans appeal to us as one of the two grand stem-tribes of Europe, and in the matter of the Swiss Revolt and the Reformation they have twice led Europe. In poetry we see them advancing from the chaos of primeval times to the Swabian era of wonder



and Chivalry, even surpassing the Troubadour Period. The didactic period followed—of wise saws and fables—culminating in the Reformation. A long night succeeded for Imagination, while Science and Logic walked abroad in a Germany distracted by the Thirty Years War. In the middle of the eighteenth century a marvellous new birth took place with Lessing and Klopstock. Denial changed to affirmation, and creative Inspiration proved itself still possible in an age of frivolity and scepticism.

The shortcomings of Mr. Taylor's book are that it tells nothing of the successive phases of the German national mind ; it is an aggregate of dissertations on individual writers, with masses of ill-chosen translation. One line, for instance, suffices for the *Nibelungen Lied*. Of trifling errors we need say nothing, but more serious are statements of the kind that Schiller was a Deist and Goethe an Atheist or Pantheist. Indeed, the work is one great Error, and the highest productions of German Literature a sealed book to the author. Forty years separate him from Germany, by his own admission, and it is in this very space that its literature has become national. Besides, he reads it with English eyes, as if it were all written for him ; and in walking from Dan to Beersheba he finds little he did not bring. His whole nature is polemical ; he delights in pulling down old opinions, and glorifies in infidelity. Religion, he holds, is a grace in woman who looks upward for protection, but a blemish in man who sees nothing above himself. He is a positive man ; his whole philosophy is sensual, and bounded by logic. His attitude is one of majestic composure, and he just tolerates those who believe in the unseen. The Germans would apply to him the word *Philister*, and with us such men enter Politics rather than Literature. Equally with Religion, he has little sense for Poetry, except its broadest effects ; he regards it simply as a stimulant. For which reason he exalts Schiller's *Robbers* above the *Maid of Orleans*, and delivers many other misleading judgments.

At least we may commend his translations as far above the average British level for such work. In fine, we differ from Mr. Taylor but recognise his vigorous talent ; nor do we blame him for speaking out his true opinion. And the existence of such a book proves that nations are ceasing to be mutually repulsive, and a World Literature may one day be looked for. It is becoming plain that Mind is stronger than Matter, Literature is superseding Church and Senate, and is engulfing all thought and interest. We know not what will issue from the chaotic welter, but we hope to see a European Commonwealth administered by the wisest, and the cessation of wars as one of its products.



GOETHE'S PORTRAIT.—The most universal man of his time. The world is mirrored in him more completely than in any man since Shakespeare. He found a universe full of scepticism, and transmuted it into a universe of belief. In these distracted times two great men have been sent us : Napoleon and Goethe. The earthquake-violences of Napoleon have sunk to silence like a tavern-brawl : Goethe remains, the true ruler of the world.

DEATH OF GOETHE.—Goethe's last words were an expression of delight at the arrival of spring : a beautiful poet's death. The End ! How solemn and irrevocable a meaning lies in that word. We must not lament over his death, for his work was done, and his life was like a clear solar day. The thoughts occasioned by an earthly sunset are solemn and awful ; how much more when it is a life that sets, to return on no morrow. Goethe was no ordinary poet or sweet singer, but a seer who deciphered some new lines of the celestial writing. It is beginning to be surmised that Thought rules the world, is parent or living soul of the Deed. But as the Moon commands the Atlantic, yet requires time to effect her tide-work, so the spiritual impress of a great man of the world fulfils itself only after generations : unless he be a mere Napoleon. The influence of Hume is spending itself, and we see his successor in Goethe. The battles and revolutions of the last century gave us nothing ; the new era was when a Wise Man arose and taught us the greatest lesson man can teach : to live wisely in an age of Unbelief.

The range of this universal man's works was vast, but we cannot estimate them here, except to say that they are the prophecy of a New Time. Greater even than his Knowledge was his Love : the most important thing in a man's life. His greatness was due to his being a genuine man in an age like the present. We admire in him Intellect, Justice, strength, mildness : he was a completed man. He fulfilled all the changes of human life, reaching its extreme verge, unspoilt by flatterings of fortune and outward prosperity. He created the higher literature of Germany, even of Europe. Literature, Europe, the Earth itself will pass away ; yet in the work of a faithful man there is something that triumphs over Time.

GOETHE'S WORKS.—Now that Goethe is dead we may ask with new seriousness, What was the meaning of his life ? Death is the great re-kindler of interest, as even love-sick girls know who drown themselves to impress the obdurate Lovelace. The importance of man to man is infinite, and all men are mystically united. Hunting after popularity is proof of man's sympathy with man, and hatred itself is inverse love. Alone among creeds Hero-worship never grows obsolete, for a religious fibre exists in the heart, and man must worship something. Atheism is

impossible ; it is only a name that men deny ; and man is ever the clearest symbol of the divinity to man. The world shows curiosity about its great ones, and its sham great ones, from its need to worship. Man is never a mere clothes-horse ; even fine clothes are thought to be symbols of inward beauty ; as bank-notes are symbols of gold. Produce gold, and paper is discredited ; as the God-created Napoleon was venerated above lineal Kings, or Burns above the most learned Doctors. Admiration of the great is proof of the saying that love is the beginning of all things ; and its first product is *imitation*, whereby the ages are connected and the attainments of the past handed on to the future. Thus a Great Man is the most important phenomenon of an age, surpassing Waterloo victories, etc. ; he alone has *power* to nerve us for life's journey. In default of great men we venerate Noted men—a Beau Brummel, for instance—who are summaries of an Age's particular ideal. The aim of education should be to teach us reverence, and whom we are to admire. Alas, the ritual most faithfully observed is Self Worship. . . .

Our age has produced many noted men and two great men—Napoleon and Goethe. The latter was the greater, but attracted less notice, like a star dawning in silence compared to the explosions of artillery-parks. The greatest of Goethe's works was his life ; to him belonged an extraordinary inward force for solving the complexities of circumstances and turning them into acquisitions. Worldly gifts are possibilities of good, but only to him who can rule over them ; and the hostile forces of Necessity and Free-will confront every human soul. Goethe bore prosperity, the hardest task of all, and riches—the *readiest* of possibilities. The ready-made barriers of poverty at least force a man along a prescribed road and relieve him from the care of his own guidance. Byron or Mirabeau may dash themselves against the adamant circle of Necessity whereon the world is built ; but Goethe turned all outward blessedness to inward strength.

A joyful childhood with much sun and azure was the incipient World-Poet's in old Teutonic Frankfort. Of his parents, the mother was the more gifted, and she lived to witness his maturity. His father was a city, not a country, gentleman—a character unknown with us—delighting in collections and artistic things, but positive and with much strength of will. In the Seven Years War—a World-incident contemporary with Goethe's childhood—his sharp temper nearly brought him into trouble with the French invader.

Goethe received education of a catholic kind from his father, and displayed a large appetite for varied knowledge. Impressions left on him by some old-world figures are thought worthy of record in his Autobiography ; and small business commissions which he



performed for his father initiated him early into diverse conditions of life, with their joy and sorrow, advantage and drawback. From Leipzig University he derived little good, neither in literature, philosophy, nor religion. He studied Law at Strasburg, by paternal decree : strange occupation for a World Poet. He has been blamed for drawing back when an innocent flirtation with Frederike, the daughter of an Alsatian Vicar of Wakefield, approached the marrying-point—falsely, we think ; for this world is not all a wedding-dance, and man must eat and labour as well as wed. He is described at this time as having large bright eyes, magnificent brow, and fine stature.

Greatly stimulating to his mental “ fermentation ” was acquaintance with Herder, in whom was imaged the whole world of European culture. Now was the reign of Dilettantism, and, for lack of a Divinity, which men cannot do without, Taste was enthroned. For two centuries German literature had lain fallow ; but of late, in Lessing, Klopstock, and some others, there were signs of a new time. Germany was to return within the sphere of European influences, even to be the leader of spiritual Europe. To Goethe, at present an unwilling student of Law, was it appointed to body forth this Chaos into a Creation. *Werter*, the product of his twenty-fifth year, gave utterance to the World's Despair ; but its effect is now spent. It decided the outward events of his life, being the means of his procuring a Court appointment at Weimar, and eventually the post of Minister. The brilliant little Weimar circle recalls an old Italian Commonwealth, when the poet was not considered to have lost his wits as a man. Is not a talent for poetry the highest in the world, founded on intellectual Perspicacity, with force and honesty of Will ? Is it not, therefore, the best equipment for all Business ?

Goethe prospered at Weimar, with all life's gifts united under the heavenly firmament of art. Multifarious duties, contact with all manner of men, bringing experience and tolerance, were his. His writings display a mind working itself into clearer freedom and invulnerable health from conquered scepticism. *Meister*, the work of his next period, is somewhat Pagan in character ; no Divinity presides over its hearty life. But in the third period, *Meister's Wanderjahre*, Reverence triumphs, and we see a deep all-pervading Faith. Thus he is the great Reconciler of our chaotic Era, of the woes of an Atheistic time, aggravated by the physical wretchedness of whole classes. Let none despair, for light will follow darkness ; only woe to the land which has no prophet, only satirists or *Persifleurs* !

Goethe was the star or light-bringer to Europe with its Byrons and Mirabeaus and Napoleons. Hence he is one of the landmarks in the History of Men. His strength of intellect was such that



he contradicted no one, and transported himself into everyone's manner of conceiving. He had an all-piercing vision like Shakespeare's, gazing through a thing and creating it anew. To both the world is translucent and encircled with wonder ; both excel in *figurativeness*, in the *vital* embodiment of the thought. Their characters surpass all others in being constructed from the heart outwards. Both have the calmness of perfect tolerance, for you cannot hate what you comprehend. Shakespeare was the greater but less cultivated nature ; Goethe solved the question that a man can still live devoutly without contraction ; and has secured untold good for all. Let each of us aim at the Goal of Manhood which he attained in our Tower-of-Babel era.

CHARACTERISTICS.—The healthy know not of their health, but only the sick ; and this holds good of all matters, moral, political, and otherwise. With the body, when an organ announces its separate existence, it establishes a false centre of sensibility. Only discord proclaims itself ; when life flows musically on it is unheard, like the music of the spheres. In childhood we had perfect health ; the body was not the prison-house of the soul but its vehicle. Enquiry is disease ; and science originated in the feeling that something was wrong. But though Life itself has become a disease, in all vital action Nature contrives that we should be unconscious of it. For it is but a small portion of his life that man rules by forethought ; he is unconscious of the boundless deep on the surface of which he swims. Cunning Nature secures that he should forget that a film separates him at any moment from death, and that he is born to die. Of the soul and its activities the bodily physician's aphorism holds good : the sign of health is Unconsciousness. Articulate thought concerns the surface ; below argument and manufacture lie the mysterious depths of meditation and creation. Milton was more conscious of his faculty than Shakespeare, and therefore below him. The logical power is opposed to the intuitive, and the system-maker is ill at ease in this complex world. Even so with Oratory and Rhetoric, the Orator carries his audience with him, he knows not how ; the Rhetorician can at best prove that he should have done so. Observe this still more in the moral sphere : never say, How worthy is this action ; but continue in spontaneous well-doing as your natural existence ; lest Free-will, reigning by divine right, should abdicate before a mere earthly sovereign who rules by rewards and punishments. Then comes the age of Sentimentality, with its luxury of doing good, barrenest of all ; followed by the Sophists, who prove and deny the existence of virtue.

But we must look beyond man the individual to man in society, for alone he is but half alive. Morality begins in society with

the reaction of mind on mind and the establishment of a mystic union. Life is more intense ; Literature provides a common stock of ideas ; Politics aim at moral supremacy ; Religion crowns the whole. Society is the great wonder of our existence ; itself, truly vital, alternates between sickness and vigour, youth and age. If we question the condition of Society we are met with the same test of Unconsciousness ; only an artificial state of society knows its own structure. It should work outwardly to fulfil its aim, to be loyal to the Idea of which every Society is an embodiment. In Rome why preach patriotism when the Decii fought, or praise political virtues when the State encircled every life with a second higher life ? Society was then *whole*, and opinion begot action ; till Religion became Philosophy, and Prophecy turned to Argumentation. Thus, when the *soul* had fled, dissolution set in for the *body*.

Everything proves that the Great and Perfect is a mystery to itself ; wherefore the poets have honoured Silence, Night, Death. Our present Era is above all self-conscious, with its talk of "Progress of the Species," "March of Intellect," etc. Self-consciousness is followed by Enquiry and Doubt ; we have Reform Bills, Christian apologetics, theories of poetry. The impassable gulf between riches and poverty bears witness to Society's Physical diseases. Man has subdued the Planet, with his fleets and iron highways ; yet nine-tenths of our fellow-creatures struggle against Famine. Society would seem to be dying, were it not immortal, and every death a new birth. It is indeed sick enough, and its spiritual condition, which governs the physical, no less sickly. Religion has dwindled to "Discourses on the Evidences," has become self-conscious, mechanical, and listens to itself. Literature, thanks to Reviewing, has lost its inspiration and become affected ; for love of Nature we have View-hunting.

The existence of Philosophy, as we said, is an evil ; yet man, surrounded by Eternity and Infinitude, cannot still his questionings. The finite cannot explain the infinite, and in action alone can we have certainty. Metaphysics lead nowhere, being the mind's attempt to rise above the mind. Labour is man's inheritance, and his hope of Ease a dream ; for without labour there would be no ease ; therefore Evil must exist. But when there was Faith, man bore his burden cheerfully, and knew what he toiled for. Now he feels himself crushed beneath a Juggernaut which he knows to be a mere idol. How empty is life now to the youth of noble aspirations when Divinity has withdrawn from the Earth ! He may cling to worn-out symbols, end in denial, or like Byron follow vain earthly pleasures—or Schlegel, terrified at the loneliness, fly back to dead Catholicism. The Old has long passed away, but as yet the New does not appear. No wonder the whole world



“listens to itself”; yet the very disease proves that Nature is attempting restoration. . . .

The two books that form our text have this in common, that they attempt not merely to question but to establish; though the German is the apotheosis of Spiritualism, the English of Materialism. The first is a work of deep meditation; the second an absurdity that could have originated nowhere save in England, though it too contains thought. But these discords no longer perplex us, for we know that God made the Universe, not a Demon, and that Good will come out of Evil. One great thing we know, that Mankind is advancing somewhither, and the ways of Providence are wisely mysterious; for man would be spell-bound did the future always repeat the past. We need not mourn over the Past, for its Soul, or all that is worthy of it, survives and enriches the Present, while the Body only grows obsolete and perishes. Change is painful but needful; for it is increase of social forces that bursts asunder old systems: even scepticism is the result of increase of knowledge. Good may yet spring from Metaphysics; and life will then withdraw from the barren Conscious to the deep Unconscious, whence all wonders, such as Poesies and Religions, have proceeded. Even now German Metaphysics have displaced those of Hume and Diderot and made Faith again possible. Mechanical Constitutions, too, have they not perished in the seas of fire of the French Revolution? The Godlike is being recognised; and Mechanism will one day become our slave. Let us fight like soldiers in a foreign land, without struggling too much to read the mystery of the infinite, but believing that the Infinite is Good.

BIOGRAPHY.—Man’s interest in man is proved by the charm of biography; in all speech and art biography is the one thing needful. Works of art surpass nature because of the biographical interest; our pleasure in the *Iliad* is enhanced by our imaginings of the man Homer; and we overlook many and wonderful scenes of earth and sky to admire the *Transfiguration* because it was painted by a human hand. History, we repeat, is the essence of innumerable biographies; and we resort to it in the hope of gaining acquaintance with our dead and vanished fellow-creatures: a hope too often fallacious, thanks to the dullness of modern historians. Fiction is mimic biography: a similar attempt to explain the significance of man’s life. But, even for poetic purposes, there is a deep import in Reality; Belief is the strongest condition of the mind, the foundation of spiritual force; Imagination is of use only so far as it is believed. When the Supernatural in an epic poem ceases to be believed, it becomes “Machinery” and should be swept aside. In place of the dead epic we now have the partially living modern novel; but it falls short of Reality



We are told man has become less susceptible to the spoken Word ; but it is false ; for when has man lost anything of his spiritual endowment ? Only let the poet of the future work more and more on Reality and speak what his whole soul *believes*.

Consider the impressiveness of the smallest historical fact, the thing that did actually occur. How King Charles, after Worcester, for instance, was sheltered by a cottager and given bread and buttermilk. A genuine flesh-and-blood Rustic of 1651 is seen by us through the momentarily parted blanket of the Night. For the Past and the Dead are all holy ; even wickedness was caused by the environment which lay heavy on the ethereal Force of the true *Self*. Consider the poor outcast woman who addressed Dr. Johnson, seen in one glimpse amid the darkness of the past. She issued from the Maker of Men and therefore moves us more than the noblest fictitious creation. Now we may ask, how are objects to be seen and described ? How capture the accidental light-gleam which completes the picture ? The secret of being "graphic" is to have *an open, loving heart* ; the mind is thus opened and the intellect quickened. The torrent of modern literature rushes on to Oblivion because the army of British authors *see* nothing, have no sympathy with Man or Nature. Each sees but a pitiful image of Self for ever. The stupidest has some faculty, but if the heart is shut the intellect cannot be open.

BOSWELL'S JOHNSON.—The merits and demerits of Croker's edition occupy the preliminary pages of this essay. He is praised for accuracy in small external matters, but censured for throwing no light on the condition of English life. He also fails in insight, seeing nothing himself beyond need and greed and vainglory, and attributing these in every instance to Johnson. His editorial methods—above all his confusing the text by introducing pages of extraneous matter between brackets—are outrageous. . . .

Of Boswell be it said that he has done us a greater service than any man of his time, and has been repaid with abuse. His faults of sensuality, etc., lay on the surface, his virtues belonged not to his age and were confounded with his vices. His appreciation of spiritual excellence triumphed over his evil nature and his education. Consider the strength of the impulse that drove a Scottish Laird, nurtured in Tory traditions, to embrace the knees of an English schoolmaster. Strange that Boswell should recall the old feeling of reverent Discipleship which was thought to have passed away. If vanity alone possessed him, why did he attach himself to poor Samuel Johnson ? Graceful noblemen and gentlemen abounded, more famous in the world of fashion, exacting less submission, and paying larger rewards. Boswell was sneered at rather than regarded by the great for his devotion to Johnson. No, the spark of goodness and reverence dwelt in

his inner character, and at the beginning of the Era of Cant and Mammon-worship, he proved that Hero-worship was still possible. And thanks to his open, loving mind he gave to the world a *Johnsoniad* scarcely equalled since Homer. Like all, he was a microcosm of the Universe with its beastlike and godlike ; only with him the highest and lowest lay in strange juxtaposition.

It was falsely said that he did his good work by virtue of his bad qualities ; for bad is negative and can do nothing. He wrote well because of his childlike openmindedness, and his reverence, the highest of human feelings. We rate his book above all other eighteenth-century writings ; we regard it as a work of enchantment restoring to us the land of our fathers in defiance of changeful time. Reality is the cause of its charm, for neither *instruction* nor *thinking power* could have made it immortal. We say that a poet should inform the finite with the infinite ; but, in the case of a *Johnsoniad*, Time voluntarily invests with infinity whatever it has touched. For the *Past* is sacred, and thus the only true Poetry is History. The Mitre tavern, where Johnson and Boswell supped, is gone ; even the knives they ate with are rusted to the heart ; but Boswell's book is a revocation of the edict of Destiny : a little row of Naphtha-lamps kindled in the Night of the Past. It tells us, more than any official history, what the Life of Man in England then was. We dismiss the charge that it is an infringement of privacy. All the better if it leads to the curtailing of insincere speech. Speak not till thy thought is mature ; hold thy tongue till thou hast a meaning ; endless is the significance of Silence ; think not that idle words perish, for nothing can perish.

To turn now to the Ulysses of our English Odyssey, Johnson was of all men the most deserving of a full-length biography ; for though no biography would lack interest, there is a want of originality in men's life, and a sameness of fundamental tune in each. Like sheep men consort together from gregariousness and fear of loneliness ; but every flock has its leader, and men have their Chiefs and Guides. These are our Great Men who *know* and *believe*, who live by Vision not Hearsay, who are not misled by the shows of things, but in whose lives is *Reality*. Such was Johnson, not among the highest, yet of the sacred band : by nature a Priest, and his whole life a Gospel—that man is heaven-born and not the thrall of circumstances. Among contradictions in his lot were his poetic soul and unsightly body—Ariel in the hull of Caliban. Social, and prizing the love of men, he first excited disgust ; imperious, he was born poor. School days, Oxford days, with their pride and poverty, pass before us. Want drives him from Oxford ; shame and melancholy, alternating with high thoughts, oppress him in his father's house : he is to be made



perfect by suffering. The world yields him but a miserable usher-ship, where he grinds like Samson in the mill. Let no one treat with ridicule his marriage to the good widow Porter, who acknowledges him as the most sensible man she ever met. His attempt to keep a school did not prosper ; so his destiny of teaching grown men must be fulfilled.

Authorship was at a low ebb when he reached London, and the problem of keeping himself alive by speaking *truth*, hard of solution. Literature was in a transition state, between Patrons and Public ; and Patronage must not be too easily condemned. It was good for a nobleman, who was still noble, to be the conduit to the world of wisdom : till feigned reverence brought sycophancy. The Bookseller system followed, and has lasted to the present day ; but difficulty lies always in *transition* from one method to another ; and at such an epoch came Johnson. Having tested the Patronage system and found it wanting—as we know from the famous Chesterfield letter—he turned to the Bookselling guild. How to speak *truth* in such an England now confronted him. It was a divided age, moving to a catastrophe ; the ghastly apparitions of Hypocrisy and Atheism were abroad ; and Opinion and Action were at war. There was no longer a fixed polestar of Religion, and the keener intellects had espoused Infidelity. Aware that his Church was no longer adamant, Johnson yet found his glory in defending old traditions. The like confusion reigned in Politics, where Democracy had shown itself against the Jacobites, to disappear temporarily. Among Whigs and Tories there was halfness and insincerity, with lingering uneasiness. The Whigs strove to destroy, the Tories preached loyalty to an *Office* : and the result was Plausibility and Quackery, with floods of talk. Johnson became a Tory, and thereby increased his moral difficulties ; for to resist innovation is to resist enquiry. This he would not do ; he must therefore have known that the Symbol of his Divinity was half-idolatrous. A twofold problem faced him, unlike the Whigs, who aim only at Respectability and see no truth beyond the senses.

The question how he lived a heroic life in this mad world, and steered a straight course for the Eternal City, is fully answered by Boswell. He had a higher than earthly light, and a conviction of the immeasurable character of Duty : the basis of all Gospels, and essence of all Religion. For an author he had little education but much desultory reading, some experience of life, and an open eye and heart. All the ways of men interested him, and he practised Meditation. He wrote on all subjects for clamorous Printers' Devils. He was poor and sick, endured parting from his wife, sometimes wandered homeless with Savage all night in the streets. Unlike most authors, he was careless of fame,



knowing that Eternity encircled him. But he is too good a workman to remain for ever in obscurity ; his emergence is slow, like the rising sun, not sudden and fugitive like a blazing tar-barrel. Friends came about him : Goldsmith, Beauclerk, Langton, and others. When fifty-two he is awarded a royal pension, and the result is much foolish clamour. What was the sum he drew compared to the Primate's ? And Johnson was the true spiritual Edifier of England.

The last part of his life was happy, relieved from want, conversing with such men as Burke and Reynolds, seeing the fruit of his labours in fair printed books. We rate his life and conversation above his books : the highest virtue of these was Prudence. The last genuine Tory, he taught men how to live in an age of ruin, to silence vain scruples, to hold firm to the old Belief. He could not stem the eternal Flood of Time, but he saved England from Revolution. He, a wise man, could still be Loyal to the Old : it was this which made Waterloo victories possible. His leading quality was Courage, not the courage which dares only die—for all men can undergo what must be borne once—but courage to live manfully. The bravest man since Milton, how great is his stoicism and talent for silence beside the small soul of Boswell ! He loved Truth, and when he spoke for victory, it was only on superficial things. He hated Cant, he professed only to write for money, yet he disdained the muddy waters of "popular delusion."

A tender heart beat within his rough exterior ; love of the thing opposed, not hatred of the opponent, inspired his rages : in defence of the Church, Divine Right—symbols to him of all that was precious. A poor man, he gave freely to the poor, and cherished the outcast in his own home. He was a true brother of men, and it is his feelings of affection and power of attachment (illustrated by some touching stories) that most attract us. Yet he passed as a bear, because his fine nature and true politeness, based on the dignity of man, looked out through such a strange medium. His loving heart appeared in his intellectual character ; as, indeed, goodness is the basis of all talent. His much blamed "Prejudices" were the ordinary beliefs of provincial Englishmen ; but he clung to them because they were hallowed by his earliest recollections. Thus, in an age of Scepticism, he became a Builder, not a Puller-down. He was a typical English product, the John Bull of Spiritual Europe. What worth in Institutions that could still produce such a man in the eighteenth century ! He was the contemporary of Hume, and how wide is the contrast between these two greatest men of their age !

## CHAPTER VIII

### EARLY ESSAYS

THE essays we have thus analysed extend from 1827 to 1832, Carlyle's thirty-second to thirty-seventh year. We now have before us a sufficient body of his writing to divine his opinions on life conveyed through the channels of literature. From the range of subject, the width of study, the exactness of knowledge, the reader can form his own opinion of the strength and fertility of Carlyle's mind ; and let it be remembered that in the first half of this period of unceasing production he was preparing a separate work on German literature, and in the second meditating and composing *Sartor*.

The grand characteristic of these essays is their mingling of individuality and universality. While not a line but reveals the individual author's presence, not a man or book he treats of but is a mirror of universal life or literature. The sun of his intellect may be directed upon one favoured spot, but it stands high enough in the heavens to irradiate the outermost circle of our planet. Obviously we must ascertain his point of view, for criticism should run parallel with life, and the kind which treats the author as a literary artist was condemned by no one more than Carlyle. Matthew Arnold surveyed life through literature, and his point of view was the Apostle of Culture ; but his shaft of light travelled diagonally across the spheroid of our earth and left much in shadow. Hazlitt was a would-be philosopher, but he made his personal experience with an unsympathetic world the test of universal law : much as Wordsworth—if we may credit Emerson<sup>1</sup>—deduced the character of a nation from petty altercations as a traveller in stage-coaches.

What Carlyle united with a strictly personal style was a power of wide-encircling thought in which personal prejudices had no

<sup>1</sup> *English Traits*.

place. His remark has already been quoted that residence at Craigenputtock most favoured his power to work ; and the comparative health and happiness of his first six years of marriage formed the sound basis of his spiritual life. His ideal man of letters, like Schiller, best serves the world by renouncing it, lest the calm depths of meditation be disturbed by life's cross-currents. He may accept human relationships, but not those of overmastering force ; and above all he must not be a seeker for promotion. To the fact that Carlyle lived the ideal life during these years we owe a certain unique quality in his writings—their absence of anger and exaggeration ; and even the two prophetic utterances, *Signs of the Times* and *Characteristics*, conclude upon a note of hope. He himself praises Goethe for speaking with asperity of no man ; and in his own case the aberrations of later years were caused by the increasing intrusion of the cares of the world. It was not indifference or seclusion that inspired this clearer and purer utterance, but the height at which he took his stand. And the foundation of his peace was health, and the companionship of his wife and kinsfolk as a recreation from the toils of composition. For we should have known, even had he not many times placed the fact on record, how intense must be the labour of one who transmutes facts into poetry, whose imagination fuses material collected by the intelligence.

In these years all Carlyle's thought may be referred back to the Leith Walk "Conversion," where to his soul had been vouchsafed a sight of the immortal sea. So far as the human mind can admit certainty, he became certain that the ultimate cause of the universe is spiritual. Like Moses, his face shone from communion with the Highest ; the divine light streams along the pages of his writings ; and although it grew dim or dispersed in later years, owing to his preoccupation with the earthly cares of men, at any moment it would flash forth in original purity. He owed much to the study of the kindred-minded German poets and philosophers ; to Goethe, whose great achievement was to make faith again possible ; to Novalis and Richter, who taught that the world of nature is like the body to the soul, the mere garment of the unseen. And yet his point of view was not that of other-worldliness, of contempt for our earth because it is a mere speck in Eternity. Like those who have overcome the



fear of death, he had a deeper appreciation of life ; because he had grown to consider the visible world as identical with the invisible : much as the Mohammedans regard their Temple at Mecca as part of heaven on earth.

To understand Carlyle's views on life and literature we must bear in mind his unique experience, the ascent of his soul. The spiritual world is the only Reality, and hence he honours the poet above all men, because the poet's meditative soul is nighest to it. He even, as with Goethe, declares a talent for poetry to be the best equipment for all business. Realisation of the kind of poetry which he admired—the works of Shakespeare and Goethe, and the songs of Burns—will throw much light on his mind, and confirm our opinion of his point of view. The supremacy of the “reason” over the “understanding” is a problem that much exercised Carlyle. Deriving from Kant and the transcendental philosophers, it found fullest expression in Novalis. The “understanding” is dependent upon the senses, but they are a misleading guide ; for, judging by our senses, we would say that the sun goes round the earth ; and, were our nervous system reversed, the properties of external objects would be reversed also. According to the transcendentalists the sovereign quality of the mind is “reason,” which is self-moved ; and hence Carlyle's condemnation of the literature of power and the prevalent fashion of regarding poetry as a thing to stimulate. Byron had been the great exemplar of the latter kind, and perhaps the battle-field in *Lara* equals in power any passage throughout his works. A couplet like the following :

That panting thirst which scorches in the breath  
Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,

appeals to the reader through sense ; and if we compare a passage of Keats :

To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies  
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest ?

we have sensuousness, which is one step removed from sense. But now let us turn to Shelley and read :

. . . old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser day  
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers . . .

and everything is changed. The bark of song has slipped from its mooring and entered the transcendental sea. To refine further would be unprofitable, for so long as we inhabit earth we cannot wholly dissociate ourselves in thought from sense; even as the firmest anti-materialist and believer in life hereafter cannot form an image of his vanished friend apart from the body.

The seeming paradox between Carlyle's scorn of "view-hunting" and the beautiful words which he lavished on mountains and lakes and other scenes of nature, is thus explained. Nothing is beautiful for its own sake, nothing even has reality, but as the visible garment of the invisible soul. To the true poet, like Shakespeare or Goethe, the world is translucent and encircled with wonder; and they use earthly figures to body forth the divine symbols. And yet the poor trivial poetaster, at this epoch of Carlyle's development, is not roughly handled. The poetaster is a man, and therefore a complete mirror of the universe; he needs but silence and meditation to withdraw his attention from the outer world to the inner. It is the mind's true relation to the universe which preoccupied Carlyle; and the hindrance to perfect communion is the grossness of matter. He himself, in pleading for the holiness of the past, affirms the cause of wickedness to be the environment which lay heavy on the ethereal force of the true self.<sup>1</sup> The poet is the most precious gift bestowed upon a generation because his mind is in more direct touch with the universal mind than that of the reformer or leader of men, who works through the material medium of battles and revolutions. He ridicules a current idea that the poet must be born at a certain social elevation in order to "see life." Richter, for instance, was excluded from the West End of Hof but admitted to the West End of the Universe. Poetry is inspiration and arises in the innermost shrine of the soul; and yet, as the poet finds himself in an age of prose, and like all men is afflicted with social ambitions, no small struggle is needed to attune the mind to its unearthly environment that it may body forth its vision of the Divine Idea. This is but a more modern method of saying that the poet's function is to celebrate the glory of God; only in the deepening prose of our mechanical era it becomes harder

<sup>1</sup> "Biography."

with every generation ; and hence the supreme importance of Goethe.

Carlyle's conception of biography was equally mystical, and he would have said with Milton that to write your heroic poem you must first live it. He envisages life as a struggle between the grossness of matter and the aboriginal purity of the soul. Luther performed great things in the material world because of his firm basis in the spiritual ; Goethe's life was even greater than his works, for he turned everything into an acquisition, and even bore prosperity and riches, the hardest task of all. Voltaire failed to achieve true greatness because he succumbed to the temptations of his time ; and yet his virtues were his own, his faults those of his age : as we said before, it was the environment which lay heavy on the ethereal force of the true self. As the soul of man awakens, it discovers that it is in bondage and must struggle for freedom ; its enemies are the five senses and a sixth sense called Vanity, which includes social ambition, fear of public opinion, desire of popularity. On the day when it bursts through these shackles and re-establishes communication with its ante-natal home, it attains spiritual majority. And the main weapon with which, Samson-like, it prevails against the Philistines, is the will. But the will must not be mistaken for the wish, engendered too often, as Goethe said, by unwise education. The result of vague wishes is to dissipate the energies ; and of this kind of failure the most notable example is Burns, who alternated between poetry and the society of the great ones of the earth. Heyne succeeded because he had a true will, and the moral of his life is the power of the spirit over circumstances. The true will is something which permeates mind, spirit, and body, and is the same source of wealth to the individual as the Nile with its inundations is to Egypt. As thus springing from the common root of the will do we begin to understand that doctrine of Carlyle's which at first puzzles us—the unity of the moral and intellectual nature.

But before the will assumes its task of regulation it must make a compact with Necessity ; it must free itself of any outer covering of the mere wish that still clings to it. Using the word less strictly, Carlyle says that were will and faculty one, all ambitious men would choose literature, for no power exceeds the promulgation of thought. Goethe's character of Faust failed to discover



how far nature had equipped him for the task before embarking on his colossal speculations, and the result was ruin. So any mortal, realising the truth of Carlyle's doctrine of the majesty of the soul and its power over circumstances, might think that the wish to write like Shakespeare or Goethe could achieve the end. He must remember that the soul has to perform its work on earth with instruments of sense, that men are moulded by heredity, education, and countless other influences ; that only a few spots of the material envelope become sensitive to the divine light ; and the wholly transparent geniuses, Homer, Shakespeare, Goethe, are epochs in the history of the world. Within the smallest soul perhaps lie hidden under material dross and lumber the potentialities of the greatest ; but time to unfold them is lacking. Burns, for want of education, had to construct his own tools, and hence the result of his life's work was but a tithe of what it should have been. Only in his songs has he freed himself from encumbrances of earth and set up the ladder by which, as in Jacob's dream, the reader's soul can ascend to heaven. Consider, too, the contradictions in the lot of Dr. Johnson : how, by nature imperious, social, poetic, he was born poor and unsightly. Yet he triumphed over Necessity, though in his writings he strove to express no loftier virtue than prudence : unlike Byron, who dashed himself to pieces against the adamant circle which compacts the world.

To attain spiritual manhood by reopening communication with the primeval source ; to vanquish the mud element by means of the purified will ; to fear God and therefore be fearless of men, like Burns's father : such is Carlyle's conception of duty. But what is man's earthly heritage that in the greater number of cases, in this confused era, prevents consummation ? It is his social ambitions, his love of fame, position, wealth ; it is, in a single phrase, his pursuit of happiness. By happiness Carlyle means passive enjoyment, and it would seem as if he omitted the distinction between happiness and pleasure, though he blames others for so doing.<sup>1</sup> We would interpret happiness as a negative condition rather than a positive ; as peace of mind or freedom to pursue with zest the duties of one's life, unattended by anxiety, remorse or regret. Needless to say that Carlyle condemns sensu-

<sup>1</sup> " Schiller."

ality as furnishing the soul's prison house with thicker walls and stouter bars ; but we would naturally covet any guidance he might vouchsafe us as to the road of progress. We may even confess to a first disappointment at what seems a lacuna in his account of Goethe : the actual process by which that great man overcame scepticism. Yet we know that the highest cannot be spoken of, and we must simply accept Carlyle's statement that it was effected by devoting his life to the cultivation of art, and therefore by meditation ; and we must read and re-read the two chapters of *Meister's Wanderjahre*, which explain his grounds for belief.

But the great message from Carlyle's biographies of this period is that so long as a man has an undivided will and recognises the barriers of Necessity, he can triumph over circumstances. And victory is not to be reckoned in praise or reward, but by the consciousness of well-used endeavour to act or proclaim truth ; for thus only does the soul rise one stage nearer to its ultimate reunion. On this mere speck of earth the work even of a Goethe dwindles to nothing compared with infinity ; but the spirit in which the smallest faithful man works is of endless moment and helps to advance the far-off divine event. It is a message of hope and consolation ; it brings increased faith in the destiny of man. For the stream does flow in the soul of each of us, however hidden in the deep valleys of this world and its cares, or distracted among the sandy deltas of egotism. It lies with each one of us to make it less landlocked and accelerate its passage to the ocean. Carlyle has told us how this may be achieved ; and thereby the charge is refuted that he tells us our faults and suggests no remedy. He is surely not blameworthy for failing to provide us with fixed ideas. But be it remembered that he taxed Voltaire with neglecting any doctrine of which he could not convince others—as he did Jeffrey, from personal experience, with basing all his teaching upon argument, whereas below argument lies meditation. To quit the sphere of conscious argument and seek the depths of unconscious meditation is Carlyle's advice ; and the beginning of it is to observe Silence.

Thus a spirit of serenity obtains throughout these writings because the state of mankind as yet is remediable. The occasional flash of anger is like that of a schoolmaster towards a pupil who has abilities which he will not exert. Man's errors and wanderings



are due to the increase of knowledge which has made impossible the old beliefs, rather than inherent wickedness. There is no cause for despair, for other ages have witnessed like declensions, and in each of us, as in the first man, dwells the invisible world. *Signs of the Times* and *Characteristics* sound like mournful prophecies, or long laments for the decay of our noblest faculties, but their total effect is constructive. We expect to find a world in ruins, but instead we seem to gaze through chinks of scaffolding at an ideal home which has been silently building ; and its summit is in the clouds. Each one of us may regain his birthright, may pass through the portal of silence into the halls of meditation, and there learn the unreliability of the senses, the nothingness of this world for its own sake, its supreme importance as the living garment of the divine idea.

But although Carlyle preached the doctrine of Renunciation as the beginning of wisdom, and that to find our heavenly self we must sacrifice our earthly, he was no ascetic. With him, as with Bunyan, the celestial world rays out its influence upon the lower world. Christian is profoundly interested in earthly things, since they can retard or accelerate his journey to Mount Zion ; and Carlyle can never forget that the meanest things or persons have issued from the Maker of Men. We recall his unforgettable delineation of the rustic who aided King Charles to escape ; how he dwells in imagination upon the changes of his life and the details of his dress.<sup>1</sup> Or again, how he is concerned with the very utensils with which Johnson and Boswell supped at the Mitre. That Carlyle was already disposed towards a picturesque rendering of history, that he rejected as inadequate the conception of history as "Philosophy teaching by experience," we know from his essay on the subject. The condition of mind in which such an interest could root itself, and where the Past and the Dead became sacred at the expense of the living, will be considered later.

It explains also the emphasis he lays upon humour, for lack of which Schiller had only half a mind. The easiest form of greatness was Schiller's, since he saw only what was above him, and not what was about or below. It explains the charm of his own picture of Richter carrying on his literary work in the room

<sup>1</sup> "Biography."



where his mother cooked and scoured. These homely details are transmuted into poetry by the light-beam which unites them to the Maker of Men. To aim only at the sublime implies that thoughts of self still obtrude between the seeing eye and the clear image of the universe that should exist in the mind's mirror of each one of us. Reverence, disinterestedness, annihilation of self, are as needful in literature as in life; for the powers of the intellect are quickened by the open, loving heart; and thus did even a poor Boswell forget his lower self in portraying Johnson, and give to the world a work comparable to the *Odyssey*. But we repeat that Carlyle was no ascetic, and condemned this world only so far as it overmastered the higher nature. He does not bid Goethe sacrifice the paternal wealth and live like Richter. He does not call Schiller idle for spending many hours a day by the river in delicious reveries. But he praises Schiller's heroism in bearing fifteen years of bodily pain without complaint, and producing therein his finest plays, by contrast with such men as Cowper and Rousseau. The past is sacred, but grief for the dead may become selfish if it hinders the advancement of the daily task. A priest-like, dedicated life is Carlyle's ideal at this epoch, the object of which is to dissolve the prison walls of sense.

The harshness of judgment which the world has come to associate with Carlyle, and certainly prevalent in his later writings, is not here. He himself warns us against ascribing states of the soul to physical causes, or we might have alleged more persistently the health and happiness of the first Craigenputtock years. His doctrines speak for themselves—that without sympathy there is no right understanding of your fellow-men, that love quickens the intellectual faculties and is therefore the beginning of knowledge—and he has not failed in their application. He calls William Taylor a *Philister*, and condemns the deplorable editorial methods of Croker, but without personal animus. It is the muffling of the spark of the human spirit in the rubbish of this world that points his rebuke.

Carlyle's political philosophy reveals, through the gaps of wall and tower that tumble about our ears, a city built to music. The picture he draws of the present is unflattering, but it leaves untouched the native majesty of man, and discloses infinite possibilities to each one of us. The woes of the age are due to our failure

to cope adequately with the increase of knowledge, or what we should now call the progress of science. Mechanism has invaded the sphere of morals and religion, and argument has displaced meditation. Friendship is no more ; men judge their fellow-creatures by wealth, social position, and all external signs ; they shape their conduct by the law of public opinion ; hence there is no check to hypocrisy, and no standard of morality, for the judgments of men avail nothing without celestial guidance. Yet the soul has lost no one of its ancient faculties ; and the day of reconstruction will dawn when each begins to reform himself and desert the barren self-conscious for the deep unconscious.

It has been said that as an individual Carlyle was no ascetic, nor was he in the least a misanthrope and advocate of seclusion. Man by himself is but half alive, he declares, and in society life becomes more intense. Like Burns's father, Carlyle was a complete man, for he feared God and was fearless of men. He united in himself all the qualities which have made the greatness of the Scottish character. He disdained the petty restrictions of men, yet lived as if ever in the eye of his great Taskmaster. For human nature needs restraint, and our own day has seen the havoc wrought in manners by republican and socialistic doctrines. In dignity of character even he fell short of his wonderful parents, who inherited the unquestioning religion of their ancestors ; but, as we shall often have occasion to observe, his faults were the result of over-sensitiveness. In later years he sought relief from the aggravations of dyspepsia by propounding heroic means for purifying the human stock ; but at this period of health his conception of associated men was in agreement with the poetical cast of his nature. Society was a mystical union of souls, a true brotherhood of man, because each was directly related to the spiritual First Cause. The mighty organisations of the modern world—constitutions, class distinctions, trade unions—were but artificial products. We recall a passage where he laments "the genial old days," when friendship was possible, when one soul would seek another simply for the pleasure of communion. Of the many figures that here pass before us, though Goethe was the best admired, we would say that Dr. Johnson was the best loved ; and this because of his sociability, his brotherliness towards the world, his goodness to the poor. The paragraphs that tell



of his marriage have a kind of lyric enthusiasm ; the draping folds of prose are stirred by the natural music from a loving and sympathising heart.

Confidence in the future is the outstanding note of these essays. God and the Soul exist, and no Voltaire can exterminate Christianity ; for Christianity has a deeper foundation than books ; it is written in the purest nature of man ; and the human species, having once attained this height, can never retrograde from it. But what impresses us is the strength of Carlyle's conviction, born of personal contact with the reality he expounds. It is the Leith Walk "conversion," without which doubt must obtrude upon philosophic serenity. The diseases of modern life are curable ; they arise out of the scepticism which comes from increase of knowledge. Man, with his steam engines and mechanical appliances, has become self-conscious in knowledge ; he thinks he has probed Nature to the bottom and unveiled her last mystery. Not till he realises, like the wise ancients, that he knows nothing will the mystery of life again encircle him and his soul find reunion with the highest.

We may briefly summarise the motives of some of the essays, to preserve in our minds the gist of Carlyle's teaching. The great achievement of Goethe and the German metaphysicians like Novalis and Richter, was to make faith again possible by superseding the atheistic philosophy of Hume and Diderot. Heyne succeeded because he had an undivided will ; and Burns failed for want of it. Voltaire fell short of true greatness because he was the child of his age, lacked reverence, and became a *Persifleur* ; yet even his life proves that it is thought which rules the world. Schiller fulfilled his true destiny by dedicating his life to art and being lightly bound by human ties. Johnson triumphed over Necessity ; in an age of ruin he remained faithful to the old landmarks, and saved England from revolution. Boswell produced a great biographical work by annihilation of self. Poetry is not a stimulant, according to prevailing fashion, but far removed from sense ; born in the soul, it is independent of political changes. In all spheres of life the truly great is the unconscious. The smallest historical fact excels in interest by virtue of Time and Reality.

And from this summary we naturally turn to the fabric of



Carlyle's philosophy. Apart from its point of contact with German metaphysics, it is no philosophy of the schools with a logical basis, but the personal revelation of one who, as a reward for right living, has been vouchsafed glimpses of the eternal. It is not personal in the narrow sense, but rather the result of admittance by a well constituted, rightly developed soul of those rays of light which claim freedom of passage through all. There is nothing remote in the truths which he discovers ; they are the first-fruits of meditation—of life in a permanent state of undulled wonder at the action of the Universe, made possible by the rejection of petty social ambitions and unworthy pleasures. And though he communicates with mankind only by the bridge of books, his is no academic life or life of the recluse. As strong a reality tinges it as that of the veriest man of action : though books furnish him with experience, and few living presences are more vivid to him than Goethe, Burns, Johnson. It was the life of the spirit, lived by him in a more undivided fashion during those years than before or after. Hence the summer lightnings that play upon his page, and his confidence in the point of vantage from which he surveys the world.

The dissector of Carlyle's merits cannot part with these essays without some recognition of their literary excellence ; though he may accord praise with reserve, knowing his master's views on "art," interpreted as "artifice." But, granted the high degree of concentration which the study of Carlyle demands, it is possible to read his essays with entire satisfaction, and rise from them with an invigorated and uplifted mind. And the reason is that Carlyle would not have written at all without the consciousness of a message that he must impart to the world. He therefore reverted to the utmost source of the river of art, to the point where it bubbles up into visible life from the mysterious central deeps : unlike those writers—not always among the least—who draw their inspiration from the works of other men. If we examine a sonnet of Heredia or a short story of Maupassant, we find the subject has been chosen for its artistic possibilities ; the seer has first descried his vision in the crowded walks of men, and followed it backward towards the rocky solitudes ; and, as a crowning reward, the God of his faithful worship has breathed life into the Pygmalion-image. But Carlyle starts from the

*origins*, and in his progress to the plain, rediscovers for himself the landmarks left by the great ones of the past. More and more are we impressed by the truth of Goethe's criticism that he could develop all out of himself.

The laws of art proceed from the necessities of the human spirit ; they can be learned from Virgil or Milton, but they reveal themselves to the mind which by meditation has discovered within itself a complete inner world. Creation, as Ruskin said long ago, is not so much invention as putting life into your subject ; and the best witness to Carlyle's profound *originality* is the life which reaches to the extremities of his every sentence. He himself tells us how easily the supernatural may become machinery in an epic, when it is no longer believed. We may distinguish between the invocations to the Muse of Homer and Milton, as, in the first case, a fervid and heartfelt prayer, in the second, an ornament of speech, the revelation of an individual mind steeped in classical tradition. With Carlyle, given the standpoint from which he surveys life, there is much that might have degenerated into machinery. He sees man on his little planet, itself a speck, surrounded by eternity and infinity ; and, though often repeated, this never fails of its effect. Again, along his page poetic metaphors stream like torch-light—but these not infrequently recur, and, however sublime the height, it is rare that an image does not serve again, either in his works or letters or journals. Yet the sixth time of use will carry as strong conviction as the first, because of the re-fusion in the creator's mind.

We are not now living in the days of verbal criticism, yet it is tempting to illustrate in this way the omnipresence of Carlyle's mind. When, for instance, he says how the knives used by Johnson and Boswell at the Mitre are now " rusted to the heart," we feel the grappling force of intellect that could include so much detail and fuse it by meditation. And in the essay on Burns, no self-conscious " artificer " could have placed a certain word with greater skill than he. These men, he says of Milton and Cervantes, and their single-minded devotion to a great purpose, compared with Burns's divided aim between poetry and social ambition, were no " self-seekers." How comfortably does this word supply a want in the reader's mind, and aid his conception of the whole ! In how individual a sense is it used, modified by

what has gone before, facing the truth, yet shorn of some of its harshness ! And, on the same theme, he tells us that the wedge will rend rocks if its edge be single, but if it be double it will rend nothing. From another writer, so tense is the place, we might have expected a stronger antithesis than the word "nothing" ; but here it is not so, nor are we disappointed. The mind of Carlyle overthrows the reader by the mere wind of its passage.

Lastly, we may pronounce the total impression left by the essays to be a moral one. They are of incalculable importance above all to those who have just crossed the threshold into manhood or womanhood ; and we may predict a revised scale of values in such as lay to heart their doctrines—a contempt for worldliness, insincerity and shams. The authoritative call to live more worthily will come to them like a new religion ; or at least will aid in caulking the seams made in the bark of life by its first struggle in the breakers of the world. Goldsmith tells how a crowd of people went to see a halter in which a nobleman was hanged, and were delighted because threads of gold were interwoven with the silk ; they looked for silk alone and were gratified by the added spectacle of gold. In the same way, we approach Carlyle for literature and we get the fine gold of morality as well. Man, as he himself says, is the clearest symbol of the Divinity to man ; and we feel that here is one who has found his way by meditation to the deep places of the soul and speaks thence with a puissant voice.

We may raise one question more, but the time to answer it is not yet. How far did Carlyle read the signs of the time aright ? He showed that faith is possible to the right-living individual soul ; but who will dare to say that the nineteenth century became an age of faith ? Was mechanism displaced from ruler to servant ? Did the advance of knowledge re-establish wonder and reverence ? How far have the diseases in the bodies social and politic, the false centres of sensibility, disappeared ? We know that Carlyle hoped much ; of the nature of his disappointment and the effect on his life and thought we need not yet speak. Only be it remembered that as yet he lived far from the world, had not exhausted the joys of reading, and was comparatively young. He had more confidence in the potentialities of the soul in its warfare with



matter than the reverse. He elevated poets above all other men, and affirmed poetry to be the essence of a nation's history.<sup>1</sup> We may not accept as proven his saying that Goethe found a universe full of scepticism and transmuted it into a universe of belief,<sup>2</sup> but we ascribe it to his own spiritual vitality, and his conception at this time of man on earth as a spiritual force.

<sup>1</sup> "Historic Survey of German Poetry."

<sup>2</sup> "Goethe's Portrait."

## CHAPTER IX

### "SARTOR RESARTUS": ANALYSIS

I. 1. IT is strange that while knowledge has been spreading into every quarter of Nature and Art for five thousand years, nothing has been written about Clothes. Scientists have proved the Creation of a world to be as little mysterious as the cooking of a dumpling ; and man's whole life and environment has been elucidated. Why, then, should the vestural Tissue, the outmost wrappage of Man's Soul, be overlooked ? As usual Germany comes to our aid, the one country where, in these frenzied times, abstract thought can shelter. In countries like England, absorbed in practical matters, this abstruse Inquiry might have lain dormant indefinitely. The Present Editor would certainly have not filled the gap ; it was a gift copy from Professor Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo of his monumental work that directed his thoughts to the subject.

2. Not only has the Professor disclosed a new branch of Philosophy, but he is himself a new Individuality. Our task is to bring him and his Philosophy home to the business and bosoms of the English. Many difficulties confronted us ; the absence of biography, and how to procure access to journals. A communication from a friend of the Professor's, interested in the extension of such theories, and the promise of documents, went far to solve the latter difficulty. Let the reader accept the result with a mind open and cleared of cant. We ourselves have examined Teufelsdröckh's work in a purely critical spirit.

3. Such a singular work was not to have been expected from Teufelsdröckh ; and yet who could tell what lurked in him ? There were strange gleams in his dreamy eyes, their rest was like infinite motion, the sleep of a spinning top. He had come as a stranger to Weissnichtwo ; hence the difficulty of gleaning biographical details ; for he would slyly elude enquiries, and was regarded as something of a Wandering Jew. He was called "Professor of Things in General"—characteristic of our chaotic times—but he had never delivered a course of lectures. Much was hoped from this Professorship, that it would replace Denial by Reconstruction ; but it had little result.

Teufelsdröckh would sit meditatively smoking at his Coffee-house, and at times delight the assembly with a river of utterance. The Present Editor was much favoured, and even admitted to the Professor's attic : from which, as a watch-tower, he beheld the circulation of the city. Looking down on the contrasts of life, he would compare the living flood that poured through the streets to Apparitions : souls made visible by bodies soon to vanish into air. Or, with the same calm look, he would utter rather startling Night-thoughts : speculations on the varied lots of the individuals crowded beneath the smoke-canopy of the city ; pomp, vanity, vice, crime, love, sickness, divided from one another by mere brick partitions. But he more often remained silent amid the litter of his apartment, which the good Lieschen, his right arm, restored to order once a month. One fond friend and admirer he had beside—a very Boswell—by name Heuschrecke ; whom he in return loved from gratitude and habit.

4. We admit his book has its faults, despite its grand effect of inciting the reader's mind to thought : it is a mixture of ore and rubbish. There is a rusticity about the author ; he has seen little of good society ; to him a drawing-room is simply a section of infinite space. He sees the star of a Lord as a tag for *hooking-together*. A transcendentalist, he looks on all material things as spirit. Inequality marks his style ; a phrase of crushing force is followed by pages of maundering. His vast learning, common to Germany, may excite wonder here. To vigour, inspiration, burning words—the result of a clear intellect and wild imagination—succeed soporific passages. In his moral nature there are like contrasts of infinite love and a sardonic humour akin to that of Mephistopheles. We once heard him *laugh* : a memorable peal, a laugh of the whole man from head to foot. No man who has once laughed heartily can be altogether bad. As an author, he suffers from want of arrangement ; he hurls all the courses of his banquet into one huge trough.

5. The Professor starts with the remark that there is a Spirit of Clothes, an Architectural Idea behind all fashions, and a meaning in Colour. The first, mythological, part of his exhaustive treatise may be dealt with in a cursory manner ; and also the antiquarian. Of interest are his philosophical reflections : for instance, that the first purpose of clothes was ornament, not warmth or decency ; as we still see in the barbarous classes of civilised countries. What changes are in Time ! An act or word is a seed-grain that cannot die. The inventor of printing was disbanding armies and cashiering kings and creating a new democratic world. The inventor of gunpowder was preparing the final suppression of Force by Thought. Money was a simple invention of the old-world grazier, who scratched the figure of the ox he wished to barter on



a piece of leather. From Clothes has mysteriously risen Shame. Man is a Tool-using animal; and so can knead glowing iron like paste, and make of the sea his smooth highway. We take this to be the most comprehensive definition of man.

6. Unsatisfactory is the section on Aprons. They are defences, and the whole military and police may be compared to an apron. The most puzzling is the Episcopal apron; it seems to have no use, and its corner is tucked in as if the day's work were done. Journalists now are our true Kings and Clergy.

7. Our Professor is on firmer ground when he reaches the Middle Ages: the time of extravagance in dress. We need not dwell upon fantastic details, but the general rule is that fashions become obsolete, and the present grows out of the past, like the branches of a tree. He notes the accidents by which men live in history: such as a rent in the courtier's breeches, in the days when the person was artificially swollen out with bran.

8. We now have the harder task of treating Clothes from the moral, political, and religious standpoint. "Society," says Teufelsdröckh, "is founded upon Cloth." It is hard to elucidate his doctrine, so complex is his method: and his proofs derive from experience rather than argument. The speculative man, he says, will at times ask the question, Who am I? He is then alone with the universe; life appears to him a dream; and wars and Moscow retreats like the somnambulism of uneasy sleepers. Time and Space are part of our dream; deeper meditation teaches that they have no existence; and God is Omnipresent and Eternal. In such mood did the Professor light upon the subject of Clothes; he compared the horse in his perennial rain-proof court-suit, and himself thatched with dead fleeces of sheep and bark of vegetables, etc.—a true moving Rag-screen. Man, prejudiced, unthinking, creature of use-and-wont, forgets that he is naked without clothes, that he is tailorised and demoralised—but also a Spirit.

9. But let Teufelsdröckh consider the utility of clothes: as a baby, what would he have been without blankets and bibs? And now when he rides his horse through the storm, where is he without weather-proof case of wool, and bit and saddle? No, he is no Adamite, and sees the virtue and utility of clothes. Look, he says, how Red says to Blue, "Be hanged," and it is done. The reason is that man is a Spirit and invisibly bound to all men; and clothes are the visible emblems of that fact. In atrabiliar moods, reading of pompous ceremonials, he imagines a sudden disappearance of all clothes, and the effect on Dukes, Bishops, Generals, etc. It would mean a dissolution of civilised society.

10. A naked world exists under the clothed one: this is the fact that concerns us. We need only touch on the Professor's speculative radicalism: how King and Carman are compounded

of great Need and Greed and little Faculty ; how the Carman, who knows something of equilibrium and has operated on Nature, is the more cunningly gifted : but the difference is Clothes. Think of the confusion of ranks without Clothes ; and how else could we possess the pineal gland of the social body—a Purse ?

Yet, with this habit of dwelling on the seamy side of the tapestry of life, Teufelsdröckh combines a Transcendentalism which exalts man to the Gods. Man's soul appears to him surrounded by a garment of flesh, contextured in the Loom of Heaven, whereby he is revealed to his like ; he is swathed in amid Sounds and Colours and Forms. Our Professor is fundamentally a mystic, and Matter, though never so despicable, is to him the manifestation of Spirit. He calls Wonder the only reasonable temper for man, and the basis of worship ; and has small liking for Science with its tabulating methods and Thought without Reverence. The class of Scoffers and illuminated Sceptics is likewise wearisome to him. Explain thy birth and death, or retire with thy foolish cackle, he says to those who deny the domain of mystery.

11. In the process of expanding his thought, Teufelsdröckh rises higher and higher. He denies that anything in the universe can be detached or separated. The blacksmith's fire is kindled at the sun and fed by antediluvian air ; it is an Altar on the bosom of the All, and its dingy Priest proclaims the mystery of Force. All visible things are emblems, that exist to body forth an Idea ; and hence the significance of Clothes. Language is the garment of thought, and metaphors are its stuff ; you shall seek in vain for an unmetaphorical style. Heaven and Earth are the Time-vesture of the Eternal ; all that represents Spirit to Spirit is a suit of raiment put on for a season. The whole Universe, therefore, is but Clothing. . . .

We break off to say that the biographical documents have arrived, and a letter from the Professor's friend suggesting that knowledge of his life is necessary to the understanding of his philosophy. What kind of man was this Teufelsdröckh ? Was he ever in love ? We are promised not only a biography but an autobiography ; and we are presented with six Paper-Bags, where, to say truth, greater confusion reigns than even in the Clothes-volume. Daily and nightly does the Editor pore over these to the detriment of his health, but lured on by the belief that the Philosophy of Clothes rightly interpreted will reveal a new Era.

II. 1. The genesis of our Clothes-Philosopher is obscure, but the first appearance of a great man on our planet is an event too important to be withheld. In the village of Entephul, Andreas Futteral, an old soldier of Frederick the Great, lived by cultivating



his orchard. His wife Gretchen loved and admired him, though her subordination was not entire. But she too did her part in making trim and gay their cottage embowered in fruit-trees and honeysuckle. One evening, a mysterious and reverend stranger deposited with them a basket, bidding them care for the contents as an invaluable Loan. The astonished couple found therein a little infant, with a number of gold coins. The stranger having totally disappeared, Andreas and his wife resolved to care for the child : and so did our friend Teufelsdröckh get the chance of growing to manhood. In after years he passionately yearned to know his father : though, after all, he said, the true Father is in Heaven, and those whom other men call Father and Mother are but nursing parents like mine. His name preoccupied him much, as the earliest garment wrapped round the earth-visiting *Me*. Names are of endless importance, and all common speech, science, poetry, consist in right *Naming*. . . . Meanwhile the child made the usual progress till he performed the miracle of Speech. . . . Such is the account he gives us of his genealogy.

2. How happy is the season of childhood with its ignorance of Time and Vicissitude ! And how blessed is Sleep, granted to the Child, denied to world-conquerors like Alexander and Pyrrhus ! We pass over games and such minor details ; we note the child eating his supper on the orchard wall, watching the gold and azure of the sunset. He loves animated Nature, even the swine as they follow their master. Helvetius' theory that all are born the same, and genius is developed by happy accidents of childhood, is not approved by Teufelsdröckh. As easily may an acorn produce a cabbage, or a cabbage-seed an oak. Yet he admits the all-but omnipotence of early culture. Father Andreas stirred his imagination by battle-reminiscences ; and the old men under the Linden-tree roused his sense of a great world beyond Entephul. The Stage-coach, which at first had seemed to rise and set like the moon, he now understood to come on made highways from far cities. But the annual Cattle-fair, where assembled together men and women of strange dress and appearance and occupation from distant countries, was the grand experience.

Thus, waited on by the four golden seasons, did the child sit and learn to read in the grand Volume of the World. Yet a dark ring of Care did encircle him : the ring of Necessity ; and happy is he for whom it becomes a ring of Duty. His Active Power was hemmed in ; much was forbid ; he had to renounce many wishes ; and thus did he come into collision with Necessity, and his tears flowed. Obedience he found safest, and so laid the foundation of worldly discretion and Morality. His upbringing was frugal and rigorous, but contained the root of deeper earnestness. From his mother, by act as well as word, he learned



simple Faith. To see the highest he knew on earth bowed down before a Higher in Heaven, reached inward to the very core of his being and kindled Reverence, the divinest human feeling.

3. We have now done with the passive part of Teufelsdröckh's endowment, and turn to his active. At school the master pronounced him a genius and could do little for him. He early discovered a passion for reading, expended his coppers on stall literature, and accumulated a strange miscellany of knowledge. As an instance of his meditative, poetical spirit, take his reflection on the streamlet : how it had flowed on from the earliest date of history, was flowing when Joshua forded Jordan. Less fortunate were his experiences at the Gymnasium among boys who persecuted him. Averse on principle to fighting, much given to tears, he yet at times blazed up in rage that quelled the boldest. The masters he calls “hide-bound Pedants,” and their teaching mechanical ; for mind grows not by cramming, but like a spirit by mysterious contact of spirit.

At this time the death of Father Andreas first made known to him the inexorable word *Never* ! Yet he drew strength even from grief and desolation ; and the Tomb became to him a fortress whence to defy the hostile world. . . .

Such chaos reigns among the documents that it is hard to combine a picture of Teufelsdröckh's University years. He read diligently, but not wholly with profit ; he suffered poverty ; yet his true character is first decisively revealed. He speaks hardly of the University ; and the Professors, he says, were chiefly remarkable for their attainments in Hypocrisy—for gulling the public into the belief that what they conferred was education. In the present age of Deception, perhaps man's gullibility in the provinces of Education and Religion, where so little can be furnished, is a blessing to him. The Professors lived on their reputation ; the spirit of the University was said to be rational and opposed to mystic, with the result of much argument and scepticism. We admit that our era is one of Unbelief, but a better time will come, for periods of Faith and Denial alternate. To the nobler-minded it is a misery to be born in times of doubt : such as Teufelsdröckh, who demanded nutriment and was fed with east wind. However, he learned to read by himself ; to master languages and lay the foundation of a literary life ; to construe the writer's character from his work ; and fashion a ground-plan of human nature.

But paroxysms of doubt assailed and finally vanquished him ; so that God's fair living world became for him a vacant Hades. Add want of guidance, sympathy, hope, money, to the Purgatory pains of the poor struggling genius. Some little comfort he derived from friendship with Herr Towgood, a travelling English-

man. They discussed the shortcomings of education, and feelings of friendship arose between them : a quality obsolete now, when so-called friends are but dinner-guests.

4. On leaving College, Teufelsdröckh had to think of getting under way. It is no easy matter to find your true inward Capability and reconcile it with your outward Environment of Fortune. Some never solve the question ; hunger compels others ; and apprenticeships, professions, etc., help to mould the vague universality of the young. Teufelsdröckh, having tried but abandoned Law, found himself without outward landmark. It was not Work alone that counted in the Law, and he was too shy a man to be popular. Regarded as a useless "man of genius," he combated hunger by private tuition and translation. A kind of friendship with the noble Zähdarm family afforded him glimpses of the great world. But the Sphinx-riddle of the Universe had to be solved, and work to be found ; and we must treat as mere off-shoots of a mind set on this grand object his remarks on the detestability of young men between the ages of nineteen and twenty-four ; and on Man as a Son of Time which ever threatens to devour him. Among his fellows, from excess of love and fear, he had come to adopt a tone of irony : though he now condemns it as the language of the Devil. How then can such a one make his way in life, where the first problem is to unite with a body of men ?

5. We see Teufelsdröckh abandoning his law business and daring the ocean of life alone. At the very outset he touches at a Calypso isle. Heaven, he says, is revealed everywhere on earth, but most in one's fellow-creature. The pitifulest mortal is not indifferent to us : how much more the Young Maiden who promises the highest mystic possibility—union of Like and Unlike ! All women to him were holy and heavenly ; that he might win one for himself was beyond all hope. If kind eyes did cast electric glances on a nature so full of latent passion, what a fire would be kindled !

Our Professor did once fall frantically in love ; and we maintain that the human heart is capable of but one love. We know little of the event, and the fair one's name, *Blumine*, is fictitious. She was high-born, high-spirited, but dependent and insolvent. The Garden house of a noble Mansion was their place of meeting, in the presence of a brave company. He had thought her sphere too far above him ; yet pole and pole tremble towards contact ; and his soul is roused from its deepest recesses. Though near to swooning, he did not take refuge in silence, but resolved to show himself or be for ever hid. As if inspired, he struck adroitly into the stream of conversation and continued to lead it. He discomfited a certain Philistine who was wearying the company,



and thereby won a smile from Blumine. When he addressed her, was there a tremor in her voice? The conversation took a higher turn, the barriers of ceremony were dissolved, and the burden rolled from every heart. Only the failing light saddened with the suggestion of death. Our friend, at parting, pressed Blumine's hand, and fancied it was not withdrawn. Love, he reflected, is not delirium; it is the Idea made Real, with the addition of Fantasy, for which, by contrast with sense, planets and solar systems will not suffice. They met again; and he, poor, proud, who had lost faith in himself, knew that the fairest and noblest did not despise him—that he also was a man. Amid his thoughts of Eden, and rejection of the past as a haggard dream, did he reflect on his want of capital, and what figure a Mrs. Teufelsdröckh was likely to make? We pass over the pitiful close of this love-episode; how he found his Morning-star all dimmed and dusky-red; how she told him they were to meet no more. Yet was Teufelsdröckh made immortal by a kiss.

6. Teufelsdröckh does nothing violent, but, even more compressed into himself, starts on his wanderings. He called the past a lying vision, and concealed his rage and despair under a cover of Silence. He wanders on with no fixed purpose; now surveying from afar the embosomed town diminished to a toy-box; now in the mountain wilds where beauty alternates with grandeur, and the path from amid shaggy chasms leads to emerald valleys and the dwellings of men. We see him on the uplands at sunset, alone with Nature, whom he now recognises as his Mother and divine; above him the savage peaks glowing with gold and amethyst. No trace of man but a little link of highway; and along it comes a gay barouche and four bearing Towgood and Blumine on their wedding journey! . . . We forbear at such a time to turn against himself a subsequent criticism of the Professor's on View-hunting: which he compares to drinking the liquor and then eating the glass.

The confusion of his wanderings exceeds our power to elucidate; the stream of his existence has lost itself like a cataract in clouds of spray. A nameless unrest urged him on; his loadstars were blotted out; and all he could do was to go forward . . . forward. . . . He visited strange countries; at one time a Tartar woman cooked his breakfast; at another he roasted wild eggs in the sand of the Sahara. That he had his living to seek saved him from suicide. Before his spirit can free itself and he can become a man, he must write his sorrows over the earth in foot-prints. Byron wrote his in prose and verse; and Napoleon to the sound of cannon-volleys and light of conflagrations.

7. Our Wanderer, disappointed of all, affects stoicism, but is consumed by inward misery. Man, he says, is based on Hope,



and this world is the Place of Hope. Yet he himself is shut out from Hope : and in a deeper sense, for he has lost all tidings of a world higher than this. Religious by nature, yet doubt had become unbelief ; and for man's wellbeing Faith is the one thing needful. But for this all wounds might have healed. Is there no God ? he asks, or at best an absentee God sitting idle since Creation ? Has Duty no divine meaning ? Or is it but fear of the gallows ? Can Virtue be ground out of the husks of Pleasure ? If happiness is man's aim, let him covet Stupidity and sound Digestion.

So does the Wanderer interrogate Destiny and receive no answer but an echo. The world has become a desert, full of despairing men ; the Temples of the Godhead have crumbled down. Only he conserved the Infinite nature of Duty ; and so God was present in his heart, though lost to his sight in the world. He believed with Milton that to be weak is the true misery ; that we should see ourselves in our works ; but the net result of his workings amounted to nothing. Had he no faculty, then, or was he the completest dullard of the age ? The fearful unbelief is unbelief in yourself ; and the world had cruelly rejected him. Isolated he moved among his fellows ; around him the Universe lay all void of life, even of hostility : a huge engine rolling on in indifference to grind him limb from limb. . . . From suicide he refrained, but in danger he displayed a carelessness that passed for courage. And yet, devoid of hope and fear, he lived in a state of indefinite, pining fear. Full of such fear, one sultry day in Paris, he suddenly asked himself, What art thou afraid of ? . . . Canst thou not endure ? . . . And in sudden defiant mood he shook away fear for ever and the Everlasting No. It was a New-birth and the beginning of Manhood.

8. Unrest continued, but of a less hopeless kind, for the soul had won its freedom. It now begins to work outward from the citadel and clutch on the Not-me for wholesomer food. Looking upon a town, he would reflect how an ember of fire—and also of vital fire—had survived there for two thousand years. Turning to men's attainments, the results seemed to him mystic and invisible. Skill in any handicraft is transmitted from father to son by hearing and vision, and cannot be located. Laws, Government, are not to be seen ; they spring out of mystery, spirit, invisible Force ; they are everywhere and nowhere. The only-tangible products are cities, tilled fields, books ; and the writer of a true book, who occurs about once in two centuries, need envy no city builder or city burner. Open thy Hebrew Bible rather than journey to the pyramids.

Pausing on the field of Wagram, he laments the waste of war, and exposes its net product—the mutual slaughter of peasants

dwelling far from each other and with no cause of quarrel, because their Governors had fallen out. More wanderings follow, and contribute to his spiritual growth. He owns to a predilection for great men, and calls them inspired texts of the divine Book of Revelations ; but we must suppress his meetings with laurelled and crowned heads. We only preserve his saying of Napoleon, that he was an unconscious divine Missionary, preaching through the cannon's throat, “*La carrière ouverte aux talens.*” His meditations in the beauty and solitude of the North Cape are cut short by a smuggler, whom he coerces with a pistol. Inventive Spiritualism thus triumphs over Animalism. Of his inner man, we may say that he had cast out the Satanic School, though he had nothing to take its place. The world seemed to him a place of shadows ; his wishes had been sniffed aside—but what if they had all been granted ! The Earth was a Dog-cage inhabited by successive noisy generations of men ; only the heavenly stars looked down unchanged. True, he was nobody ; but who was somebody ? This was the Centre of Indifference.

9. Temptation must come to all, continues Teufelsdröckh, in the populous moral desert of selfishness ; to all who are men and not half-men. To him was given, if not victory, the consciousness of battle ; and he did finally attain the sunlit slopes of the Mountain which has no summit. He paused in his wanderings, bade farewell to Hope and Fear, and thus accomplished the first preliminary moral act : Annihilation of Self. His dwelling was on the high tableland before the mountains ; above him the azure Dome ; around him the four azure-flowing curtains of the winds. Towns and villages lay about his mountain-seat, and their smoke-clouds, as a culinary horologe, told him the hour of the day. Or the tempest would encircle a peak with vapour, then march on and leave it white with snow. What is Nature but the “Living Garment of God” ?

Fore-shadows of the great Truth began to fall over his soul, like the voice of a mother to her frightened child—that the Universe is not dead. An infinite love and pity kindled in him for his fellow-men. Were they not his Brothers, bowed under the same load as he ? The Origin of Evil had been his strangling knot ; solution of it was indispensable to a few ; and every era must find its own solution. To him, man's unhappiness comes of his greatness, because the Infinite is in him. All Europe could not make one Shoeblick happy ; for the Shoeblick has a soul and would require the whole Universe.

We fancy ourselves miserable because each of us, with his fund of self-conceit, assesses his own deserts. Rather by lessening your Denominator can the Fraction of Life be increased in value. True Life begins with Renunciation. I complain that I am not



happy ; but what Act of Legislature is there that I should be happy ? Let man seek Blessedness, for this is the Godlike, and only in the Godlike will he find Strength and Freedom. Love not Pleasure, love God. This is the Everlasting Yea. Knowest thou the "Worship of Sorrow" ? Its Temple is in ruins, but the Altar is still there and the sacred Lamp still burns. Cease, Voltaire ; or help rather to embody the Spirit of Christianity in a new Mythus : but thy talent is only for destruction. Thou canst not dispute out of me the God in my own heart. In my own heart is the origin of the "Worship of Sorrow" ; and this is Belief, all else Opinion. Cease, then, to dispute with thy brother that he is encroaching on thy share of happiness : for such is the cause of all earthly disputes. But Conviction is worthless till it becomes Conduct ; for speculation is endless ; and Experience must provide a centre round which it revolves. Doubt cannot be removed except by Action ; and Do the Duty which lies nearest thee : these are two sayings of a wise man. Here in the despised Actual is thy Ideal, and thy condition the stuff from which to give it heroic form. Let there be blessed light over man's soul ; then will Chaos be abolished and the deep rock-foundations build themselves beneath.

10. We have now followed Teufelsdröckh to the point of his Conversion : a state unknown to the wisest ancients. He has discovered the Ideal in the Actual ; that he, like every being, has some faculty ; and that, as a wonder-working Tool, nothing exceeds the Pen. This task of Priesthood, highest of those allotted to man, has he taken upon himself ; and he thanks the heavens he has found his calling. . . . A suspicion crosses the Editor's mind that these documents are fantastic and symbolical rather than true to the letter. . . . But, as the Professor says, What is a fact ? The man is the spirit he worked in and what he became. We now know what Teufelsdröckh became ; his character has taken its ultimate bent. We will abstain from further readings in his external Life element—details of his Professorship, etc. Returning to the Clothes-Philosophy, we may say that he seems preappointed to expound it. Cast out from public employment, from associations of men, condemned to a life of solitude and meditation, he has grown used to looking through the Shows of things into Things themselves.

III. i. In all sensible phenomena, then, Teufelsdröckh has recognised either fresh or faded raiment ; he has trodden old rags into the mire and worshipped Spirit in all shapes. But he does not, like Adam and Rousseau, wholly dispense with clothes bodily or intellectual ; and this is the gist of his Philosophy. We will continue as before chaining together selections from his abundance. The most remarkable modern incident, he says,



was George Fox, the first Quaker, making himself a leather suit : the poor shoemaker, visited in his humble surroundings by splendours and terrors. Disdaining the advice to “drink beer and dance with the girls,” he returned to his Bible. His spirit heaved under its mountains of encumbrance ; no shoe-wages could get him into heaven ; only prayer and meditation ; so he made his leather suit and retired to the hollow of a tree. Like Diogenes he stands on the adamantine basis of his manhood ; but is even greater, for he preaches not scorn but love.

2. Church-Clothes are described as the forms with which men invest the Divine Idea of the World. Only in Society does Religion manifest itself ; in looking heavenward. Soul communes with Soul, and mutual love begins. How my Belief gains when another shares it ! How easily do I catch either love or hate from my fellow ! If this is so through the impediments of earth, how much more when soul communes with soul ! Without Church-Clothes Society could not exist ; for, as Government is the outer skin of the Body Politic, Religion is its nervous tissue. Our present Church-Clothes are out-at-elbows, or serve as masks for unclean things. Religion has withdrawn to quiet nooks and is weaving new vestures for later generations.

3. Silence and Secrecy are great things, continues the Professor. Thought works in silence, and capable men forbear to babble of what they are creating. Hold thy tongue for one day, and how much clearer does thy purpose grow ! Even so, Virtue works in Secrecy ; Shame is the soil of all Virtue ; and thou shouldst not prate even to thyself. In Symbols, Silence and Speech act together with double significance. Fantasy appears as Sense, and reveals something of the Infinite. Man is guided by Symbols ; the Universe is a vast Symbol of God. All that man does is symbolical ; the hut he builds embodies a Thought.

At present man is smothered by the Genius of Mechanism ; and persuaded by the Motive-Millwrights that he is a dead Iron-Balance for weighing Pains and Pleasures on. When did history proceed by calculated motives ? How account for Christianities, French Révolutions, etc. ? It is Imagination that rules us ; and inspiration or madness is present in the meanest. Understanding is thy window, but Fantasy thine eye. See five hundred soldiers sabred to death for a mere flag ! Man lives by Symbols, and the noblest ages best prize symbolical worth. There are symbols like banners that have but extrinsic value, though through these glimmers the Divine Idea ; and indeed the highest symbol of all, the Cross, is extrinsic. But there are symbols with intrinsic value, such as works of Art, where Eternity looks through Time. Still nobler are the lives of heroic men. Highest of all when the Poet becomes Prophet and embodies religious symbols. To

higher symbol than Jesus of Nazareth man has not attained. Time may deface or desecrate symbols; even the *Iliad* now needs scientific interpretation. All things have their rise and fall, and we call him a Legislator who removes worn-out symbols lest they choke the world.

4. The Professor uses a book written by his friend Heuschrecke against the dangers of excessive population as a means of introducing the following thoughts: Two men he honours: the toilworn Craftsman with hard hand and rugged face and form bent in our service, and him who toils for the spiritually indispensable, the bread of Life. The two dignities may be united, and a Peasant Saint is the sublimest thing on earth. The poor man is not to be pitied when he toils, but when the lamp of his soul goes out.

On the subject of excessive population, he laments that a horse can be sold for a good sum in any market, while a man, who is a more cunningly devised article, is worth nothing to the world. Call not the world too crowded while the plains of America and interior of Africa are desolate. But the leaders of men, who should guide the superfluous masses into these fruitful regions, are busy "preserving their game"!

5. Teufelsdröckh considers Society to be defunct, owing to the damage wrought in its Nervous Tissue, or Religion, by the attacks of three centuries. There is no longer any Social Idea of a common Home; but each clutches what he can get; and Friendship is impossible in an age of unlimited competition. The poor die of hunger and overwork, the rich of idleness and satiety. The one virtue of which men boast is "Independence," forgetting that if your superior is worthy to rule, reverence is the only freedom. Utilitarians are engaged in burning the Body Politic now that its Soul has departed. Yet no one can hinder the Spirit of the Time: it were safer to acquiesce. . . . We suspect that Teufelsdröckh would consent that the Utilitarian Monster, if well controlled, should tread down old ruinous Palaces and Temples. . . . Society is not dead, and cannot die, he continues; but man hates change and clings to old traditions. There will be a Phoenix rebirth, though the burnings which precede it may last two centuries.

6. We call Teufelsdröckh the politest man in the world. He maintains that courtesy, the remembrance of the rights of others, is not the attribute of a class, but lies in human nature, and is due from all to all. There is but one Temple in the world, the body of man—he quotes from Novalis. He would bow to all men as visible manifestations of God; but Vanity would pocket the bow. Therefore he will reverence Clothes as all men do; for no Lord was ever my-Lorded in tattered blanket fastened by wooden skewer. Often when in London did he turn into the



Old-Clothes Market and worship the past witnesses of Woe and Joy and all the Passions.

7. Though two centuries may be the limit for the complete burning-out of the World-Phoenix, in nature Creation and Destruction proceed together ; and while the ashes of the Old are blown about, organic filaments of the new spin themselves. Thou art my Brother ; thy Hatred is inverted Sympathy. Wondrous are the bonds that unite us all. Like the visible circulation of letters and messages, there is a finer nervous circulation by which man's minutest act influences all men. And the generations are similarly bound together by the Tradition or form of Life which we inherit. Cadmus printed this volume, and Tubalcain made the first needle. Nature is one, and so is Mankind ; and through the generations Opinion flows on like life-streams, ensuring that no thought shall ever die. Progress is eternal ; Newton must out-distance Kepler, and the Radical supplant the Whig. Let the friends of order take comfort, that the Phoenix whom they see perishing from self-immolation will soar the higher.

We pause to remark that Teufelsdröckh is a convinced Radical ; but, as to his politics, in his concern for Past and Future, he seems slightly to regard the Present or a delay of centuries before his prophecies are fulfilled. He has little to say of Elective Franchise ; and hardly thinks that Freedom can spring from the Ballot-Box. But to return to "organic filaments," Hero-worship seems to him of the number. Nowadays man cannot obey, yet his faculty of reverence slumbers and is not dead. Nature orders that he should obey where he ought, and reverence above all the faintest revelation of the Godlike in his fellow-man. Look at Voltaire's triumph in the parched Parisian world : and he an ape-like divinity, yet deemed the Wisest ! What promise is here for more favourable seasons of Life ! The dullest clodpole will worship a soul higher than himself. Another organic filament is the Press, which, in preaching-faculty, has overborne the Church. You say, no Religion, no Prophet ? There is Goethe.—No Temple ? There is the Universe ; and for Evangel the History of Men.

8. The Professor now grapples with Time and Space ; beholds Existence stripped of its earthly hulls ; and takes his final leap into Transcendentalism. What is a Miracle ? he asks. To a tropical savage an icicle would be a miracle. Not violation of Nature's law but the presence of a deeper law. Of those who say Nature is constant we ask, What are her unalterable rules ? Was Man with his experience present at Creation ? Nature is of infinite depth, and our knowledge is limited to a few centuries and square miles. We know not the larger cycle our little epicycle revolves on : as the Minnow knows every accident of its little



creek but not the Ocean Tides and Trade-winds that regulate it. Of the Volume of Nature written in celestial hieroglyphs, only Prophets can read a line here and there : not your Academies of Science who pick out Letters in the vulgar character and therefrom put together economic Recipes. Custom blinds us to the Miraculous ; and from repetition we view the Stupendous with stupid indifference. Names are like custom-woven, wonder-hiding garments ; we call witchcraft and such things Madness : but what is Madness ? It is a mysterious boiling up of the Chaotic Deep ; it lies in the wisest soul, and out of it his world of wisdom has been built and now rests, as this Earth-rind on its dark foundations.

Space and Time are the greatest wonder-hiding agents. It were a great thing to clap on a Space-or-Time-annihilating hat and be present anywhere or anywhen ; at the creation or consummation of the world—in the first century or the thirty-first. But is the Past annihilated or the Future non-extant ? Consider thy mystic faculties, Memory and Hope. By these thou the Earth-blinded communest darkly and with mute beckonings with Past and Future. Pierce through the Time element into the Eternal : with God it is a universal Here and Now. The white tomb of our loved one is no illusion ; and our lost friend is still mysteriously here, as we all are with God. Space and Time are forms of thought, hardly realities. You would think it a miracle could I extend my arm to the sun, but the miracle is that I extend it at all : not in mere miles of distance.

And so with Time : we say that Orpheus built Thebes by the sound of his lyre ; but who built this town of Weissnichtwo ? Was it not the still higher Orpheuses who civilised man by the divine music of wisdom ? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, and his sphere-melody still sounds in our hearts. Is a thing wonderful when it happens in two hours, and not when it happens in two million ? Sweep away the illusion of Time and look back to the first cause. Then wouldst thou recognise that this Universe is the star-domed City of God, and God is present in every soul and every grass-blade.

Remember how Dr. Johnson longed to see a ghost. We are all ghosts, apparitions, if you compress the threescore years into three minutes. We rise out of nothing ; Eternity is round us ; and minutes are as years to Eternity. Where now are Alexander with his steel hosts, or Napoleon and his Moscow retreats ? Dust and shadow are our limbs and life-blood ; a Shadow-system gathered round our Me. That mighty warrior is a vision, a revealed force ; the film of earth gives way and he sinks beyond plummet's sounding. Thus do the generations storm across the Earth from Mystery to Mystery.

9. We have now travelled from man's woollen, fleshly and social garments inward to those of his Soul's Soul—Time and Space. Do we begin to discern something of the eternal essence of man ? . . . We trust we have made the reader feel that his daily life is surrounded with wonder ; and that all Symbols and Forms are Clothes, even the Authority of Law and the Thirty-nine Articles. As Clothes-Philosophy is evidently an important branch of knowledge, we will glance on two divisions of mankind whom we may call Cloth-animals : Dandies and Tailors.

10. A Dandy is one who lives to dress, and all he asks in return is the glance of your eye. The world has neglected him ; but now comes our Professor to prove his mystic significance. The Dandies are a Religious Sect—their religion is Self-worship, their Temple Almack's, where they worship by night ; their Sacred Books are Fashionable Novels. In contrast to this sect let us take the Irish *Poor-Slaves*, pledged even before birth to Poverty and Obedience. . . . Two pictures follow—one of the interior of a Poor-Slave's cabin, the other of a Dandy's dressing-room. . . . These two sects will one day part England between them : like two electric machines, positive or money, negative or hunger. A child's finger may bring the two together, and the earth will be shivered into smoke. . . .

11. The Professor now turns to Tailors, and after having deprecated the prejudice against them, that they are not men, maintains that a Tailor is not only a man but something of a Creator or Divinity, since he can new-create a man into a Nobleman and clothe him not only with wool but dignity. And is not the whole fabric of society the Tailor's creation ? Let him be of good cheer ; his day of recognition is about to dawn.

12. We take leave of Teufelsdröckh not without some disapproval of his eccentricities. But we commend his devotion to Truth and hatred of Cant and Dilettantism. Is Hope the basis of his nature, and the solution of his mystery a wish to proselytise ? Infinite, he declares, is the help man can yield to man ; and Friendship is only possible in mutual devotedness to the Good and True. His hope may be that in an era when the sun and stars are blotted out, and Hypocrisy, Atheism, and Sensuality stalk abroad, his Clothes-Volume should kindle a beacon to unite disconsolate wanderers. . . . Meanwhile it is said that Teufelsdröckh has disappeared from Weissnichtwo ; and we conjecture that he has sought refuge from hostile Sects in London. The present over-weary Editor thankfully lays down his pen.



## CHAPTER X

### “SARTOR RESARTUS”

It is convenient to approach the mystery of *Sartor* through its faults ; and by a fault we mean that which impedes the reader's whole-hearted acquiescence in the author's conception : the cross winds which delay his bark and make its voyage not uniformly prosperous over the new sea opened to it by the magician. And our first complaint is of a partial want of tact in handling the framework of the book and the character of Teufelsdröckh, from whose mouth the rivers of wisdom are said to flow. The short-coming is not in ingenuity, nor would we like the framework abolished ; for, until the reader's interest in the soul of the autobiographer is fanned to a flame, it needs the stimulation of a fictitious interest : and this is supplied by the vivid paintings of Weissnichtwo and the Professor in his attic and the ministrings of his faithful Lieschen. Only when the true motive of the book—the history of its author's soul—becomes apparent, the figure of Teufelsdröckh and his Professorial trappings might have been sensibly diminished : perhaps to regain life size in the concluding pages as a means of unifying the whole. But far more serious than this mere technical defect is a certain tone which obtrudes itself in the paragraphs which comment upon the Professor's meditations.

We know the great store Carlyle set upon humour, for lack of which he declared writers like Schiller and Milton, preoccupied only with the sublime or what is above them, to have but half a mind. The richness of his own vein of humour is beyond dispute, but it was the last of his powers to obtain worthy expression. No doubt he wished to present a complete picture of Teufelsdröckh, not only for those who study his soul alone with the Universe, but as he appeared to the harsh, the unsympathetic, the worldly-



minded. And in so doing he has come perilously near to belittling his own creation. Shakespeare's humour was an instrument under perfect control, and our minds naturally revert to De Quincey's interpretation of the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth* as the return of the common world, temporarily suspended by the awful midnight world of murder. Again, Hamlet may be worsted in the exchange of quibbles with the Grave-digger, but the central dignity of his character remains unimpaired; and the Fool is like a wisp of straw on the Atlantic of Lear's passion. It is true that Plato in the *Phædrus* presents the most gorgeous prose-passage which the world's literature can show as an instance of rhetoric; but the reader's mind, weary of its long excursion into false rhetoric, was seeking reaction. In *Sartor*, time and again the reader is pulled down from the altitudes, like a kite—as Rousseau would say—and made to doubt his impressions. As examples we may cite the recognition by the peasant's son of Reverence as the divinest feeling, to the exclusion of envy for a duke's son, spiritually poor, but surrounded by heraldic signs of rank: upon which the Editor remarks, “Beware, O Teufelsdröckh, of spiritual pride!” Then, is there not something of flippancy to interpolate into the Blumine episode such a question as, “What figure was a Mrs. Teufelsdröckh likely to make in polished society?” Thirdly, we have the old charge of View-hunting, and the comparison of eating the glass after drinking the liquor, advanced against a magnificent descriptive passage. The spirit of these and many of their kind is rather mockery than humour; and mockery is not to be justified on the ground that it is directed against self. When writing of Voltaire, Carlyle affirmed ridicule to be the lowest faculty; and in this very book he denounces sarcasm as the language of the devil. We may test his progress by looking forward to the time of *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, when the word “offensive” used by the author of his own work is hailed by the reader with immeasurable relief.<sup>1</sup>

And yet the framework of *Sartor*—though it does not, like that of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, exceed the beauty of the matter itself—has the interest of being Carlyle's greatest achievement in fiction. There is the strangely life-like drawing of the Professor in his Weissnichtwo surroundings; then we have the

<sup>1</sup> *Latter-Day Pamphlets*: “Jesuitism.”

romance of his commitment to the worthy foster-parents ; and the idealised account of his childhood. School and college days are more plainly historical and interest the reader rather as autobiographical documents. They tell us the nature of Carlyle's unhappiness at school, and dissatisfaction with the University methods of teaching. The episode of Blumine is again autobiography thinly veiled, and comparable in spiritual beauty to the earthly beauty of Rousseau's account of his passion for Madame d'Houdetot. The wanderings are of course fictitious, intended to symbolise the distracted condition of his mind ; and here we are on less certain ground. The bark of fiction heels over on one side and disturbs the reader's balance. Neither the Tartar woman who cooked his breakfast, nor the North Cape smuggler whom he overawes with a pistol, carries much conviction ; nor do his interviews with the great, and the pinch on the ear accorded by Napoleon in good humour. Of the “conversion” we already know something, and it is hardly necessary to point out its paramount interest.

It is frequently said that Carlyle is “obscure” or “involved” ; and the reader, having travelled a little way, turns back from the imbroglío of thought. *Sartor*, the first of his longer works, and therefore unrestrained by the arbitrary limitations of the essay, may seem to justify such an accusation. What usually make the argument of a book hard to follow out are diffuseness and lack of concentration ; but these cannot possibly be urged against Carlyle. It is rather the opposite ; it is the teeming life meeting you unexpectedly at every turn, as in some huge city, in crowded court or twisted byway, that causes you to miss the main road from gate to gate. It is the energy of his mind in its large revolutions dropping the vital seed on far-off desert patches and making them blossom. Something of this characteristic we noted in the essays, but the requirements of the essay, and the Editorial ferula, forbade its full expansion. But now he moves on as if exchanging the confinement of a few roods of earth for its whole surface ; and the reader or traveller, amazed at the strength of the life-force, is nevertheless bewildered, and asks Whence and Whither !

It will be our business to follow the main stream of Carlyle's thought through the three parts of *Sartor*, and our endeavour

to assign their relative importance to the numerous tributaries. The leading idea of the first book is that the effect of the bodily envelope called Clothing is to disguise the Soul. Not that Carlyle, in his assumed character of Professor, would entirely dispense with clothes; he sees their utility as emblems—in a court of law, for instance, when Red says to Blue, "Be hanged," and it is done. But a naked world exists under the clothed one, and men are apt to forget this, and judge simply by the effect of fine raiment on the sense. The force and beauty with which some rival ideas are presented, hinder the direct passage of this leading one into the reader's soul. It seems ungracious to murmur at an author who has given us such a miracle of description as Teufelsdröckh's Night-thoughts in the third chapter; but we must pronounce them wrongly placed, as also the philosophical reflections of the fifth chapter. For the reader is perplexed as well as delighted; he has been promised a work on Clothes; and the author seems about to keep his promise by his allusions to mythology and history and hint of system in his enquiry. Needless to say we are now dealing with what turns back the would-be worshipper from the shrine; for deeper reading absolves Carlyle from faults of construction as it does Shakespeare from breach of the unities.

The interest of Book II is entirely autobiographical, and therefore at one with itself, though the connecting link is weak. As an excuse for interpolating the history of a soul into a work on Clothes, we are informed that only thus can the said work be understood. A mere outline, instead of the succession of glowing pictures, would have carried the same conviction, that Teufelsdröckh, rejected by the world and condemned to a life of solitude and meditation, has grown used to looking through the shows of things into things themselves. The reader is taken far away from his promised subject, and his difficulty of comprehending the whole increased.

The design of Book III seems to be reconstruction, and Clothes are now used plainly in their metaphorical sense. In the first book we were warned of a forgotten truth, that a naked world existed under the clothed one; but this rather concerned man's worldly worth, in comparison with his fellow-creatures. Man's relation to God is the motive of the present part, and the works



of other men are of importance only as they affect this relation. Religions, customs, traditions, become like worn-out suits, no longer capable of clothing the divine idea; and at the time of writing, the world is ragged. Yet a few signs are apparent that new vestments are being silently woven—such as the infinite promise of Hero-worship—or the supersession of the pulpit by the press. Besides this main idea we get the first hint of Carlyle's future political writings, in his allusion to the true leaders of the people who preserve their game instead of leading the surplus population into the world's great corn-producing countries. There are also the chapters on Dandies and Tailors, hardly fused with the remainder, and where the result is incommensurate with the energy put forth.

But no true reader of Carlyle will be satisfied with this mere disentangling of threads. There is, as already hinted, a deeper unity which dispenses with the usual constructional needs of a work of art. It is impressed on every thought, however seemingly irrelevant—like a common centre to the widest-spreading circle. And the centre is an enquiring individual soul alone with the Universe. The mystery that surrounds Teufelsdröckh's birth, his upbringing by foster-parents, his yearning to know his father are but means of throwing into relief the great fact that the true Father is in Heaven. The earth-visiting ME he calls himself as a baby; the problem to be solved is whence has he come, for what goal is he bound, and what relation does this earth on which he finds himself bear to the enquiry?

We thus see that Clothes—used in the metaphorical sense as expressions of ideas—are the subject so far as they help to prove the existence of a deeper reality. In the first book we gradually become aware of a naked world existing beneath the clothed one; and, in the third, of the soul raying out its light as one by one the blankets of custom are removed. The central book is less abstract, and therefore has a keener interest, as a record of Carlyle's individual inner life, and an abiding document on the universal nature of man. We see the soul making its perilous voyage through the world till it attains its majority; and the pains, greater in proportion to its nobility, which sojourn in the flesh brings upon it. It is excess of pain which achieves what is called the first preliminary moral act: annihilation of self, or suspension

of earthly desires. The collapse of the scaffolding of worldly hope, followed by the loss of faith—as if the heavens themselves should threaten to fall—were needed to discipline the giant soul. From the centre of indifference, or the numbness caused by pain, it turns to the Not-me, to that which is outside itself, for wholesomer food. With its mere earthly wishes thus laid asleep, it meditatively traces the divine occurrences in man's normal life; its former inborn faculties revive; and with them, the certainty of its spiritual home. Memory and Hope Carlyle calls the two mystic faculties; by means of which the mind's true relation to the Universe is maintained, and purged of every extraneous wrappage, including even Time and Space.

Such then is the pivot of the book—its writer's search for faith: the point of earth round which the chapters revolve, like a starry zodiac, with their signs and wonders and strange symbolic characters. The difficulties which attend the search arise from the complexity of his nature—the powerful inherited strain of religiosity, nullified by the rapid comprehending intellect which sums up the results of modern rationalist teaching; and the soft, poetical temperament, susceptible, in spite of all he says, to the allurements of earthly happiness. The strong winds of thought that blow throughout Carlyle are apt to make the reader pass rapidly away from the fair havens and sunny islets. These nevertheless exist, and in *Sartor* there is a more disinterested celebration of the beauty of the world, and less confined to metaphors, than elsewhere. We read, for instance, how the child is “waited on by the four golden Seasons”; or of Teufelsdröckh in his “skyey Tent” with the winds like “azure-flowing curtains” round him. It was consciousness of this susceptibility—to be subdued as a craving of the earthly self—which made Carlyle condemn a poet like Keats: even as Shakespeare was hard on idealists like Hamlet or Brutus because he felt the dangers of their temperament in himself. The pleas for the “Worship of Sorrow,” and “Love not Pleasure, love God,” spring from the severity of the struggle.

We thus have before us the full cycle of the soul's experience: from its first wakening amid material surroundings to the time of its reunion with God. And the middle period is its passage through the darkness of unbelief, as through a pine forest growing like a belt on the steep mountain it ascends. Thanks to Fate which



seemed unkind, it has been disappointed of its earthly wishes and enabled to achieve annihilation of self. Then the divine rays once more reached it ; and a third period of meditation confirmed its possession of faith. The material world has no real existence ; Time and Space are but forms of thought ; the religions which men have held are like fresh or faded raiment. The lines of Shakespeare most often quoted by Carlyle are these :

We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

It was by meditation that Carlyle acquired the faith which was the great consoler of the years we speak of. Its decline in later life need not occupy us now ; but we must enter a warning against all hasty or facile criticisms of his work. Some writers point out his historical inaccuracies ; they tell us that he misinterpreted the character of Frederick, or that the effects of Francia's absolutism in Paraguay were the reverse of beneficent. Our answer is that we read Carlyle less for facts than spiritual experience. Some of the greatest writers—Plato, Virgil, Dante, Milton—the world's great scholars, are not accessible to the many. Mark Pattison affirmed that appreciation of Milton was the ultimate reward of a consummated scholarship. For the reader needs familiarity with the classical worlds which the English poet drew into his orbit, that he may be retouched by a more complex emotion : like Æneas before the Trojan pictures in the halls of Dido. Carlyle's writings are not obscured by literary allusiveness, yet they puzzle the uninitiated.

"Make yourselves noble and you may enter," said Ruskin to those who seek an entry into the highest society of all—that of the Princes of Literature. And the question rises : how are we to make ourselves noble, how acquire the inner experience necessary to appreciate Carlyle ? The answer is in his own works—but again we must beware of too literal an interpretation of his doctrine. For he would be the last to wish to provide us with fixed ideas to use in every mental emergency. This he would call mechanical, or opposed to the dynamical, which is turning our eyes inward upon the wonders of our own God-given minds. The first stage of meditation is silence : "In thy own mean



perplexities,” he tells us, “do thou thyself but hold thy tongue for one day : on the morrow, how much clearer are thy purposes and duties ; what wreck and rubbish have those mute workmen within thee swept away, when intrusive noises were shut out.”<sup>1</sup> But a little further on comes the warning : “Thought will not work except in Silence ; neither will Virtue work except in Secrecy. Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth ! Neither shalt thou prate even to thy own heart of ‘those secrets known to all.’” And compare with these a sentence from the essay *Characteristics* : “Whisper not to thy own heart, How worthy is this action ; for then it is already becoming worthless.”

“Neither shalt thou prate even to thy own heart,” is one of Carlyle’s most pregnant utterances. Thought is hard ; it is tempting to let others think for one ; and it seems easy to observe the command of keeping silence. But did Carlyle set such store on the mere refraining from the physical act of speech ? Is not silence to be interpreted in a more complete and inward manner ? There is a false-mechanical silence as there is a false mechanical self-control, where the mind, though strong enough to hold back the body from expression of anger, is yet swarming with malignant thoughts. True silence, like true self-control, is inward.

Thus, for the study of Carlyle is needed meditation, and meditation can only be effected by a soul at peace ; and if the jars of modern life have injured the soul, it must be remade by practice of that self-control which denies access to feelings of care, anger, ambition. This is no light task which Carlyle lays upon us, this restoration of the divine nature. We can now better understand his saying that the cultivation of art helped Goethe to acquire faith ; for art derives from right living and is not artifice or manual dexterity. And we know that Milton suspended his poetical labours during his turbulent middle period when he poured forth his political pamphlets. In words that have echoed down the generations he affirmed that “he who would not be frustrated of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things ought himself to be a true poem.”

The unique value of *Sartor* is its history of a soul’s reunion with

<sup>1</sup> *Sartor*, iii. 3.

God ; and its truths are therefore relative to our own experience, Carlyle's theory, derived from the German metaphysicians, of the unreality of space and time, may bring less assurance to us than to him of the omnipresence of God ; but this is due to our own deficient power of meditation. To judge as an equal we must descend to his depths ; and meditation is not a thing to be learned like a lesson or practised as an experiment. It demands the whole life : the self-dedicated life of Milton, the simple virtuous life of the old-world Scottish peasant in which Carlyle grew up, untouched by sins of the flesh. For no blessing was he more thankful than his Presbyterian upbringing ; and the result of habits of reverence, and obedience to Necessity at the cost of renouncing childish wishes with bitter tears, is now growing plain. He had faults of oversensitiveness, like Milton or Dr. Johnson or Frederick William—one of his own triumphs of characterization—the effect of contact of excess of spirit with material obstacles ; and the loss of self-control was more apparent in his later life and work.

Cumbered as we are in this life with the flesh and its desires, and worldly ambition, it is in our power to cut them away with the clean weapon of meditation. But we must preserve the distinction between meditation and thought ; for thought is a strict logical process, while meditation is unconscious. It cannot be practised with an effort and then laid aside, but demands the co-operation of the whole nature. The way must be prepared by true inward silence and self-control. Of what avail is self-sacrifice, for instance, if we are ever after to babble to ourselves of man's ingratitude ? Or self-denial in material things, if the mind feeds imaginatively on the abjured flesh-pots ? Or abstinence from evil sayings of a friend, if we tolerate a disloyal thought ? Or confident speech in time of national danger, if the ice of despair has been suffered to close round the heart ? The will must succeed in banishing not only out of touch, but out of sight and hearing, the intrusions of sense, so that, as the grip of consciousness relaxes and the mind is left to itself in dream or reverie, it turns naturally to its reserves of spiritual thought. Thus did Milton make himself a true poem, and Goethe, by meditation for purposes of art, arrive at faith. For it is the duty of the poet to keep the house of the mind clean-swept and ever



ready for the coming of the Royal Guest who will order it as his own.

It appeared to onlookers that Taillefer at Hastings cut down <sup>X</sup> his opponents by juggler's trick rather than knight's fair fence ;<sup>1</sup> and there is no back way into the Kingdom of Heaven. The world is now with us to an unprecedented degree, and the struggle to lead a fuller spiritual life is severe in proportion. With Carlyle, in this Craigenputtock period when *Sartor* was written, there was no question of compromise with the world ; he remained, as always, untouched by materialistic ambitions ; but in later years the cares of the world entered through the gate of his very altruism, and wrecked his poet's solitude. He might have learned from Wordsworth, who, to the threats of hypochondria, opposed a fixed determination to be happy, and thus consummated his life-work. But for the present he is teaching us how to sweeten the whole character from the roots upward ; and it is by the action of the will, which, like the moon, controls the tides of the unconscious ocean lying in the immortal part of each of us, that we first proceed : the will to inward silence, perhaps through work, as with himself ; so that there can be but one issue to the struggle when, as in sleep or unguarded moments, the powers of good and evil dispute the possession of the mind.

To restore the old significance of the life of the spirit is the message of *Sartor* : to value our fellow-creature from his soul outwards—not from his clothes and worldly possessions, through the flesh, inwards, never reaching the soul. The false system of values is the result of mechanism, which is the unfailing substitution of the outer life for the inner, with the inevitable decline of religion. Only in religion does the brotherhood of man become possible ; for under a materialistic conception of the universe, all men are born enemies. Hence the most untoward signs of modern days : the unlimited competition, the decay of friendship, the dissolution of all but financial bonds between different classes. Hence, too, the deadly commercial menace to the moral future of the world.

All Carlyle's writings inspire these thoughts, but *Sartor* is the most direct expression of his experience, and tells in the first person how he vanquished Materialism. It gives his cycle of

<sup>1</sup> See Lytton's *Harold*.



progress through worldly disappointment to Renunciation, interest in the Not-me, and discovery of the true Self. To those of us who have made small progress in that deeper meditation which denies reality to the external world, much will remain a mystery. But a simple instance may help towards realising that state of mind to which Battles of Austerlitz and sack of cities are like the somnambulism of uneasy sleepers. When the hand of death threatens a life-companion, to what an immeasurable distance do once-valued material things recede !

Did not the schoolmen of certain ages believe in a science of sciences, and think they had found it in Logic ? *Sartor* bears such a relation to the rest of Carlyle's books. Or its message of hope may be compared to Spectrum Analysis, which, by confirming the identity in substance of all solar and stellar bodies, advanced the probability of design in creation. It is the essence or finer spirit of his knowledge, his teaching idealised rather than applied in external things. Yet the struggle which it commemorates is a birth-struggle, the pangs of a soul entering the material world where it has much to perform. It needs the faith, without which it cannot move, for action, not mere spiritual ecstasy or other-worldliness. But in order that it may play its part worthily and that the body may be its servant rather than its master, it needs conviction of its former and future state. Its earthly and social ceremonies must be unwound, even its inmost garments, Time and Space, stripped off, till it sees itself as part of God.

NOTE.—The above aims at the interpretation of Carlyle's doctrines ; it leaves untouched the business of identifying scenes and characters with his "external life-element." But this has been exhaustively done in *Love Letters*, Appendix B. The reader will there find reasons for supposing Herr Towgood to be Charles Buller, the Zähdarm family the Bullers, Entephul Ecclefechan, the tableland in ii. 9, Hoddam Hill, etc. Most important are the arguments in favour of Jane Welsh being the original of Blumine, and not Margaret Gordon as hitherto supposed.

## CHAPTER XI

### CRAIGENPUTTOCK—REMOVAL TO LONDON— WORK AT "FRENCH REVOLUTION"—THE BURNT MANUSCRIPT

(1832-6)

It was the middle of April when the Carlyles once more found themselves at Craigenputtock after the memorable winter spent in London. Their solitude was complete; for it will be remembered that Alick had quitted the farm-house, and was making a second attempt to wring a living from the soil at a farm called Catlinns. But for Carlyle the time passed "more prosperously than heretofore," excepting servant troubles.<sup>1</sup> The work which he had on hand for editors was enough to assure his livelihood. 1832  
(36)

An increased solicitude for his mother appears in his letters, since the father was no more. He exhorts his family to obey and honour her doubly, now that she alone remains.<sup>2</sup> "My dear Mother," he writes, "every time I hear that you are well, I hear it as an *unexpected* blessing; and live in a continual kind of apprehension."<sup>3</sup> We know that he condemned grief as a selfish passion, yet this single touch, preserved in the *Reminiscences*,<sup>4</sup> of the return journey from London, and the first meeting after the tragical event, must be recorded: "At Whinnyrigg, I remember, Brother Alick and others of them were waiting to receive us: there were *tears* among us (my Father gone, while *we* returned). . . ." To John, who was travelling in Italy with Lady Clare, he wrote in his usual strain of disinterested advice, free from patronage. The thought that Jeffrey's loan would now be repaid was welcome to his independent spirit, though the

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 265. Letters T.C., ii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 50.

<sup>4</sup> I. 95-6.

1832 (36) money owing to himself troubled him not.<sup>1</sup> His generosity in money matters is further proved by the non-appearance, at his own request, of his name and John's in his father's will,<sup>2</sup> owing to the sums already expended on their education. Work at his essays—on Goethe and Corn Law Rhymes, immediately after his return—continued his sole comfort.<sup>3</sup> “When vapours of solitude, and longings after the cheerful face of my fellow-man are gathering round me, I dash them off, and the first lusty swing of Industry scatters them away. . . . Let not a living man complain ! . . . This time fifty years, as I have often said to myself, the question will not be, Wert thou joyful or sorrowful ? but, Wert thou true or wert thou false ?”<sup>4</sup> In August he was preparing an essay on Diderot, and he would sit on the moors from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., and scarcely break off for meals and pipes, reading the French philosopher's twenty volumes at the rate of one a day.<sup>5</sup>

A few sentences from Carlyle's journal at this time will help in our conception of him. “Unspeakable is the importance of man to man. . . .” “A strange feeling of *supernaturalism*, of ‘the fearfulness and wonderfulness’ of life, haunts me and grows upon me. . . .”<sup>6</sup> “I cannot understand *Morals* . . . *Punishment* neither is nor can be in proportion to fault. . . .” “Cultivate thyself in the want of enjoyment : gather quite peculiar experiences therein. . . .” “The Radical is a believer of the gross heathen sort ; yet our only believer in these times. . . .” “I thank Heaven I have still a boundless appetite for reading. I have thoughts of lying buried alive here for many years, forgetting all stuff about ‘reputation, success,’ and so forth, and resolutely setting myself to gain insight by the only method not shut out from me—that of books. Two articles (of fifty pages) in the year will keep me living ; employment in that kind is open enough. For the rest I really find almost that I do *best* when *forgotten* of men. . . . It never wholly seems to me that I am to die in this wilderness : a feeling is always dimly with me that I am to be called out of it, and have work fit for me before I depart. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 34, 37, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ii. 47-8.

<sup>6</sup> Froude, ii. 283.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii. 49, 52.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ii. 306-9.



But the picture of Craigenputtock life would not be complete without some extracts from a delightful letter written in June by Mrs. Carlyle to Eliza Miles, the daughter of her late landlady. 1832  
(36)

"I never forgot my gentle Ariel in Ampton Street. . . . Besides this is the place of all others for thinking of absent friends, where one has so seldom any present to think of. It is the stillest, solitariest place that it ever entered upon your imagination to conceive ; where one has the strangest shadowy existence. . . . I fold my hands and ask, 'What is to be done next ?' 'The duty nearest hand, and the next will show itself in course.' So my Goethe teaches. No one who lays this precept to heart can ever be at a stand. . . . Shame that such a malady (ennui) should exist in a Christian land ; should not only exist, but be almost general throughout the whole female population that is placed above the necessity of working for daily bread. . . . For my part I am very content. I have everything here my heart desires, that I could have anywhere else, except society, and even that deprivation is not to be considered wholly an evil. . . . My Husband is as good company as reasonable mortal could desire. Every fair morning we ride on horseback for an hour before breakfast. . . . Then Carlyle takes to his writing, while I . . . inspect my house, my garden, my live stock, gather flowers for my drawing-room, and lapfuls of eggs ; and finally betake myself also to writing, or reading, or making or mending, or whatever work seems fittest. After dinner, and only then, I lie on the sofa. . . . In the evening I walk on the moor . . . and read anything that does not exact much attention." <sup>1</sup>

That this letter was known to Froude and appreciated by him, yet failed to move his conception of the Carlyles' Craigenputtock life, is strange proof of the distorting power of fixed ideas.

On completion of the Diderot article in October, an excursion to Annandale was made, and Ecclefechan revisited. Then further articles would be undertaken : payment for which was often unduly retarded, to Carlyle's inconvenience—though he was now quit of his debt to Jeffrey. In December old Mr. Welsh, Mrs. Carlyle's grandfather, died at Templand.<sup>2</sup>

1833 was a troublous period of Carlyle's inner life, and it saw the conviction grow that Craigenputtock must cease to be his 1833  
(37)

<sup>1</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 41-4.

<sup>2</sup> Froude, ii. 316.

1833 residence.<sup>1</sup> A visit to Edinburgh occupied the first four months, (37) but brought little satisfaction. Friends came about him, but to none was he much drawn except Sir William Hamilton.<sup>2</sup> He felt himself a stranger among them; and they in return were startled at his modes of thought, and inclined to share Jeffrey's opinion that he was wasting his talent.<sup>3</sup> He himself laments "the too frequent obscuration of Faith within me; the kind of exile I must live in from all classes of articulate-speaking men; the dimness that reigns over all my *practical* sphere . . ." <sup>4</sup> There were more disturbing reports of the condition of England and the sufferings undergone by children in the Lancashire factories.<sup>5</sup> About this time he addressed a letter of tender beauty to Alick, who had lost a child: "Your little Son has been lent you but a short while. . . . Indeed, the longest life is scarcely longer than the shortest, if we think of the Eternity that encircles both. . . . I have many times pictured to myself that stern awakening you got: 'I dinna hear the bairn' breathing.'" <sup>6</sup>

The return journey was broken at Templand, where Mrs. Carlyle succumbed to influenza, following the fatigue of a trying coach-ride.<sup>7</sup> The end of May saw them once more occupants of the lonely house. One of Carlyle's first actions was to negotiate with Fraser for the appearance in his magazine of *Sartor* in monthly parts.<sup>8</sup> He had completed his article on Cagliostro, for which, with Diderot, he received £100; <sup>9</sup> and he now embarked upon the *Diamond Necklace*. Not only is this year momentous for the Craigenputtock decision, but as witnessing the dawn of another far-reaching interest—the French Revolution.

A mood akin to that which preceded his late visit to London, but even more aggravated, was upon Carlyle. It was the old feeling of the inadequacy of the work he had hitherto performed, and the wish to shape a worthy creation: to deliver himself of his "Divine Idea of the World."<sup>10</sup> Art seemed to him but a reminiscence at the present era, and Prophecy needed rather than Poetry.<sup>11</sup> No one lived more consciously in the presence of eternity, yet was he sorely wounded by the cares of the world. "Man is such a *Dualism*," was his reflection on failing to reconcile

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 77, 89.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ii. 76.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ii. 97.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., ii. 119.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 82.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ii. 92.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., ii. 103-8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 88.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ii. 84-5.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., ii. 99.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., ii. 123.



1833  
(37)

the two.<sup>1</sup> The "grand verities" were under eclipse, and the problem of right living becoming harder then ever.<sup>2</sup> He accused himself of intolerance, "his own private discontent mingling considerably with his zeal against evil-doers."<sup>3</sup> There was indeed an "obscuration" of faith, a dulling of the immortal part of his nature. Was this the end of the great spiritual conquests proclaimed to the world in the long pæan of *Sartor*?

Of outer events we have to record a visit of two months from John, who left about the end of August to rejoin Lady Clare. Then came Emerson from America to create in twenty-four hours a full-blown friendship with one whose mind at that time moved much as his.<sup>4</sup> Of London friends, Mill was the most assiduous correspondent, though the limitations of his strictly logical character were apparent to Carlyle.<sup>5</sup>

A passage with Jeffrey, last of its kind, and also Carlyle's last attempt to enter practical life and win "promotion," occurred in the autumn of 1833. Hearing that an Astronomical Professorship at Glasgow University was to be vacant, and that the appointment was in the Lord Advocate's power, he made application. Jeffrey returned "not a flat refusal only, but an angry, vehement, almost shrill-sounding and scolding one, as if it had been a crime and an insolence in the like of me to think of such a thing."<sup>6</sup> According to Froude, Jeffrey was offended by Carlyle's arrogance, and lectured him in a tone of "condescending superiority."<sup>7</sup> The gulf opened by this cataclysm was feebly bridged in the years that followed by Mrs. Carlyle's correspondence with Jeffrey; and this all but ceased towards the close of the *French Revolution*.<sup>8</sup>

Two marriages were now projected in the Carlyle family: 1833-4  
that of his sister "Craw" Jean to her cousin James Aitken, (37-8)  
which took place towards the close of 1833—and his youngest brother James, the next year. To the latter he made over the debt of £200 which Alick owed him; but, as James lived at Scotsbrig, he did not wholly welcome his marriage, for the mother's sake. Here is the least pleasing recorded communication from Carlyle to a member of his family: "The house must belong to your wife from the instant she sets foot in it; neither mother nor sister

<sup>1</sup> Froude, ii. 354.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 348.<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 113.<sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii. 122.<sup>6</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 266.<sup>7</sup> Froude, ii. 391-3.<sup>8</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 268.



1833-4 must any longer be there to contest it with her. . . . I understand  
(37-8) what wonderful felicities young men like you expect from marriage ; I know too . . . that such expectations hold out but for a little while. I shall rejoice much . . . if in your new situation you feel *as* happy as in the old ; say nothing of happier. . . . Do nothing that is *selfish*. . . ." Yet we learn from later passages in the letters that these apprehensions were not realised ; that the two households united in perfect amity ; and the mother and James's wife did "very handsomely together."<sup>1</sup>

1834 In the first months of 1834 the final decision was taken of  
(38) migrating to London. "Burn our ships," counselled Mrs. Carlyle, who was all in favour of the venture.<sup>2</sup> Carlyle compared it to "a rising from the grave," or at least "an issuing from the Bastille." "As to 'fame' and all that, I can honestly say I regard it *not* : my wish and hope is that I may live not dishonestly nor in vain. . . ." <sup>3</sup> It was the greatest personal decision he was ever called upon to make ; and it seemed to him like a last desperate struggle, while some of the best years of manhood remained, to win a place in the world. For solitude had grown oppressive, and his literary affairs did not prosper : *Sartor* being much condemned as it appeared in *Fraser*,<sup>4</sup> and editors standing aloof from the *Diamond Necklace*. His late visit to Edinburgh had revealed to him an ungenial atmosphere ; but London held memories of better things.

Parting with his mother was the greatest cause of grief ; for, with the addition of Jamie's marriage, it seemed to him that "all the old scaffolding of her life was falling asunder about her."<sup>5</sup> But her religion was of the true consoling kind ; she being, in Carlyle's words, "the truest Christian believer I have ever met with ; nay, I might almost say the only true one."<sup>6</sup> Otherwise the pangs of exile were not keenly felt ; for, as he said, "My much-respected Motherland has given me much, much of priceless value, but of men that I love, no great overplus."<sup>7</sup>

Of minor incidents we may chronicle the death of Badams, "among the men I loved most in the world."<sup>8</sup> A charming

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 396.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 139.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 128.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 137.

<sup>6</sup> Froude, ii. 414.

<sup>7</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 144.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 127.

letter to "Craw" Jean is extant, with a promise to lend her books on condition of their careful treatment; and the remark that leisure is best employed in reading.<sup>1</sup> In the company of a young scholar named Glen, Carlyle had lately been reading Homer; and of interest is his saying that he loved it better than any book except the Bible.<sup>2</sup>

1834  
(38)

About May 8th Carlyle left for London alone, and on arriving took up his quarters at 4 Ampton Street. "Oh, my Love, if I were to write all the loving things I have thought of thee, whole quires would not hold it. Blessed be the Heavens, I have thee to wife. . . ." In such a strain is couched his first letter, and it proceeds to give a description of his journey: the steamboat across the Solway Firth to Liverpool, and the coach thence through Lichfield and other well-known scenes to the Arch at Holloway.<sup>3</sup> One of his first visits was to Mrs. Austin; and the same day a chance meeting took place in Kensington Gardens with Irving: whom he found much broken down and prematurely aged, but friendlier than ever.<sup>4</sup>

Search for a house, in which Leigh Hunt assisted, now began in earnest, and Carlyle was at first ill impressed by the district of Chelsea.<sup>5</sup> Kensington or Brompton, but especially Bayswater, allured him; <sup>6</sup> however, before the end of May, he was writing to his wife of the famous No. 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, which will ever be associated with his name. And she replied: "I have a great liking to that massive old concern with the broad staircase, and abundant accommodation for *crockery* . . . and the wainscoting up to the ceilings . . . ." <sup>7</sup> The question of her journey was now agitating Carlyle. He writes: "Like a dear Child you are hastening to me; in few days I shall hold you in this bosom. . . . Could I have spoken I would have said, Do not hasten if your health is to suffer, much as, on all accounts, I long to see you. . . . At this hour I fancy you on the Solway brine. . . . But O, my little Lassie, take care of yourself; rest, if rest be possible, when you get to land. . . . As to Craigenputtock, take my thanks for your cleverness, adroitness and despatch: I find all quite wonderfully well settled. . . ." <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 129-30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 146-9.

<sup>3</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 150.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 48.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., ii. 140-2.

<sup>6</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 211-12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ii. 161-2.

<sup>8</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 164-5.

1834  
(38)

Mrs. Carlyle arrived in London and gave her vote for 5 Cheyne Row. It had three stories beside the basement ;<sup>1</sup> the rent was £35 ;<sup>2</sup> and it seemed to them nearly twice as good as any other to be got for the money.<sup>3</sup> They furnished it with the Craigenputtock furniture, which originally belonged to Mrs. Carlyle's father, noteworthy for its solidity. More than once Carlyle alludes to the rock-like steadiness of his mahogany writing-table ; and the strength of the chairs repeatedly drew forth the wonder of modern upholsterers.<sup>4</sup> To this house, on Tuesday, June 10th, proceeded the Carlyles and their servant.<sup>5</sup> Among their belongings was a canary named Chico that burst into singing as they passed Belgrave Square ; and they interpreted this as a good omen.<sup>6</sup>

In a letter written by Carlyle to his mother two days later, he gives the first favourable impressions : " We lie safe down in a little bend of the river, away from all the great roads ; have air and quiet hardly inferior to Craigenputtock, an outlook from the back windows into mere leafy regions, with here and there a red high-peaked old roof looking through ; and see nothing of London, except by day the summits of St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and by night the gleam of the great Babylon affronting the peaceful skies. . . ." " A right old strong, roomy brick house, built near 130 years ago. . . . In addition to the many properties of our House, I should have mentioned a little Garden behind. . . . It is of admirable comfort to me, in the *smoking* way : I can wander about in dressing-gown and straw hat in it, as of old, and take my pipe in peace. . . ." <sup>7</sup> To John he writes : " Nothing was ever so discrepant in my experience as the Craigenputtock-silence of this House and then the world-hubbub of London and its people into which a few minutes bring you." <sup>8</sup>

Carlyle's position was sufficiently desperate, as the entries in his Journal testify : though it must be remembered that the Journal was the means of expressing his moods of dejection only. He possessed £200, which he reckoned to suffice for a year,<sup>9</sup> after which his prospects were uncertain. He seemed to have exhausted

<sup>1</sup> Froude, ii. 428-9.<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 169.<sup>3</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 169.<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 169-71.<sup>5</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 181.<sup>6</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 97-8.<sup>7</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 101.<sup>8</sup> Ibid., ii. 181.<sup>9</sup> Ibid., ii. 185.



his essay market,<sup>1</sup> and was about to begin his work on the French Revolution, which Fraser had promised to print free of cost.<sup>2</sup> *Sartor* had completed its appearance, but its words of wisdom fell on an unlistening world. He had, for instance, despatched six copies "done up from the *Fraser* types" to "six Edinburgh Literary Friends"; and no one of them even troubled to send an acknowledgment.<sup>3</sup> Only a cheering letter reached him from Emerson, bidding him "go on in God's name," as he wrote to his mother, "for in remotest nooks, in distant ends of the Earth, men *are* listening to me and loving me."<sup>4</sup> Reading for the *French Revolution* was undertaken before many weeks had been spent in London; and the task of selecting books and sorting pamphlets at the British Museum was lightened by Mill, who placed at Carlyle's disposal a quantity of books which he possessed on the subject.<sup>5</sup> Then came the pains of beginning, the inevitable Slough of Despond, as the labour of dyeing with originality a familiar tale, while conserving truth, grew manifest.<sup>6</sup>

We must not wholly omit the mood expressed in the *Journal*; and the following is an example: "Nothing can exceed the *gravity* of my situation here. . . . I have no practical friend, no confidant, properly no companion. For five days together I sit without so much as speaking to anyone except my wife. . . . No Periodical editor wants me: no man will give me money for my work. . . . Despicablest fears of coming to absolute beggary, etc., etc., besiege me. . . . Can friends do much for one? . . . Mill is the best; unhappily he is *speculative* merely. . . ." "Whole boxes of books (on Revolution) about me. Gloomy, huge, of almost boundless meaning; but obscure, dubious—all too deep for me; will and must *do my best*. Alas! gleams, too, of a work of art hover past me; as if this should be a *work of art*. Poor me!"<sup>7</sup>

At about this time Carlyle hoped to become Editor of a new Radical Review, financed by Sir William Molesworth, but organized by Mill:<sup>8</sup> it was however dashed, like all previous similar hopes. "Mill likes me well," he wrote in a passage that reveals his sensitiveness, "and on his embarrassed face when Fox happened

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 185.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 289.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 231-2.

<sup>7</sup> Froude, ii. 443-5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 173.

<sup>4</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 199.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 210-11.

<sup>6</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 113.

1834  
(38) to be talked of, I read both that Editorship business, and also that Mill had *known* my want of it ; which latter was all that I desired to read." <sup>1</sup> Besides Mill, there was Leigh Hunt, who may seem a strange choice to those who still regard Carlyle as rough and unsympathetic. "I never in my whole life met with a more innocent, childlike man ; transparent, many-glancing, really beautiful, were this Lubber-land or Elysium, and not Earth and England." <sup>2</sup> Elsewhere Carlyle describes him as a "talking nightingale," and notes the chivalrous silence and respect with which he enjoyed Mrs. Carlyle's tunes on the piano.<sup>3</sup> The Hunts were neighbours, and to a careful housewife like Mrs. Carlyle their way of life appeared improvident in the extreme. More than one of her letters details their borrowings from her of articles like tumblers and teacups, and even a brass fender.<sup>4</sup>

Carlyle did not lack society, yet he still complained of being "alone under the high vault." "All London-born men . . . seem to me narrow-built, considerably perverted men, rather fractions of a man." <sup>5</sup> In the sincere and disinterested letters which he wrote to his brothers, the warning against isolation is ever-recurring. "Never," he wrote to John, "till a man get into practical contact with the men round him, and learn to take and give influence there, does he enjoy the free consciousness of his existence. Alas, I have long felt this and felt it in vain. Nevertheless there is a kind of inextinguishable hope in me that it *shall not* always be so ; that once, for some short season, I shall live before I die." <sup>6</sup> It is the burden, now grown familiar, of the modern poet resenting his exclusion from a world which baffles him more and more by its increasingly "mechanical" nature.

In September Carlyle began the task of writing the *French Revolution* and experiencing with his usual acute sensibility the pains and pleasures of composition. A letter to his mother or brothers giving a cheerful account of his progress will be varied by lugubrious entries in his Journal such as the following : "*French Revolution* shapeless, dark, unmanageable. Know not this day, for example, on what side to attack it ; yet *must* for-

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 205.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ii. 242.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 6, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ii. 235-6.



ward. . . ." "This morning think of the old primitive Edinburgh scheme of *engineership* ; almost meditate for a moment resuming it yet ! It were a method of gaining bread, of getting into contact with men, my two grand wants and prayers. In general it may be said no man ever so wanted any practical adviser. . . . My isolation, my feeling of loneliness, unlimitedness . . . what tongue shall tell ? . . . Patience, unwearied endeavour ! . . . Didst thou ever hitherto want bread and clothes ? No. Courage, then ! But above all things, *diligence*. And so to work. In general, except when writing, I never feel myself that I am *alive*." <sup>1</sup>

1834  
(38)

The fate of *Sartor*, the decline in the demand for his articles, the condition of the book trade in England, convinced Carlyle that if his present work came to nought he must abandon literature, buy a rifle and spade, and seek a living in the New World.<sup>2</sup> So amid fears and glooms he toiled on at the book which he believed was his last message to mankind. A letter written to his mother, in deprecation of her fears of overwork, describes the routine of his day : how he would "breakfast about nine ; work till two ; then go walking till *four* ; and after dinner seldom work more, except reading and the like."<sup>3</sup>

The death of Irving in December, at the age of forty-three, and from no disease except weakness, was keenly felt by Carlyle. Irving had been his earliest friend ; and to one of his constant nature first impressions never lose their strength : though the "Gift of Tongues" and other things had interrupted their friendship in life. Irving died in Glasgow and had visited Cheyne Row but once in September, previous to his last departure for Scotland. He had then said to Mrs. Carlyle : "You are like an Eve, and make a little Paradise wherever you are !" <sup>4</sup>

The first two months of 1835 were spent in steady work ; the days passing almost unmarked by the writer at his task-sheet.<sup>5</sup> For relaxation he walked in the streets and found his gloom grow less amid the crowds and traffic.<sup>6</sup> At times he went into society, but on the whole found it more profitable to be left alone with the *French Revolution*.<sup>7</sup> He was not given to self-laudation,

1835  
(39)

<sup>1</sup> Froude, ii. 466-8.

<sup>2</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 253.

<sup>3</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 271.

<sup>4</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 108.

<sup>5</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 216.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 263. <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 285.



1835 but he writes to his mother that after all he has not mistaken  
(39) his calling ;<sup>1</sup> and to Alick that this book is better than anything he has done, for it rests upon a *truth*.<sup>2</sup> For the book's worldly future he hoped little, having lost faith in the present judges of literature. But he records in his Journal that "no honestly exerted force can be utterly lost. Were it long years after I am dead, in regions far distant from this, under names far different from thine, the seed thou sowest *will* spring. . . . Oh for faith ! . . ." <sup>3</sup> A less conscientious man might have solved the economical problem, for he had become acquainted with the Sterlings ; and Froude tells us that the elder Sterling offered him work on the *Times*, which he refused from unwillingness to advocate what he did not believe.<sup>4</sup>

But all external events of these years pale before the catastrophe that was now approaching. He had completed the first volume early in February and written some chapters of the second, when late on the evening of March 6th, Mill, to whom he had lent his manuscript, came with the tidings that "except four or five bits of leaves it was irrevocably annihilated." Carelessly left about, it had been mistaken for waste-paper. No words but those of Carlyle's Journal are fit to record the sequel : "I remember and can still remember less of it than of anything I ever wrote with such toil : *it* is gone ; the whole world and myself backed by it could not bring that back : nay, the old spirit too is fled. I find it took five months of steadfast, occasionally excessive, and always sickly and painful toil. Mill very injudiciously stayed with us till late ; and I had to make an effort and speak, as if indifferent, about other common matters ; he left us, however, in a *relapsed* state ; one of the pitiablest. My dear Wife has been very kind and become dearer to me. The night has been full of emotion ; occasionally sharp pain (something cutting or hard-grasping me round the heart), occasionally with sweet consolations. I dreamed of my Father and Sister Margaret ; alive, yet all defaced with the sleepy stagnancy, swollen hebetude of the Grave, and again dying in some strange rude country : a horrid dream ! The painfulest too is when you first wake. But, on the whole, should I not thank the Unseen ? for I was

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Froude, iii. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 283.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., iii. 11.

not driven out of composure, hardly for moments. . . . This morning I have determined so far that I *can* still write a book on the French Revolution, and will do it. . . . Oh, that I had faith ! Oh, that I had ! Then were there nothing too hard or heavy for me. Cry silently to thy inmost heart to God for it. Surely He will give it thee. . . . I was the nearest being *happy* sometimes these last few days that I have been for many months. . . . I felt myself on firmish ground as to my work, and could forget all else. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

1885  
(39)

Mill was anxious to do all he could in compensation, and transmitted Carlyle a draft for £200. Carlyle returned it, but finally agreed to accept £100, the cost of five months' housekeeping.<sup>2</sup> As an example of the consideration for others which he always showed, when not under the stress of personal irritability, we may cite the first words he uttered when Mill left him on the fateful night : “ Well, Mill, poor fellow, is terribly cut up ; we must endeavour to hide from him how very serious this business is to us.”<sup>3</sup> Writing to John a fortnight later, Carlyle confesses that the bitterness of the business is now past, that he has got back his spirits, and will work hard at the task of rewriting.<sup>4</sup> To his pious mother he is careful to represent it as the work of Providence, and the meaning to be that he must write it *truer* than before. Already the first chapter is finished, “ certainly no *worse* than it was.”<sup>5</sup>

But the good mood was followed by reaction, and on concluding the first volume for a second time six months later, he confessed that it was the ugliest task of his life.<sup>6</sup> In May, for instance, he was compelled to abandon his work from sheer disheartenment and disgust, and spend some weeks in reading Marryat's novels.<sup>7</sup> The thought that literature was not his true profession never left him, and various other projects worked in his mind : such as a lecture-tour in America, or a post in the new scheme of National Education.<sup>8</sup> Towards America Carlyle gazed with hope not only for himself, but his brother Alick, whose farming venture at Catlinns had again failed. In the New World there was no one to say, “ Thou that tillest, let another reap ! ” but he

<sup>1</sup> Froude, iii. 28.<sup>2</sup> Froude, iii. 28.<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 302.<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ii. 319-20 ; *Reminiscences*, i. 107.<sup>5</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 290.<sup>6</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 286-92.<sup>7</sup> Ibid., ii. 379.<sup>8</sup> Ibid., ii. 335, 332.

1835 (39) would not definitely counsel emigration till the last extremity ;<sup>1</sup> though his cup of despair at the condition of England was nearly full. "God be thanked," he wrote to his mother, at this time of trial, "I have *no* doubts about my course of duty in the world ; or that if I am driven back at one door, I must go on trying at another."<sup>2</sup> Froude surmises that the mother was distressed by her son's lack of faith,<sup>3</sup> and we recall the repeated cry in his Journal "Oh for faith." About this time John Sterling communicated to Carlyle his criticism of *Sartor*, and he objected that Teufelsdröckh did not believe in a "personal God."<sup>4</sup> We may transfer this to Carlyle : though we know that his belief in the Universe's spiritual frame had a rock-foundation. But for one of his tender nature, there could be no happiness without belief in a Person who concerned Himself with the individual and guided and consoled : belief, that is to say, in the Fatherhood of God.

But apart from the labour of composition and the occasional assaults of Giant Despair, there was much that was pleasant in life at Cheyne Row. "I am wonderfully well hefted here," wrote Mrs. Carlyle, "the people are extravagantly kind to me, and in most respects my situation is out of sight more suitable than it was at Craigenputtock." Mention has been made of the Sterling family : and their friendship was of immense value to Mrs. Carlyle. "I have only to say 'I should like to see such a thing,' or 'to be at such a place,' and next day a carriage is at the door, or a boat is on the river to take me. . . ." <sup>5</sup> The elder Sterling, "the redoubted Sterling of the *Times* Newspaper, really a very notable man," <sup>6</sup> was an ardent admirer of Mrs. Carlyle. Towards his wife she felt as to a third mother, and of the son John, whose biography Carlyle was afterwards to write with so much beauty, she speaks as follows : "The son is devoted to Carlyle, and makes him a real friend, which, among all his various intimate acquaintances and well-wishers, he cannot be said ever to have had before."<sup>7</sup> Carlyle described their little circle of society as one of "really superior honest-minded men and women."<sup>8</sup> It numbered some foreigners or "Political

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 335.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 325.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, iii. 62.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., iii. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 331.

<sup>7</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 51.

<sup>8</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 304.



Refugees" among those who composed it, such as Mazzini and Cavaignac.<sup>1</sup> 1835 (39)

His meeting with Southey and Wordsworth occurred in the early months of 1835 ; and, as we know from the *Reminiscences*, he was more drawn to the former than the latter. "The old man," he wrote to John, of Wordsworth, "has a fine shrewdness and naturalness in his expression of face . . . one finds also a kind of *sincerity* in his speech ; but for prolixity, thinness, endless dilution it excels all the other speech I had heard from mortal. A genuine man . . . but also essentially a *small* genuine man. . . ." <sup>2</sup>

When the burnt manuscript was restored, Carlyle felt "like a man that had nearly killed himself accomplishing *zero*." <sup>3</sup> The labour and the exhausting effects of a hot summer had fretted his nerves to a fever ; and servant troubles had to be borne in the shape of two succeeding wild Irishwomen, one of whom dealt violently with cups and plates and was ordered immediate quittance.<sup>4</sup> At the end of August Mrs. Welsh arrived on a visit ; and in the first week of October Carlyle set out alone for Scotland. He suffered the usual torture from exacerbated nerves during the toilsome journey by coach and steamer. He found his mother well and cheerful ; and the reports which he makes of his brothers and sisters and their children are in his well-known kindly strain.<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Carlyle writes in her lively manner that she and her mother mostly accomplish the household work themselves ; and that his friends do not neglect her. Only the elder Sterling is less frequent in his visits, through incompatibility with Mrs. Welsh.<sup>6</sup>

In the first days of November Carlyle returned to London, bringing with him "Anne Cook," a Scottish servant, to whom he behaved with great kindness on the journey, resigning the inside place in the coach to her, as the night was cold and wet.<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Carlyle once records an amusing story of this girl : her suggestion that, if Carlyle slept badly, as he had lately done, and happened to be walking about the house at 5 a.m., he should awaken her.<sup>8</sup> For the rest of the year Carlyle remained fixed at his work, taking long walks for relaxation in the streets, which he always

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 110-12.

<sup>2</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 296.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 355.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 359-60.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 365-73.

<sup>6</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 34-5, 45-6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 47-8.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 50.

1835 found amusing : frequently with John Sterling, "by far the love-  
(39) ablest man I have met for many a year."<sup>1</sup> "May the worst of our years be over !" he wrote to his mother at the close of December.<sup>2</sup>

1836 The agony of writing the *French Revolution* was protracted  
(40) to the end of 1836, and forms the ground-tone of Carlyle's correspondence. "My position here is a very strange one," he writes. ". . . Many men honour me, some even seem to love me ; and withal in a given space of time I shall have no bread left here."<sup>3</sup> According to his mood he alternated between hopes and fears, now admitting that his book is not worthless,<sup>4</sup> now denouncing it as "the miserablest mooncalf of a Book."<sup>5</sup> He speaks of himself as "enchanted to this sad Book,"<sup>6</sup> and his preoccupation is to get it done. "My one wish is to have the miserable rubbish washed off my hands : the sole blessedness I expect or desire from it is that of being done with it. After which ? No man in Europe perhaps has a blanker future. . . ." <sup>7</sup> But the power of absorption in his work at times brought him the stern happiness of independence ; steeling him to the changes of fortune and the opinion of men, even when it pleased him to mix with his fellow-creatures.<sup>8</sup> In April he laid aside his task to spend some holiday weeks with John, on leave from Italy and his attendance upon Lady Clare.<sup>9</sup> In July and August, when Mrs. Carlyle was in Scotland, he would work all day, and by night take "long swift-striding walks under the stars."<sup>10</sup> Fear of immediate shortage of money was removed by the article on Mirabeau which he contributed to Mill's Review, now called the *London and Westminster*, and by Fraser's acceptance of the *Diamond Necklace*.<sup>11</sup> A sorrow to him was John Sterling's exile to the south of France in search of health : "the friendliest being I have met in the world for long years."<sup>12</sup> Letters to his kindred diminish from lack of leisure, but are charged with the same interest and wish to secure for his mind's eye a picture of the daily round of life at Scotsbrig and elsewhere. "Do you keep good fires ? . . . There is nothing like *fire* in such weather," he writes to his mother, for whose health he is never without a shade of solicitude.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters T.C., ii. 389.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., ii. 391.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ii. 394.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., ii. 398.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 30.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., i. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., i. 20.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., i. 10, 40.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., i. 10-11, 36.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., i. 43.

This year it was Mrs. Carlyle's turn to journey alone to Scotland for reasons of health ; and she left on or about July 9th. In a letter to John, who was then at Scotsbrig, Carlyle writes : " Do not say Medicine can do nothing (though that I do believe is the truth) : but question her, speculate with her, speak hope to her : she is very disheartened—that is her grand ailment . . ." <sup>1</sup> The particulars of her eventful journey have been preserved : how Manchester was her first halt, where Robert Hanning—lately wedded to Carlyle's youngest sister—received her ; and in their hospitable but noisily situated house she was detained till the second day by sickness. Thence she set forth for the first time by railroad to her uncle at Liverpool : and he presented her with a fineshawl, and saved her from the hardships of the cheaper sea-journey by securing a place in the Dumfries mail for her at his own expense. At Dumfries her mother met her, and there ensued " such an embracing and such a crying. The very Boots was affected with it, and spoke in a plaintive voice all morning after." Mrs. Welsh carried her daughter off to Templand and showered gifts on her in her usual generous fashion. Health, however, did not return at Templand, and, the ecstasy of reunion once over, discord began to rise out of the small accidents of life. " You know my Mother's way," wrote Mrs. Carlyle to her husband, " she will give you everything on earth, except the thing you *want* ; will do anything for you, except what you *ask* her to do." The visit terminated towards the end of August, and, on resumption of her customary life at Cheyne Row, Mrs. Carlyle's health took a turn for the better.<sup>2</sup>

The long years of probation are now ebbing to their close. Whether greater happiness awaits Carlyle in the future is a hard question ; but the economical struggle is soon to end and his fame to attain an eminence whence it will not decline. Already one ray of light was filtering through the bank of clouds which had obscured his firmament more thickly since the great labour of the *French Revolution* was allotted him. The hopeful sign was American appreciation of *Sartor*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 58-63 ; New Letters J.W.C., i. 50-61.

<sup>3</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 40-1.



## CHAPTER XII

### "FRENCH REVOLUTION" I, II: ANALYSIS

I. I. 1 (1774). Louis XV lies ill, and no prayers are said in France for his recovery : unlike at the time of his sickness thirty years ago. Dame Dubarry might pray if she could—Aiguillon and others elevated by her sinister influence over the King : who dismissed Choiseul, his last substantial man. They live enchanted lives in an Armida-Palace which hangs on a single hair—the King's life : with the rest of France striving and toiling at their feet.

2 (1774). Not only is Louis sick, but French Kingship is dying. Across the Atlantic and elsewhere Democracy is being born. All is for a time only ; and yet certain Symbols or Realised Ideals do survive out of the Past. The Church and Kingship, Belief and Loyalty—these are men's noblest possessions. But the blossoming time of Ideals is short, like the centennial Cactus-flower. And now Kingship is dying, and the Church is decrepit. To live in such decadent ages is a misfortune. The nobles have no place, and are famous only for their debauchery. With the people it fares worse. But a new Noblesse of Lawyers, Commerce, Literature, has arisen. Scepticism too has arisen ; it leaves man nothing but his five senses, and threatens enlargement to his whole dæmonic nature.

3 (1774). Shall extreme unction be administered to Louis ? If so, the Dubarry and her crew must vanish. If not, and the King gets worse but not delirious ! . . . The dispute goes on : at such a pass is Catholicism, and the symbols of the Holiest.

4 (1774). Louis had the kingliest abhorrence of death and suffered it not to be spoken of in his presence. Now it has found him. His scenic show of a life is about to become a reality. Versailles bursts asunder and the pale Kingdoms yawn open. Do the curses of mothers sound in the ears of the dying sinner ? Do the ghosts of those slain in his unjust wars crowd round him ? . . . But let no mean man flatter himself ; for it is not the work that imports but the spirit of the worker. And what could Louis have done in such a confused world ? He was the

absurdest mortal extant ; and his misfortune was to be seen of a whole world, so that Oblivion cannot swallow him. . . . Meanwhile Louis himself asks for the sacrament ; and the Dubarry vanishes into space. . . . On May 10th life is done ; the young Dauphin and Dauphiness are King and Queen, and the old era has passed away.

II. 1 (1774-84). “Happy the people whose annals are vacant” ; for history like rumour babbles only of what is *misdone*. And yet the peace of France in the next ten years was of the unhealthy plethoric kind. It was an age of Paper : with no reserve of Gold. But all France seemed young again with the young King and Queen. Virtuous Turgot was Controller-General : and no one objected that he never went to mass. Philosophism became the dinner-guest of Opulence. Great hopes were in the air : that Society would be rightly constituted by victorious analysis. . . . Cheery old Maurepas was Prime Minister ; he strove to please all ; and the King treated him with childlike trust. The Queen moved through her halls like a vision of beauty, doing picturesque acts of charity, and concerned not with the future.

2 (1774-84). With the “masses,” each one of whom, after all, is a miraculous man, it is less well. They have no hope in this world, and hardly now in another. In May 1775 they present a Petition of Grievances : and for answer two are hanged. Yet these “masses” are a problem for Government. Old Mirabeau saw a strange sight at Mont d’Or. . . .

3 (1774-84). No, this is not an Age of Hope, with a people in such a state, the result of dishonesty accumulated through generations ; with Society held together by the belief that Pleasure is pleasant, and seeing no God above it ; with a Church that has lost all power. That the rotten endures so long is proof of the power of habit. Our whole being is an infinite abyss overarched by Habit, or fixed ways of acting. Constitutions, etc., are but the expressed summary of the unwritten Code. But every Society, like every individual, holds a madman confined within it. And if ever, in the struggle, the thin Earth-rind of habit should break, and the fire-fountains boil forth ! . . .

4 (1774-81). In these days it would puzzle us to say where is the official Government of France. Louis would like to make France happy, but he does not know the way. Philosophism has her Turgot ; and, with a *Fortunatus’ Purse* in his Treasury, he might have lasted longer. But he proposed to tax the Clergy and the Noblesse like the People. A shriek of indignation arose, and Louis must write a dismissal. . . . At this time Voltaire revisits Paris and enjoys his extraordinary triumph. The purport of his life had been to wither up all whereon Majesty rests. . . .

5 (1776-85). Beyond the Atlantic the day of Democracy has dawned. Sympathetic France must have a navy, though she is poor. Rough Yankee Generals visit Paris and present arms to the far-glancing Chivalry of France. It hardly fares well with the new navy; and when peace comes, the Finances are little strengthened. Necker now succeeds to the Controllership and holds it for five years—till he too suggests taxing the Clergy and Noblesse.

6 (1776-84). Heedless of the chaos of ignorance and hunger, twenty-five million strong, under its feet, fashionable Paris rolls on in new-gilt carriages, as if on the foundations of the world instead of heraldic parchment. Anglomania is the fashion; and some enlightened persons admire the English Constitution. Note the young Duke de Chartres, once of great promise, but now ruined by debauchery. One day the Montgolfier air-ship convulses Paris; the next it is Dr. Mesmer. Proof even in such days that man is miraculous and cannot be "victoriously analysed."

7 (1781-88). Sin is the parent of misery, and what can become of a country where only the units flourish, where the millions are wretched, and industry is noosed and haltered? As usual in decadent ages, theories of Government are rife. A theory must be incomplete, and the Universe is *infinite*. Blessed is hope, and a Millennium of Holiness has always been prophesied, but never till now a Millennium of Ease. In this wild Universe man can only exist by endeavour. Woe if he has lost Faith, and Duty has no meaning for him! Sentimentalism is twin-sister to Cant; and if a whole Nation fall into Cant!

8 (1784-88). Discontent grows, as we see from the Street Ballads and Epigrams that always tempered Despotism. Young Mirabeau is first heard of, who for twenty years has been learning to resist tyranny. Then the scandal of the Diamond Necklace brings the Throne into collision with the Treadmill; and the Queen shall no more be loved. Our era of Hope is dimmed, and ominous signs appear. To which add the French characteristic of Excitability. Is it the fault of Philosophism, of Turgot, of Necker? No, it was that of every quack-like scoundrel who ever lived. And now the account day has come. For no falsehood ever perishes.

III. 1 (1781-3). Through what crevice will the explosion carry itself? By old institutions, which used to communicate with the interior deep; or by a new crater? Why does not the Parlement of Paris bestir itself? It need fear no Louis XIV now. . . . Light old Maurepas is dead; and Louis, older, but no more experienced, must begin to govern. There is much melancholy at Court owing to the failing Horn of Plenty. Posts are daily abolished: soon the Wolf-hounds will go. Towards the end of 1783 is seen the spectre of National Bankruptcy. . . .



2 (1783-6). Then appears Calonne, hopeful, smiling, loving social pleasures. Everything is changed; plenty returns; and stinginess flies from the royal abodes. He has genius, but it is for persuading and borrowing. With underhand money he gets loan after loan filled up on the Stock Exchange. This cannot last more than three miraculous years. Then he suggests an expedient unheard of for these hundred and sixty years: Convocation of the Notables.

3 (1787). In February men of weight from all parts of France meet at Versailles: 144 in number. D'Orléans, late Chartres, is among them. Calonne tells of his enormous deficit, and expounds his remedy: a Land-tax from which none shall be exempt. But the Notables are of the Privileged Classes, used to tax; unused to pay taxes. Peculation is hinted at; Calonne is ousted. . . . Loménie de Brienne becomes Controller: though he has never qualified for such a post. . . . After nine weeks' session the Notables are dismissed. Some blame Loménie; but awkward subjects of discussion were impending: *Lettre-de-Cachet*, Tithe, etc. Lafayette even hinted at States-General.

4 (1787). The Notables return to their homes carrying unquiet rumours. Spiritual bankruptcy threatens to become economical, and misery is spreading upward. Loménie, thinking to abate the swell, repeals some taxes that press on the poor; but the swell is from subterranean pent wind. . . . Cash must be had, and Loménie puts forward the Stamp and Land Tax. But rebellion is in the air, and Parlement will *not* register. It demands details of expenditure, and again the word "States-General" is spoken and repeated. By royal order Parlement is summoned to Versailles and ordered to register. But next day it does not, and declares the prior day's proceedings to be null. Also, that it is incompetent to register Tax-edicts: which only the assembled Three Estates of the Realm may do. Crowds hear and applaud its decisions.

5 (1787). Loménie issues *Lettres-de-Cachet*; and the whole Parlement is exiled to Troyes. It goes amid the blessings of Paris. Unwonted sight! It had formerly been unjust and unloved, anxious only to divide the spoil. There is ferment in Paris: audacious placards and seditious speeches. A great person is all but mobbed: rascaldom only recoiling at the flash of cold steel. . . . Time passes, and Parlement suffers from ennui at Troyes. The Stamp and Land taxes are withdrawn; but a new Land-tax imposed, which presses on the Dumb class. To this they agree, and return to Paris covered with mud instead of glory.

6 (1787). What can Loménie do with no money and France getting hotter and hotter? Taxes on the Privileged cannot be

got registered ; on the unprivileged they yield nothing. Why not a Successive Loan, with promise of States-General in five years ? . . . On November 19th Majesty holds Royal Session to have this Edict registered. D'Orléans protests against the registering of Edicts by *order* in a Session. He has cut his Court-moorings ; and next day a Lettre-de-Cachet sends him far from Paris. But Parlement begins to question the legality of Lettres-de-Cachet : and Parlements of other towns join in the chorus.

7 (1787-8). Care darkens the Queen's bright dwelling-place ; she is told that the throne is in danger. . . . And our Successive Loan does not fill. And Paris is flooded with pamphlets that denounce Despotism. . . . States-General are promised in five years. Nowhere can the King's Government advance. The measure of Iniquity and Falsehood from long centuries is nearly full. Misery is now permeating upwards, and man's hand is set against man. It is the breaking-up of a World-Solecism worn out at last, down even to bankruptcy of money. . . . But Loménie has courage to attack the symptoms : rebellious Parlements. He will tame them by hunger : cut off their Lawsuits, and give the public cheap justice. And for registering Edicts he will make a *Plenary Court*. . . .

8 (1788). But the plot has been penetrated by D'Espréménil, who unfolds it to Parlement. Loménie and Despotism are defied. Loménie issues Lettres-de-Cachet against D'Espréménil and Goeslard. Parlement will not give them up ; and Paris inundates the outer courts. But they yield to Captain D'Agoust, of military, cast-iron habit, who appears like Brennus among the Senators, with files of grenadiers. Parlement, however, has done its part, and no provincial Parlement will register Loménie's Edicts. They send Deputations to Paris : one of which, from Breton Club, becomes *Jacobins' Society*. There are riots at Grenoble, and the soldiery will not suppress them. The Plenary Court has met once and no more. . . . On July 13th a frightful hailstorm scatters into waste the Fruits of the Year, making a ruin of sixty leagues round Paris. Even before this, Loménie had promised States-General for the following May. The Treasury is all but empty. Necker, invited to resume control, declines. Then it is announced that two-fifths of all payments will be made in paper. Hootings and howlings are the answer : and Loménie must go. . . . Flimsier mortal seldom did as weighty mischief.

9 (1788). Necker is recalled amid great rejoicings ; Plenary Court, paper payments, are at an end. Paris rejoices, Rascality emerges, burns Loménie in effigy, and forces great people in their coaches to bow to the statue of Henry IV. But cavalry is brought up, and Rascality brushed back with steel besom. Not

for a century and half had it shown its huge rude lineaments in the light of day.

IV. 1 (1788). States-General, unknown since 1614, are to be ; but the question of procedure is hard. The first two Estates are the Noblesse and the Clergy ; the third is the People : the monstrous twenty-five million class that is ceasing to be dumb. Voices are heard proclaiming, "The Third Estate is the nation." Versailles is troubled ; and Necker has to solve hard problems : Shall the Commons have as many members as Noblesse and Clergy united ? Shall the States-General deliberate in one or three bodies ? . . . He summons the Notables again—to no purpose. Meanwhile popular clamour insists that there shall be Double Representation.

2 (1789). In January all over France men convene to elect the Electors. The people are awake, and hope has reached down even to the beggar. In Brittany the Noblesse try vainly to cripple the Third Estate. In Provence, Mirabeau, the deep-souled world-compeller, expelled from the Assembly of Noblesse, enters the Third Estate, and becomes member for Aix. . . . Trade is at a standstill, and food scarce after the storm of last year. Ragged Lackalls, whom Suspicion multiplies and names Brigands, move through the land.

3 (1789). National Deputies from all ends of France assemble in Paris and look for lodgings at Versailles. . . . But in Saint-Antoine rioting breaks out—worse on the second day : not to be dispersed by musket-volleys, the sound of which reaches fashionable quarters and alters the tone of the dinner-gossip. At last Besenval orders out Swiss Guards and loads his cannon with grape-shot : and then Saint-Antoine disperses. What caused the outbreak ? Was it Hunger, Oppression, Revenge ? . . .

4 (1789). The twelve hundred Deputies are at Versailles, and Louis has prepared the Hall of *Menus*. It is May 4th ; all Paris is pouring out ; Versailles is a sea of men ; life swarms on every chimney-top and lamp-iron. The baptism-day of Democracy has come ; and the extreme-unction day of Feudalism : though it needs another two hundred years for Democracy to get rid of *Quackocracy*, and the world grow young again. . . . Behold the Procession from St. Louis Church to Notre-Dame : the Elected of France and the Court of France. There lies Futurity enough in that silent, marching mass. . . . Some figures stand out : squalid, bleared Marat, once a Horseleech ; Santerre, the sonorous Brewer ; the huge figure of Danton ; Camille Desmoulins, compounded of blackguardism and genius. . . . But the greatest is Mirabeau, type of this epoch as Voltaire of the last. He comes of a wild southern race ; he has suffered imprisonment and much else. He has swallowed all formulas, and striven for



forty years against Despotism. Thus he is the spokesman of a Nation which also will make away with formulas. . . . He is the greatest : and the smallest is Robespierre, anxious, slight, sea-green in colour. . . . Note too worthy Dr. Guillotin, doomed to a strange immortality. . . . Then come the Noblesse and Clergy ; but what do they here on this earth where those who do no work either beg or steal ? . . . Of what use now are Chivalry figures in cloaks of feudal cut ? . . . Topmost of Nobles and Clergy we might name Lafayette and Talleyrand. . . . Then comes the Court. Louis is cheerful—but not the Queen, of whose beauty little but its stateliness remains, and her hair is grey. . . . So they pass on to their strange work of healing a sick, moribund Society, and destroying Shams. . . . Faith they have none, in Heaven or Hell or God.

V. 1 (1789). Next day the 600 Commons are alone in the hall ; Noblesse and Clergy having retired to their separate apartments. Will they, then, constitute separately voting Orders—two against one—and so annul Double Representation ? The Commons, who have the twenty-five millions at their backs, resist by inertia, and for six weeks do nothing. The Noblesse and Clergy claim to be verifying their powers ; but the Commons protest against *separate* verification. Each names a Commission to enquire into the matter, and so time passes. The Taxing-machine will not work ; and Necker looks blue and thinks of bringing up soldiers. Clergy and Noblesse also are divided, and some threaten to desert to the Commons. Paris, where swarms the distilled Rascality of our Planet, is not idle. Harangues sound in the Palais Royal, and every hour produces its pamphlet. There is scarcity of corn and danger of starvation. At last the Commons reject Necker's attempt at conciliation, take possession of the Hall and name themselves *National Assembly*.

2 (1789). On the morrow, June 20th, the Commons find their Hall in the possession of carpenters who are preparing it for a Royal Session. Indignant, they meet in a Tennis Court and take an oath not to separate till they have made the Constitution. One hundred and forty-nine of the Clergy, Bishops among them, join the Commons, who welcome them with tears. The Royal Session is held, and the King announces that the Three Orders *shall* vote separately. But when he, the Noblesse, and most of the Clergy, file out, the Commons keep their places. Then Mirabeau starts to the Tribune and with lion-voice speaks the word in season, but for which the Commons might have yielded, and changed the history of Europe. We are here by the will of the people, he says, and only bayonets shall send us hence. . . . The Court is worsted, and no concessions now will help it. All France is in a roar, and thousands whirl in the Palais Royal.

The remaining Clergy and forty-eight Noblesse, D'Orléans among them, join the Commons. Louis bids all the Noblesse yield ; and so the Triple Family is complete.

3 (1789). The Court is conquered ; but what mean these warlike preparations ? Foreign troops from all sides advance on Paris and Versailles ; and cannon are even trained on the National Assembly Hall. The year is one of famine ; " brigands " are howling for food ; and rumour is driving people mad with fear of " brigands " and open conflagration. . . . At Versailles the lords scorn the idea of the Paris mob resisting, and speak of grape-shot. But remember that your cause is not the soldier's. He has kindred among the " canaille," and promotion is denied him if not born noble. The Gardes-Françaises have shown no promptitude for street-firing lately ; and they now swear not to act against the Assembly. The lords, and Broglie, their War-God, saw not the course things were taking, but sent for new regiments, of foreign order, who could only speak in German gutturals. . . .

4 (1789). Panic seizes Paris at the sight of soldiers clattering in from all points. Then the Job's news of Necker's dismissal is spread abroad. As with one great voice, the people respond to Camille Desmoulins, who urges them not to die like sheep, and cries " To arms." A green cockade becomes their rallying-sign, and armed with axes, staves, they march through the streets. The Royal-Allemands disperse them with sabre strokes ; but all night the cry " To arms " roars tenfold. The streets are a living foam-sea ; the Furies are awaked which lie always in the dulllest existence of man. Vengeful Gardes-Françaises charge the Royal-Allemands ; and military order is gone. . . . What a Paris when night fell ! An old city hurled forth from its habits. Use and wont will no longer direct any man ; and each must begin to think for himself. . . . Happily there arises a " Provisional Municipality " which decrees that a " Parisian Militia " shall be enrolled.

5 (1789). It is July 13th, and the cry is for arms. Only the smith plies his craft, and the women sew Tricolor cockades : other industry has paused. Ancient cannon and firelocks are pressed into service ; and all the while the tocsin peals madly. The mob plunder and burn the House of Saint-Lazarus, carrying off the priests' corn in fifty-two carts. They break open the Debtors' Prison and enlarge those who sit in bondage to Aristocrats. The rich cannot escape, for all are seized at the Barriers and dragged to the Hôtel-de-Ville. Commandant Besenval fires no red-hot ball, for he doubts his men ; and the Gardes-Françaises go over to the people. Our Militia, now called National Guard, increases, but has no arms ; though the smiths produce pikes by the thou-



sand. . . . It is a great moment when tidings of freedom reach us ; for freedom is the aim of all man's toils and struggles. . . . Besenval's messages to Versailles are unanswered. All is rumour and mystery at Versailles, and the King bids the Assembly busy itself with the Constitution.

6 (July 14, 1789). Rumour tells that muskets lie at the Hôtel des Invalides. Thither roll the National Guards, and 28,000 firelocks are surrendered without a struggle. Now to the Bastille : where old De Launay, with small garrison but thick walls, has retired to the interior. He will not surrender, though he turns pale at the sights and sounds, but pulls up his drawbridge and gives fire. Then insurrection bursts forth ; the drawbridge chain is smitten through, and it thunders down. But eight grim towers still soar aloft, protected by a ditch and inner drawbridge. Paris has got to the acme of its frenzy ; but our musketry makes no impression on the thick walls ; while the garrison shoot us down from behind them. All kinds of devices are tried, and the fire-deluge goes on—but the Bastille does not yield. . . . De Launay should have fired the magazine rather than surrender, but he could not. The sound of many men—the utterance of their *instincts*—is the greatest a man encounters. To resist it ✓ you must have your footing *beyond* Time. This World-Bedlam has lasted four hours, and the defenders are weary. Terms of ✓ surrender, immunity to all, are proposed, accepted. The Bastille is fallen.

7 (1789). The crowd billows in, at first in joy, but soon the mood changes. De Launay shall be judged at the Hôtel-de-Ville—but only his bloody hair-queue enters ; his bleeding trunk lies on the steps, and his head is off through the streets on a pike. Two others are hanged on the Lamp-iron ; the porch of the Hôtel-de-Ville is like the mouth of Hell. But the Gardes-Françaises enclose the garrison in a square and march home to barracks. . . . The secrets of the Bastille come to view ; its long-buried Despair. . . . But at last Paris brawls itself to a kind of sleep. . . . At ✓ Versailles, Louis, to whom the news is told, declares it is a revolt ; and is answered : "Not revolt but revolution."

8 (1789). Louis enters the Assembly to announce that the troops, the cause of offence, are gone, and is greeted with acclamation. Eighty-eight senators take coach for Paris, where they march through a sea of cockades, and proclaim a new Heaven-on-Earth. Lafayette is made General of the National Guard, and Bailly Mayor of Paris. The people have conquered the war-gods ; and the flight of Broglie and some other princes marks the first emigration. . . . Then Louis visits Paris with a small escort. He drives through a steel people shouting "Vive la Nation" ; but appears on the Town hall balcony wearing a



cockade, and is acclaimed. . . . The revolution is sanctioned, and the people are now sure of a Constitution.

9 (1789). While the shock of the Bastille resounded through France, mysterious couriers spread the rumour to her furthest corners that the Brigands were coming : at which all France organised a National Guard. Paris is calmer, but the waves still run high, as the fate of Foulon shows. Old Foulon, the extortioner, who once said that the people might eat grass ; who had feigned death and burial, but is discovered and dragged to Paris. Waiting his trial, he is seized by the people and hanged at the Lamp-iron amid sounds as of Tophet. Sansculottism has at last risen, after long dumb-groaning generations. Foulon's son-in-law, Berthier, the forestaller of corn, is arrested, brought to Paris, and shares a like fate. All this is a threatening cloud to enlightened Patriotism. . . . Daily the Bastille falls to pieces, while crowds roam through its caverns, and gaze on the walled-up skeletons. . . .

VI. I (1789). In a world where all changes Revolution may mean *speedier* change. But here it is the victory of dis-imprisoned Anarchy over corrupt worn-out Authority. Its fanaticism is to make away with all formulas. Miracles seemed past, but when God's Universe became the work of the Tailor and Upholsterer, suddenly the earth yawned asunder and SANSULOTTISM arose. It brings one blessing—that man's life rests no more on a Lie. It will burn much, but not what is incombustible. Fear it not ; it came from God, since it has *been* ; do not attempt to *account* for it, to reduce it to a dead logic-formula. . . . The Revolution lies not in the Palace or Assembly, but in the heart and head of every violent speaking and thinking man. The Assembly talks about the Rights of Man and thinks it is making the Constitution. But a Constitution must have celestial sanction ; the set of prescribed habits of acting must image men's convictions, their faith as to this wondrous Universe. And here there is no god-missioned man to image-forth the general belief.

2 (1789). The National now became the *Constituent* Assembly and thought it could regenerate France. It accomplishes formalities, etc. ; even abolishes Tithes, Gabelle—in fact, Feudalism root and branch. It is an "irregular," disordered Assembly, and spectators in the gallery applaud and hiss. . . . Robespierre, the Puritan and Precisian, would abolish formulas, while living in formulas of another sort ; yet he believes every word he says. . . . Above all rises royal Mirabeau ; in the Transient he sees the Perennial. . . . Twelve hundred men struggle here for what profits not. . . .

3 (1789). The sceptre has departed from Louis ; and the Queen, regarded as the evil genius of France, weeps in her apartments. Louis has no determination, and depends on all but himself. . . . This year there is an abundant harvest, but industry lies dormant, and capital does not circulate. The poor man is short of work, therefore of money ; besides, bread is not to be bought. In former days oppression was submitted to as a law of nature ; but now, with a Bastille fallen and a Constitution getting ready ! . . . Five million gaunt figures start up in vengeance against the Seigneurs. Châteaux flame aloft, tax-gatherers are put to flight, churches even are sacked. No Lie can endure, and the end of this has come. The Seigneur will no longer extract the third nettle which the widow gathers for her children's dinner, and name it Rent and Law. There were one hundred and fifty thousand Seigneurs, but they could not combine, for they were scattered, and also divided by ill will. . . . Emigrant flights of French Seigneurs are seen this autumn.

4 (1789). In Paris people wait outside the bakers' shops in *Queues* ; while, in contrast, jubilee processions celebrate the Bastille fallen. Mayor Bailly has to face the problem of finding Bread. . . . The old Bastille Electors are replaced by the Commune, a body of three hundred, whose object is to "consolidate the Revolution." They think it is finished.

5 (1789). The deluge of pamphleteering increases. . . . Marat, squalid, dwelling in garrets, made of Nature's *leavings* . . . Camille Desmoulins, glittering with fallen, semi-celestial light, as of Lucifer. . . . Public speaking shows no decline. Incessant strikes against the dearness of bread produce more meetings and resolutions.

VII. 1 (1789). Consolidation can make little progress, for the Revolution, like all mad things, will grow rapidly. . . . There is still the Deficit ; and Necker, who had been recalled, tries vainly to raise a Loan. Instead, people of all kinds bring their belongings as gifts : from jewellery to shoe buckles. . . . The Assembly discuss the King's Veto : shall it be Absolute ? Paris breaks out into protest against a return of Despotism ; but Lafayette patrols the streets and prevents disorder. The Veto is finally made *Suspensive*. . . . And in spite of the "Rights of Man," grain is dear, and Lafayette chokes free speech. Is this the end of the Revolution ?

2 (1789). But is the Court rallying ? And what means this Flanders regiment entering Versailles ? It is rumoured in Paris the King will fly to Metz. . . . The Court, obeying the law of self-preservation, has indeed rallied ; but the King is languid, and, though he has ceased lock-making, still hunts. . . . A dinner takes place, given by the young Guards' officers to



their Flanders brethren, at which loyal toasts are drunk, but that of the Nation omitted. The King sits dulled with his day's hunting ; but the Queen's appearance is greeted with tumultuous enthusiasm. White cockades are openly flaunted, and the Court glows into hope.

3 (1789). These banquets continue, and their effect may be divined on Paris, where there is famine. And Lafayette with his patrols still represses Patriotism. But female patriotism begins to wax, for only house-mothers know the trials of an empty pantry. Will National Guards bayonet women ?

4 (1789). The French nature, full of vehemence, free from depth, is fitted above all others for insurrection. There is a Reality about a Mob ; it communicates with Nature's deepest deep. . . . Hungry women meet and suggest that instead of standing in Bakers' queues they should go to Aristocrats' palaces. A woman seizes a drum, and from every house women come forth. Ten thousand Judiths pour like a deluge into the Town hall ; they find no Mayor, but seize arms, money, and leave the building in flames.

5 (1789). But shiftY Maillard, to avert destruction, will lead the Menads to Versailles. A procession forms, with a nucleus of order round his drum, elsewhere like the ocean. He persuades them to march unarmed and petition the Assembly. By Sèvres, Meudon, Saint-Cloud, they go in the wild October weather. At Versailles it becomes known that “Paris is marching on us.” . . . In Paris, Patriotism and Patrollotism are reconciled, and the cry is “To Versailles.” Lafayette on his white charger protests in vain. From the far-spreading crowd come cries of a sinister nature. He too must march with the National Guards and all Saint-Antoine.

6 (1789). Maillard halts his Menads on the last hill-top above Versailles, and persuades them to make a peaceable show, The King has been got home from his shooting, and Bodyguards and Swiss are ranked before the Palace. Maillard introduces fifteen draggled women into the Assembly. They demand “Bread and speech with the King.” President Mounier offers to conduct the deputation, and he proceeds at their head to the Palace, through crowds of male and female Rascality, armed with strange weapons. Rain pours, and Bodyguards go caracoling through the groups.

7 (1789). Saint-Antoine continues to arrive, wetted and sulky. Some notable persons are among them ; and all these diverse elements, including caracoling Bodyguards may give rise to occurrences ! . . . The She-deputies return radiant, five having been admitted to the Royal Presence. One, Louison Chabray, the King took in his arms and promised that if provision is in the world it shall be sent to Paris. But the Menads exclaim



that these are mere words, that Aristocrats corrupt their messengers. Poor Louison is nearly hanged at the Lanterne. The Bodyguards, soaked by the rain, are losing patience. Swords are drawn ; Saint-Antoine points its cannon, but the touch-holes are wet. The Bodyguards are persuaded to file off, amid execrations. The Flanders regiment, seduced by unfortunate-female Théroigne, says it will not fire on citizens.

8 (1789). The Menads invade the Assembly and interrupt eloquence with cries of "Bread." The Royal Family would fly to Metz, but carriages are denied access. What a night fell on Versailles ! In the down-rushing of a world, highest comes into contact with lowest. Misery, pent up through long ages, will now speak for itself. . . . A letter is read from Louis authorising the free circulation of grains. Menadism further insists that the Assembly shall fix the price of bread. . . . When President Mounier returns, he finds the Assembly Members gone and the Menads holding mock debate. Unwashed heads crowd the galleries where five months ago shone jewelled beauty. They ask for food, and supplies are sent for which produce satisfaction. Then the Assembly edges in and proceeds to discuss the Penal Code.

9 (1789). Towards midnight Lafayette reaches Versailles with his thirty thousand, their rage abated by the wild weather, and is received by Louis, to whom he explains the wishes of Paris : National Guards for the King, Provisions, Judges for political delinquents, and that the King should live in Paris. All but the last are granted. Lafayette is declared to be the saviour of the Court. The troublous day is over, and Insurrectionary Chaos slumbers round the Palace.

10 (1789). Next morning a quarrel occurs between Bodyguards and people. A shot is fired, a man killed ; and Rascality, bursting the Palace grates, pours in like a deluge, wounding the Bodyguards with pikes. Brave men warn the Queen, who flies to the King's apartment with her children. The Bodyguards barricade themselves in the Œil-de-Bœuf, at which the axe of insurrection thunders. Nothing should hinder the mob from bursting in ; when suddenly the tumult ceases, and regular steps are heard. It is the Gardes-Françaises come to succour their comrades, united by memories of Fontenoy. Then Lafayette arrives and helps to clear the Palace. Two Bodyguards have fallen ; their heads, paraded on pikes, reach Paris : but the blaze of insurrection is damped down. To Lafayette Louis accorded the "Grand Entries" ; last flicker of Etiquette in the Cimmerian World-wreckage.

11 (1789). There is a general reconciliation between Royalty, People, Bodyguards : but the cry is heard, "The King

to Paris." No refusal is possible—and so the Monarchy has fallen. But what can there be for a man who wills and yet wills not? . . . The procession forms, strangest ever seen—miles long and becoming vague in breadth. Vanguard of National troops ; Royalty in centre ; soldiers in the rear ; Menadic women flowing among all. Human nature is once more human, having swallowed all formulas. At the Town hall there are speeches, and Louis appears on the balcony wearing the tricolor. Surely, people think, the New Era is born ! Only at eleven at night Louis reaches the Tuileries : October 6th.

II. I. 1 (1789). Much of Royalty's strength is fled now that Rascality has looked into its face and not died ; for all Authority is *mystic*, and comes "by the grace of God." Life at the Tuileries becomes outwardly peaceable. Louis walks in the Gardens, is cheered by the crowds. He regrets that he cannot hunt, and sets to making locks again. Better that one of his stagnating character should have been born to such a craft. The Queen spends her time reading—sorrowful, yet with hope in her son.

2 (1789-90). The Assembly sits in the Riding School near the Tuileries, and proceeds with the Constitution. Mirabeau alone discerns whither all this is tending ; and it is whispered that he begins to cool, that he has Royalist leanings, is sold to Royalism—for whence comes all his money ? This cannot be ; for his strength is from Conviction ; but is it that he is "paid and not sold" ? . . . The Deficit still is, and as a remedy, the Clergy's lands are sold and paid for by *Assignats* : thus Bankruptcy is made easy. Old landmarks disappear : Provinces become Departments, etc. Only religion cannot be abolished, or uprooted from simple hearts ; and the Assembly stirs a hydra-coil about its ears. . . . All over France disturbances are breaking out between rival cities, etc., and industry and justice are repressed. There was no true authority, and each did as he pleased. . . . The Assembly continues its task of regenerating the country, hampered by disputes between Right and Left. Modern *lingual*, as opposed to *manual*, war is endless ; for you cannot exterminate your foe. Cassandra-Marat, the man forbid, would accomplish the Revolution at the cost of two hundred and sixty thousand Aristocrat heads ! What if his plan be the one adopted ! . . . Hunger returns to Paris after a few days of plenty following the Menadic Insurrection. Disturbances threaten, and Martial Law is proclaimed.

3 (1789-90). Other strange persons, like Marat, rise to the surface : buoyed up by limitation of mind and vehemence. Danton waxes even greater at the Cordeliers ; and in a different fashion from Mirabeau he sees whither Constitutionalism is tending. Dumouriez is here, and might have done much if



twenty years younger ; but his way of thought is fixed and military. . . . From all parts of Europe men come. . . . Paul Jones, who had longed to see the world beyond St. Bees : as if the heart could not be broken in far lands, even as at home with the mean. . . . Anarcharsis Clootz, who sought the man under all costumes, and who believed in a discoverable Paradise. . . . All France is changing ; and many of the Philosophes are distracted at seeing their speculations in practice. . . .

4 (1789-90). The Paris Municipal Constitution is completed. The sixty *Districts* become forty-eight *Sections*, so that each *active* citizen may send his fifty-thousandth part of a Tongue-fencer to the National Debating-club : and this is Liberty ! . . . Journalism flourishes ; the People's voice goes forth to the ends of France in every dialect. . . . Witty Camille, croaking Marat, who after all has sense. . . . Bill-stickers too abound, and walls speak strange things. . . . Writing is but speech conserved for a time, whether one day or three thousand years. All but the spirit in man tends to oblivion.

5 (1789-90). As full hearts seek to impart themselves, and soul mystically strengthens soul, Club life grows up. It is the symptom of Social Unrest, for in each head hangs a prophetic picture of new France. The Breton Club, having leased the Jacobins Convent, is called *Jacobins Club*. There are seen Barnave, Fouquier-Tinville, Robespierre. . . . It was welcomed as a celestial Sun, but it became a Tartarean Portent. . . . The Jacobins are buried, but their spirit survives and has made the tour of the world. . . . It became a "Mother Society," with three hundred shrill-tongued daughters in direct correspondence, and of indirect progeny forty thousand. Two other Clubs spring from it : Danton's *Cordeliers* and Lafayette's *Feuillans*, which respectively think the Jacobins lukewarm and scalding-hot.

6 (1789-90). Hope is blessed ; and, in this wreck of Society, France, seeing only the birth-struggles of a better order, sings her famous *Ça-ira*. Louis, with little insight and less determination, thinks agreement with the Assembly easier than civil war or help from Austria. He visits the Assembly, proclaims his joy in the regeneration of France, hopes it will not be done *roughly*. Extravagant hopes are built on his speech. *Je le jure*, the National oath, is renewed by the Assembly, then by Paris, and all France.

7 (1789-90). Freedom by Social Contract was the faith of that generation : as if an ever-changing world could live on Promises. Yet it was a better faith than the materialism it had replaced. . . . The times are ominous, and among other strange things, the spirit of prophecy seems to revive in distant nooks of France.



8 (1789-90). It is said that the shortage of grain is due to Royalist plotters and regraters. The idea of a Covenant arises between National Guards and Patriot Authorities. Meetings of National Guards take place in November at Etoile and Montélimart ; and an oath is sworn to obey and see obeyed the decrees of the Assembly. It spreads throughout France ; and the days of universal brotherhood seem verily here. But why should not France have one Federation and universal Oath of Brotherhood ? At Lyons in May (1790) between fifty and sixty thousand are met to federate. Madame Roland is seen there, noblest of living Frenchwomen. . . . As for Paris, let it be on the Bastille anniversary, in the Champ-de-Mars.

9 (1790). Man's life is a Symbolic Representation or making visible his inward celestial force : from a Feast of Tabernacles to a theatrical scene. A nation's character appears in its scenic displays. Consider the stately Champ-de-Mars and the mean surroundings of the Scottish Covenant. Look still further back to the Last Supper. No man or Nation *conscious* of doing a great thing ever did other than a small one.

10 (1790). This Federation was an affair of pasteboard and paint, compared to the Menadic Insurrection, an original thing from the heart of Nature. Selected National Guards from all over France are to federate with selected Royal soldiers. One hundred and fifty thousand men are at work on a National Amphitheatre in the Champ-de-Mars. Clootz enters the Assembly at the head of a band of men made up of all nations, to salute the dawn of the new era. . . . Titles, liveries, etc., are abolished by the efforts of Clootz. One Adam is father of us all. . . . At this time Jean Claud Jacob, deputed from his native Jura, aged 120, visited the Assembly : he who had heard talk of Grand-Monarch victories and lived to behold this wonder-scene.

11 (1790). The area of the Amphitheatre will be 300,000 square feet, and in the centre is to stand the Autel de la Patrie. But the workers are lazy ; and, that all may be done in time, a voluntary 15,000 start to labour. These soon increase to hundreds of thousands, and all sorts and conditions work side by side. The King comes to see, and is loudly acclaimed. Saw the sun such another sight—all working brother-like under one warm feeling ? . . . Federates arrive from all parts, and are received with fraternal embracing and hospitality. They visit the Assembly and assist in the spade work of the Champ-de-Mars. A Breton Captain does homage, wet-eyed, to the King : and the King admits these were of his life's bright days. The Lorrainers, over whom the Queen's ancestors ruled, win from her a sun-smile.

12 (1790). On July 14th the throng of 300,000 floods into the Amphitheatre : a circle of bright-dyed life on its thirty-seated

slope. On the heights round Paris men stand and watch. Cannon line these heights ; and the inhabitants of towns far off await their sound, that they too may take the oath and fire : so that all France is an Amphitheatre. The Assembly sit beneath a Canopy ; and Royalty on a throne beside. Lafayette as General of France first takes the oath ; then the King : on which the welkin is split with vivats, and cannon speak to the four corners of the land that France is free. . . . An unfortunate deluge of rain played sad havoc with the multitudes and the scenic decorations, just as Bishop Talleyrand was blessing the National Banners. . . . The great day is not all ; but festivities, with dancing and illuminations, continue for a week. . . . Why was such an oath broken ? Partly because it was sworn with over-joyance ; but chiefly because Sin and Misery had come into the world. It was like a wedding where the highest exultation is followed by the bitterest disappointment.

II. 1 (1790). At Metz on the north-eastern frontier the loyalist General Bouillé commanded the garrison. A man of the old military school, he was opposed to immoderate reform, and therefore suspect to Patriotism. In order that he may still serve the King, he does not emigrate, and struggles to keep his troops faithful.

2 (1790). Since the Bastille the French army had grown daily worse. Discipline is a miracle—and if the magic word be once forgotten and the spell broken ! A military mob is terriblest of all, with proper arms, and knowing that death is the penalty for disobedience. . . . The soldiers have two grievances : that their officers are Aristocrats ; and that they are cheated of their pay. They suspect the officers favour a Counter-revolution, and would sell them to the Austrian Kaiser. Signs of insubordination multiply ; everywhere there is increase of sympathy between the people, or Patriots, and the soldiers. Officers fling up their commissions and emigrate in disgust. We have the young Napoleon's testimony that, since the famous Oath, soldiers will not fire on the people ; and also to the disproportionate influence of the few Patriot officers. Mirabeau even proposes disbanding and reorganising the whole army.

3 (1790). Bouillé much disapproves of the fraternising of the Soldiers of the line with the people and the National Guards. In Metz there are 10,000 soldiers ; and these suddenly mutiny and demand arrears of pay. The Salm Regiment would seize the military chest at its Colonel's house ; but brave Bouillé, with drawn sword, stands in the entrance for two hours, a bronze figure, fronting soldiers and rascality. Finally the peaceful Mayor effects a compromise, and advances half the money. Such scenes are universal over France ; and the anxious Assembly appoints inspectors to visit the Armies.



4 (1790). Bouillé's district was the most inflammable, as it lay near to Austria. In Nanci, the capital of Lorraine and home of faded Feudalism, were many warring elements : a divided population, Patriot soldiers, Aristocrat officers, and a Jacobins Daughter Society. The question of Arrears was like to be serious where so many grudges had accumulated. . . . Paris is alarmed at reports of mutiny, but only when Nanci has sent several deputations does it appoint Inspector Malseigne to visit the scene.

5 (1790). Malseigne is a bull-headed man, and he stirs up strife at Nanci. The soldiers will not obey him ; but at Lunéville he finds a Carbineer Regiment not yet mutinied. Between it and the Nanci troops there is a slight collision ; and wild rumours of " sold to Austria " fly about. Regiments march from Nanci to Lunéville in threatening fashion : but a parley takes place, Malseigne is surrendered, and lodged in prison at Nanci.

6 (1790). Much depends on Bouillé at a time when the whole army may mutiny and all France be convulsed. He demands the liberation of Malseigne, and his fellow-prisoner Denoue, and that the mutinous regiments march off. In Nanci there are 10,000 fighting men ; and Bouillé marches thither with one third the number. His vanguard is thirty paces from the gate when—gladdest moment of his life—the prisoners are delivered. But many of the mutinous soldiers refuse to file out ; and the gate is not opened to Bouillé's order. Things being so inflammable lead easily to a musket shot, answered by a cannon volley from the town. Then comes conflagration as of Tophet. Bouillé storms through the gate, and, though fired upon from cellar to garret, sweeps rebellion away. . . . Had Bouillé filled Broglie's place in Bastille days, things might have been different. . . . He has quenched mutiny and civil war, and is thanked by the Assembly. But Saint-Antoine demands revenge for murdered brothers. . . . The news peals through France and awakes angry controversies and embitterment. . . . The army will not die suddenly, but by inches—till its phoenix rebirth. ✓

(III. I (1790). The Universe is an action, a sum-total of actions. Everything we see is the product and expression of exerted force. All changes and works forward to fulfil its destiny ; every Beginning holds in it an End. The mystery of Time surrounds us, and we are sons of Time. . . . In seasons of Revolution changes are more sudden : as the Federation, followed within a month by the slaughter of Nanci. . . . Emigration on the part of Officers and Seigneurs continues. Châteaux still flare aloft, and all old things are vanishing.

2 (1790). Journals and Placards continue to educate Paris. Croaking Marat tells the starving people they have as much right



to exist as the King. He would hang the Assembly on gibbets. . . . There is an appetite for news all over France. Clubbism increases, and the Jacobins Club, now supreme, ramifies to the utmost corners of the country. It is the new organisation that rises out of the remnants of the old. Patriots are no longer isolated, but in every town can commune with their fellows. . . . But there is scarcity of work and food, and another hard winter. Is this the result of the glorious Revolution? Picture the jarring under every roof, in every heart; and the silent laws of action that must produce an explosion out of the incoherent galvanic mass.

3 (1790). Amid such confusion persists the Assembly. Mirabeau, renounced by Patriots and Royalists, has weight with the world. . . . D'Orléans has arrived at Chaos, and his money is done. . . . Hope has fled from the Right, and "scissions" threaten. . . . Journalism accuses Royalist Deputies of hiring professional swordsmen to challenge and kill in duels Patriot Deputies. Revengeful Patriotism sacks the house of the Duke de Castries, who had been victorious in a duel: whereupon Royalism abandons its latest method of resistance.

4 (1791). Royalty is indeed nearing extremities: with France convulsed by civil and religious riots, and the ground-tone of Scarcity running through all. The thought of flight to the frontier, to Bouillé, enters its mind; thence, by help of German regiments, annihilating Jacobinism, and afterwards ruling constitutionally. . . . Various other plots emerge and submerge again. . . . Besides, the faithful old Bodyguards have been disbanded; and blue National Guards surround the Palace, with Santerre the Brewer-Colonel at their head. . . . Meanwhile Mirabeau and the Queen have met, with confidence on both sides. The Queen never failed to recognise greatness; and Mirabeau declared that she had a man's courage, and the Monarchy is saved. With Mirabeau for head and Bouillé for hand, much might be done. . . . But Patriotism is ever brimful of suspicion: for to the indigent Patriot the Revolution has brought neither bread nor peace. Fears of the King's flight and a German invasion begin to circulate. The departure for Rome of the King's aunts further stimulates the nervous excitability of France and Paris.

5 (1791). Saint-Antoine, alarmed by the sight of repairs to the Castle of Vincennes, as if it should become a second Bastille, proceeds to raze it to the ground. Lafayette hastens there, and, although the troops will not fire, succeeds in preventing demolition. While this, one of many disturbances, is in progress, Mirabeau is dominating the Assembly and proving, even in these ages, the power of man's word on the souls of men. And Aristocrats, with "tickets of entry" and concealed weapons, are crowding

the passages of the Tuileries to protect the King. But the secret is out ; and the soldiers on duty, fearing they will carry off the King to Metz, disarm and fling them downstairs, to be further buffeted by the crowd. Lafayette, on his return from Vincennes in ill humour, angrily rates these Chevaliers of the Poniard. It is a day that will breed much bitterness between the three elements of Royalism, Constitutionalism, Sansculottism. At present the Constitution, with Lafayette like Poseidon, dominates. But if the submarine Fire-powers should ever burst the Ocean-bed ! . . .

6 (1791). Contending parties are further separated, and Patriots procure Pikes, since Royalists have got Poniards. The extreme Left mounts in favour ; for Belief is great ; and the most meagre opinion, like Robespierre's, is soonest sure of itself. Royalty's trump card is flight from Paris. Mirabeau counsels flight to Rouen, and the Assembly to follow. The King wavers as usual ; the Queen, as Mirabeau says, is the only *man*. Among such confusions struggles Mirabeau : had he lived another year he would have changed the history of France and the world.

7 (1791). But even Mirabeau's giant strength was wasted by the fierce wear and tear of his existence. All that he crowded into one day seems incredible. On March 27th he visits the Assembly for the last time. Crowds beset his house, and the King enquires twice a day. He is the last man of France who could have swayed the coming troubles. His death is Titanic like his life. He longs to live but acquiesces in death ; and the strangest thoughts pour from his mind. On April 2nd he lies dead, and the gloom and mourning throughout Paris are universal. . . . The funeral procession was a league in length, and attended by one hundred thousand mourners. . . . He had swallowed all formulas ; therefore, what formula can express him ? He was a Reality, at a time when we find many mortals driven rabid but few men. . . . Sincerity was the basis of his nature ; he saw into fact and followed that. . . . He was said to be ambitious of becoming Minister : but he was the one man who could have filled the place. . . . Like the Magdalen he loved much—even his harsh old father. . . . He shook old France from its basis and held it there still unfallen.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FRENCH REVOLUTION II-III : ANALYSIS

II. IV. 1 (1791). THE Monarchy may now be considered lost ; but the King cannot make up his mind to fly, though even Journals and Jacobins counsel flight. Citizens, since the Day of Poniards, continue to forge pikes ; for, if the King fly, there will be Aristocrat-Austrian invasion, butchery, Feudalism again. . . Despite religious toleration, trouble arises from dissident, or Anti-Constitutional, priests. . . . In April the King will celebrate Easter at Saint-Cloud : and at once suspicion of flight arises. As the Royal Carriage appears the tocsin sounds. Their Majesties mount, but Patriot arms clutch the bridles, and rude voices implore Royalty not to fly to Austria and kindle endless conflagrations. The National Guards know not how to act ; and Lafayette is in despair. Finally the King and Queen, with heavy heart, abandon the enterprise.

2 (1791). To fly requires energy : and even if Louis were safe with Bouillé, what would come of it ? . . . Factions continue ; dead Catholicism being skilfully galvanised. Jurant and Dissident Priests argue ; and Saint-Huruge burns the Pope in effigy.

3 (1791). Flight requires much preparation, for the Queen needs new clothes and a cunningly-devised *Nécessaire*. . . . Bouillé is making a fortified camp at Montmédi. . . . To allay suspicion, Louis writes a letter that he loves the Constitution and will maintain it. . . . Count Fersen, a Swede, devoted to the Queen, gets a stupendous new Coach, or *Berline*, built. . . . On the night of June 20th some hooded figures enter a glass coach in the Rue de l'Echelle. One of them (the Queen) takes a wrong road, and, wandering about, delays departure for an hour. At last we are off ; and Fersen—for it is he—drives northward through the sleeping city—one of the strangest drives since Paris rose out of mud. Then he turns eastward ; and at the barrier appears the new *Berline* with six horses. Into this change the occupants of the glass coach, six in number, and they are off for Bondy. There horses and postilions are ready ;



Fersen bids adieu, and Royalty fares towards Orient lands of Hope.

4 (1791). Fluttered Paris, thanks to the Assembly with its sublime calm, maintained an "imposing attitude." Louis has left a letter to the Assembly detailing his grievances. . . . All statues and signs of the King disappear ; and next day people will say, "We have no King, yet we slept sound enough. . . ." The Diligences carry the news to all parts of France. . . . Perhaps the most terrified man was Robespierre, foreseeing "a Saint-Bartholomew of Patriots."

5 (1791). Miserable huge Berline going at a snail's pace, and covering sixty-nine miles in twenty-two hours ! The King too will dismount to walk up hills and enjoy the sunshine ! . . . Beyond Châlons waits Choiseul with Hussar escort—first of an electric thunder-chain of which Bouillé is the head. . . . But the day bends westward and no Berline appears. Royalist officers lounge about the villages, and answer suspicious Patriots that they are come to escort a Treasure. The sour humour grows : and "Treasure" suggests seizure for rent to the hungry peasants. They sound the Tocsin ; at which Choiseul must leave Châlons and ride on hoping the Berline will overtake him. It does not, and, to avoid Sainte-Menehould, which lately showed hostile symptoms, he strikes across country with his foreign Hussars, towards Varennes.

6 (1791). At Sainte-Menehould is Drouet, Master of the Post—an acrid, choleric Patriot, in ill humour, and suspecting these Bouillé troops. . . . In the ruddy evening light behold at last the huge Berline with its mountains of bandboxes. While horses are changing, Drouet, struck by a suspicion, compares the head on a new Assignat to one within the coach. Morally certain, he follows the Berline on horseback, with Clerk Guillaume. Suspicion has spread, and the Dragoons who had mustered at Sainte-Menehould are held prisoners by National Guards. The Military thunder-chain seems to be going off in a self-destructive manner.

7 (1791). The Berline rushes towards Varennes ; while Drouet and Guillaume take side-roads and scatter abroad their suspicions. . . . At Clermont, Dragoons will not draw sword on National Guards. Officers gallop away, villages "illuminate themselves," and the storm-bell sounds. . . . At eleven the Berline enters Varennes, six hours late, and comes to a standstill at the southern end. A promised relay of horses was waiting beyond the bridge ; but Royalty knew it not and sat expectant for thirty-five minutes. Meanwhile Drouet and Guillaume arrive, and, with the help of the innkeeper and some National Guards, block the bridge. The Berline cannot pass ; the passengers are

bid alight : and phlegmatic Louis does so—though what should have hindered him from travelling unmolested on his own highway ? A few steps further and he would have been safe among Bouillé's Hussars. The Royal party pass the night at the grocer's house : while the tocsin sounds, the village illuminates itself, and National Guards muster. Dragoons might have attempted a rescue, but there are now ten thousand National Guards, and Louis has "no orders to give." A panic cry of terror rises that the King should return to Paris to save infinite bloodshed. . . . Bouillé vanishes over the frontier : so do the old Brave drop out, and men of the acrid Drouet type come in.

8 (1791). Considering the long list of failures, the cause of Royalty seems doomed. The return journey is ignominious, with an escort of National Guards. Paris is in a mood of scientific curiosity : insults and cheers are alike forbidden. The King's face wears a smile of embarrassment ; the Queen has a look of grief and scorn. A blue sea of National Guards floats on the Berline to the Tuileries.

9 (1791). Some demand deposition : but, for fear of unknown abysses, it is decided that the Throne be set up again like an overturned pyramid, and *held*. Is this the meaning of the Revolution which set out to destroy shams ? . . . Petitions for deposition arrive from all parts of France. In Paris, Danton and other extremists organise a Petition to be signed on the Altar of the Fatherland. Lafayette is suspected of treachery ; and two mean persons accused of spying are hanged. Martial Law is proclaimed ; Lafayette enters the Champ-de-Mars, with National Guards, and is received with howls and pistol volleys. He fires on the people, and twelve are killed—multiplied by rumour into hundreds. It is Patrollotism's last triumph over Patriotism.

V. 1 (1791). By the end of September the Constitution is made, and accepted by the King. The King is granted a Constitutional Guard ; the old loyal Bodyguards and mutinous Gardes-Françaises are dismissed. Few men have done a more notable work than the latter. Paris strives to hope again and forget the past ; the King and Queen are cheered when they drive abroad. The Constitution is to stand for thirty years ; a biennial Parliament, called *Legislative*, succeeds the Assembly ; and no Assembly member is eligible. The Assembly, than which a stranger one never met on this Planet, is dissolved into blank time. . . . Robespierre, acknowledged chief of Jacobins, retires to native Arras for his last seven weeks of quiet in the world.

2 (1791-2). Within a year the Legislative Assembly vanished dolefully, and there came no second. Four hundred out of seven hundred and forty-five members were of the Advocate species : men who were masters of tongue-fence. . . . Note



Condorcet, and others from the *Gironde*. . . . Cold mathematical Carnot. . . . The Left, on the topmost benches, are called the *Mountain*, and conceal much potential violence. . . . All love Liberty and the Constitution, but in different ways ; and party becomes opposition and feud. . . . In eleven months they pass two thousand decrees : and yet the Constitution will not march. For the old habits of France are gone, and the new will not appear till she measure herself in death-grip with other Powers.

3 (1789-92). Jourdan, of proved infamy in the Versailles riots, has taken refuge at Papal Avignon, where he organises a Brigand army against the Papal Aristocrats. There was much fighting and mutual gibbeting, till the Assembly decreed Avignon one with France. But bitterness survives the amnesty ; and in the Cordeliers Church, Patriot L'Escuyer is done to death by Aristocrat worshippers. Patriot Municipality, headed by Jourdan, immures male and female Aristocrats in the Castle and secretly massacres them. Commissioners and troops arrive from Paris ; the horrible secret of the “ Ice Tower ” is exposed ; and Jourdan, flying for his life, is captured, but escapes again, and makes a triumphal progress through southern cities. . . . Disturbances break out near Marseilles also. Note as one result that young Barbaroux visits Paris and becomes known to Madame Roland.

4 (1791-2). Throughout all France there is trouble, and suspicion of malignant Aristocrats and Dissident Priests. Bread is dear, and sugar totally lacking owing to the insurrection in St. Domingo. And the Constitution is too rheumatic to march.

5 (1791-2). The King, with all France disorganised, asks “ What shall I do ? ” . . . The Executive throws the blame on the Constitution. . . . The Government proceeds from one contradiction to another. . . . At this time D'Orléans appears at Court, but retires disgusted from attempted reconciliation. . . . Intrigues of Emigrant Noblesse force the King to double-dealing. . . . Then there is the European question : for old Europe cannot exist with a new France which has abolished Feudalism and declared that Appearance is not Reality. A cause of quarrel is soon found in the Feudal Rights secured to German Princes in French Alsace, and taken from them without compensation. Austria, Prussia, Russia, England, even Spain, think France might be partitioned like Poland. . . . At Coblenz Emigrants are ranking by thousands in bitter hate and menace. But for them it is doubtful whether foreign Powers would actually have invaded France. They thus concentrated the Revolution, which might have spread itself over generations, had they stayed in their country and known what to defend and what relinquish.

6 (1791-2). The revenue of France is Assignats ; her armies never saw fire ; her generals and officers are beyond the Rhine.



Opinions are divided between immediate desperate war and diplomacy. . . . Such terror of invasion and massacre reigned in rural France during February and March 1792 as never yet visited a nation.

7 (1791-2). The Legislative Assembly continues to sit, though its decrees are annulled by the royal *Veto*. To laws against Emigrants, for instance, the King at once says *Veto*. . . . The King's Guard become suspect, and their places are taken by National Guards and Swiss. . . . Then the Legislative has to reprimand the King's Ministers, shadows though they are. . . . And all the while Europe is threatening us. . . .

8 (1792). The Jacobins, with branches in every village, represents the true spirit of France: the wants and efforts of the twenty-five millions. The Jacobins Church has become a vast circus, with seats as in an amphitheatre; and the Tribune, where the speaker addresses the audience, is raised midway between floor and roof. Here speak Camille, Danton, Billaud-Varenes, Collot d'Herbois—and always Robespierre, the incorruptible, earnest-shallow man.

9 (1792). The appointment of a Patriot Ministry brings a gleam of hope. Roland is Minister of the Interior; and the fair Madame Roland reigns in the saloons once occupied by Madame Necker. . . . Paris life goes on as usual, but much is secretly growing, and old forms are changing. . . . At this time appears the symbolical "bonnet rouge" of the Jacobins. . . . Europe still threatens, and will not explain the situation at Coblenz. Therefore on April 20th, the King with tears must propose that the Assembly decree War.

10 (1792). Side by side with these tremendous issues appear other small ones. For instance, Jacobinism contrives the liberation from the galleys of the forty Swiss concerned in the Nanci "massacre."

11 (1792). On the frontier things go badly, our soldiers flying in panic at the first shot. Duke Brunswick is about to march; and the Ministry and Executive must therefore bestir themselves. Why not banish malign Priests, and establish a camp of twenty thousand National Volunteers in Paris picked from each Canton? To all but Feuillants this appears reasonable: and Feuillantism has spread through many of the Paris National Guards. The Legislative passes both decrees: and the King answers *Veto! Veto!* The Priests are friends, and the camp would be made up of stormful Sansculottes. But whither is Kingship reeling?

12 (1792). Shall France calmly await a Brunswick Saint-Bartholomew? . . . On June 20th, anniversary of the Tennis-Court Oath, Santerre and Huruge organise a procession to plant

a Tree of Liberty. They read an Address to the Legislative, and flow like a lake round the Tuileries, asking for a word with the King. The reluctant Grate opens; multitudes flock in, break down a door, and stand face to face with the King. Asked to remove the Veto, he says it is not the time. He assumes the red cap which is proffered him, and faces Sansculottism for three hours: for he does not want courage. . . . But all things end; and at last Santerre and his troop file out. . . . Thus after long centuries the two Parties are brought face to face and know not what to make of each other.

VI. 1 (1792). Louis might have turned to account the outburst of sympathy which followed; but his hopes are inclining to Austria. . . . Lafayette returns from the frontier to suppress Jacobinism, but finds he can do nothing. . . . Feuillantism, however, strong in the letter of the Law, still carries its head high. . . . In July it is suggested that a new Feast of Pikes be held, to which Federated National Volunteers should come from all parts of France. Then let them march on to Soissons to be drilled and regimented—and so elude the *Veto*! . . . Thin streaks of *Fédérés* do wend Paris-ward through a paralytic France, whose Constitution will not march. . . . France is indeed exhausted and spell-bound, while Brunswick with an army of eighty thousand is drawing nigh.

2 (1792). Most notable of those marching Paris-ward are the six hundred Marseillaise summoned by Barbaroux. The journey is long, the errand doubtful, and only their wild hearts guide them. . . . They were not men of regular life or full purse, but they “knew how to die.” Onward go the black-browed mass to meet Fate and Feudal Europe. The voiceless thought in them was translated into grim melody and rhythm by Rouget de Lille.

3 (1792). Little need be said of the new Federation Feast. No cheers salute Louis; and Lafayette’s popularity, since his anti-Jacobin visit, is gone. . . . Next day it is proclaimed that the “Country is in Danger”; and the response is a sound deeper than triumph. In each Section sits a Municipal to enlist young Patriotism; ten thousand march for Soissons in a few days; and the like is doing in every town of France. On July 25th Brunswick takes the road. He issues a manifesto: that France return to her true King, the Emigrants be reinstated, Jacobinism suppressed. . . . But what if parchments and formularies must yield to Reality!

4 (1792). In Paris the Sections are busy, and Insurrection is again said to be a duty. They form a Central Committee which sits in the Town hall. While so much is altering and ending, Paris outwardly remains the same. Only Bill-Stickers are abroad,

and Marat's croaking voice is heard again. And the Marseillaise are approaching.

5 (1792). On July 29th they enter Paris, to be warmly welcomed by Saint-Antoine. Unluckily, some Grenadiers choose that evening to vaunt their patriotism, and, being hooted by the people, draw sabres on them. The people call on the Marseillaise for help, and they stream out, also with drawn sabres. The Grenadiers think best to retreat to the Tuileries : but the affair will have a sequel. . . . The Assembly, which is like a waterlogged ship, is being petitioned from all over France for the King's forfeiture. . . . At Court, for the hundredth time, a proposal is on foot for carrying off the King to Rouen : and he as usual draws back when near the point of action.

6 (1792). The poor waterlogged Legislative absolves Lafayette, and, though Patriotism roars tumultuous, cannot pronounce Forfeiture. The Sections must now take action ; they are ready and armed ; but so are the King's friends and the Swiss. Commandant Mandat will post his squadrons and cannon and repel force with force. Courtiers crowd the Palace and listen to the storm-bell, as one steeple after another takes up the tale. Section Delegates meet at the Town hall, hear rumours of Mandat and the Swiss, and debate whether to put off the Insurrection. But no : the old Municipals must disappear, and the new declare themselves in a state of insurrection. It is no easy thing, this insurrection, for each is uncertain of his neighbour, and failure means death. Sections draw in and out, uncertain ; but the Marseillaise are steady. Mandat, summoned to the Town hall, does come at last—and is massacred by the crowd. . . . What a night for the Assembly—and for the National Guards become unwilling to slay French brothers. . . . The Swiss will not fail ; but when early next morning (August 10th) Louis goes down to review the troops, the cry is *Vive la Nation* : at which the Queen weeps.

7 (August 10, 1792). A steel host, unopposed, is flowing towards the Tuileries, with the Marseillaise in the van. The cannoneers will not fire on them ; and Louis is persuaded to seek refuge with the Assembly, with his Queen and children. The Swiss, now martyrs without a cause, are left alone amid the earthquake of Insurrection. Louis is gone, but till Forfeiture be pronounced, the Palace must be given up. The Swiss are not to be persuaded, and the pantomime grows hotter, with the inevitable issue. Marseillaise cannon thunder out ; Swiss reply with rolling fire ; and from all sides a red blazing whirlwind roars responsive. Paris has gone mad, and the Marseillaise become black demons that know how to die. National Guards turn against Foreign murderers ; Marseillaise fall deathstruck ; and the fire slackens



not. Louis sends futile message that it should end. . . . The paralysed Swiss cease to shoot ; they fly out in three columns, and some few escape, but most are killed and mangled. . . Honour to the Swiss who worked for their wages which were death.

8 (1792). Revengeful crowds sack the Palace and butcher even the Valets. . . . Louis meanwhile is in the Assembly, where the thunder of firing has reached him. . . . The President moves to suspend Hereditary Representative and summon *National Convention*. The Court is vanquished, and statues of all Kings are thrown down. Patriot Ministry is recalled ; Danton shall be Minister of Justice to enquire after the slain Patriots. For greater safety the Royal Family are lodged in the Temple Prison. . . . The Constitution is over, and the first biennial Parliament must disappear. . . . Lafayette would return to Paris ; but his soldiers seem to think that they also are Sansculottes ; so he rides over to the Austrians. . . . Dumouriez becomes Commander.

III. I. I (1792). France is roused, and fronts bullying Europe in the strength of Nature which goes down to Madness and Tophet. She has parted with all former restraints, become *transcendental*, and must seek a wild way through the New. . . . Two movements stand out in August and September : the outer rush against the enemy, and the inner against domestic Traitors. . . . Till the Convention meet, the Commune of August 10th sits at the Town hall and accomplishes superhuman labours in organising France. Robespierre and Marat are there, but we know little of the rest. . . . There are still thirty thousand Aristocrats in Paris : there are the martyrs of August 10th to be avenged. A Tribunal, ruled by Danton, is set up, and the first head soon falls : for the Guillotine now is. . . . Enlistment proceeds apace, and all learn to sing the *Marseillaise*. . . . The Prussians have taken Longwi, our first frontier fortress—and we still lack arms. Railings, chains, lead coffins, Church bells are utilised ; while fair *Citoyennes* sew tents and uniforms. . . . Only the loyal simple people of La Vendée, true to Church and King, will not be balloted for soldiers : so their fair country is to be defaced by civil war. . . . Spain and Sardinia threaten us in the south. . . . The fugitives from Longwi are told they should have chosen to die.

2 (1792). Danton, Minister of Justice, decrees search for arms, since they are not yielded voluntarily. Aristocrats tremble ; citizens are ordered to stay within doors ; barriers are sealed ; sentinel barges float on the river. Two thousand stand of arms come to light, and four hundred suspected persons are hurled into prisons like cattle pens.

3 (1792). While Dumouriez at Sedan reviews his forlorn army, the enemy press on. In spite of brave General Beaurepaire, Verdun is surrendered. Who shall now stay Brunswick? On other frontiers are Austria, Spain, Sardinia. No country was ever more desperately placed. . . . Generals counsel retreat; but Dumouriez points to the forest of Argonne with its three passes: the Thermopylæ of France.

4 (1792). Verdun's fall breeds panic in Paris; and even women will enroll against the Prussians who come with rope and faggot. . . . Danton, the brawny Titan, nerves the people with his cry of "de l'audace." . . . The Commune has become Committee of Public Salvation, with Marat as its conscience. What fearful thoughts may be in his mind, who once advocated the fall of so many thousand Aristocrat heads! With the tocsin pealing, and terror and frenzy abroad, who knows how soon Murder may come! . . . How much was premeditated we do not know; but in Paris one hundred wicked men are easily found. And yet premeditation is not performance; an abyss divides the thought and act. A trifle may bring about consummation; for the purest of us walks over powder-mines of guilt—"if God restrained not." . . . Abbé Sicard and thirty Priests are proceeding towards the Abbaye Prison in carriages, amid the curses of the multitude; when a quick-tempered Priest strikes a blow: and the whole are massacred. Murder has arisen; and the next hundred hours—2nd to 6th September—are among the darkest of history. . . . Strange Courts of Wild Justice and Revenge fashion themselves in the seven prisons. Prisoners are tried, convicted as Royalist Plotters, their removal ordered to another prison—and they are turned into the street, where murderers armed with sabres and axes cut them to pieces. . . . Princesse de Lamballe, Queen's friend, falls thus. . . . A few stories survive of love stronger than death.

5 (1792). Three narratives are preserved of three men acquitted at that time, nothing being found against them. . . . The remaining one thousand and eighty-nine remain inaudible.

6 (1792). While these prodigies were performing, men slept and theatres were open: but the Constituted Authorities were powerless. Paris looked on for four days in stupor, or acquiescing in Necessity. The killers brought all valuables to the Town hall, and higgled only for their twenty shillings of wages. . . . Carts full of stript human corpses go along the streets. . . . A shriek of horror came from all Europe—but the thing was done. For man is a mystery, and stands in the intersection of primeval Light and everlasting Dark. Such things have been before: Sicilian Vespers, Saint-Bartholomew. . . . This is not Satan's world, but Satan has his place in it. . . . The rest of France refrains



from doing likewise, though encouraged by the *Salut Public*. . . . Only the Orléans prisoners, sent to Paris in tumbrils, diverted to Versailles, are massacred. . . . France and Europe shriek, but not Danton, the Minister of Justice. Titan of the Forlorn Hope, he declares the men were guilty, and thinks of Brunswick within a day of Paris.

7 (1792). The first year of the Republic is proclaimed. The Convention is being elected by Universal Suffrage, and all those known to the Revolution are chosen. There are few Nobles, but D'Orléans is among them, now called Philippe Egalité. . . . Dumouriez has blocked the passes of the Argonne with felled trees. Brunswick is perplexed : and the rain pours. He will skirt the Argonne : but the rain is incessant, dulled is the brilliancy of the Emigrant Seigneurs, and dysentery breaks out among his troops. Dumouriez shows always a new front, yet he has difficulty in dealing with recruits liable to panic. These same recruits will become a phalanx'd mass of Fighters and form the basis of a regenerated France. . . (Goethe's presence in the Prussian army, in unmilitary capacity, is worthy of note.) . . . On September 20th Brunswick and Kellerman face each other at last at Valmy. Cannon thunder, but the Sansculottes do not fly like poultry. Twice Brunswick attacks, can make no impression, and is battered as he retires. . . The Austrians do not prosper in their siege of Thionville. . . .

8 (1792). On the day of Valmy the *National Convention* meet and decree Sovereignty of the People and Abolition of Royalty. In the Valmy region there are shouts, "Vive la République !" Brunswick retreats through Champagne trodden into a quagmire ; and the Austrians fire red-hot balls on Lille in vain. . . . Goethe describes the wild confusion of the retreat from Verdun, through pouring rain and seas of mud. . . . Emigrant Seigneurs retain their arrogance and disdain German black bread. . . . Dumouriez in Paris is lauded and feasted : only Marat, sent by the Jacobins, casts a gloom over his splendour. . . . From all frontiers comes news of victory.

II. 1 (1792). France has repelled her invaders, shaken off all her old ways of existing, and dances towards the Ruleless. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, are not social vestures but the wish for vestures. "There are modes wherever there are men" is a deep saying. It is thus man is a craftsman and not the slave of impulse. The Convention once more set about "making the Constitution." A reunion of incalculable influences, as all assemblies are, without routine or landmark, centre of a mad France, no wonder it became the astonishment and horror of mankind. . . . There is still a certain "politeness" in its debates, in spite of their mad effervescence. . . . The Friends of Order



wish to deal with the September massacres and the terrible Commune; they suggest the formation of a Departmental Guard from all over France. This is decreed and repealed more than once, and becomes the beginning of a bitter controversy. . . . Then Marat and Robespierre are accused of plotting Anarchy and Dictatorship respectively. Both vindicate themselves before the Convention, which passes suddenly from one mood to another: like the crankiest of machines jerking violently from east to west.

2 (1792). Three questions emerge: the Armies, Subsistences, the King. The army needs clothes and equipment, and grain is scarce and bread dear. The Convention under pressure fix the price of grain—but there seems none to be bought. Riots break out, and Hunger and Suspicion stalk abroad.

3 (1792). But the prevailing question is the King. At home he is a secret centre for the Disaffected; banished, an open centre. Death were the likeliest solution. . . . To us at the present time things look different: because the element of Fear is withdrawn from the Past. We have not lived for months under the rustle of Prussian gallows-ropes. And the French who have pulled down this huge Goliath can scarcely believe that he will not rise again. It was by beheading Charles I that the English won freedom.

4 (1792). On November 6th Dumouriez and his army met with the Austrians at Jemappes, and, after a first repulse, singing the *Marseillaise*, like a fire whirlwind swept them from the field.

. . . At the same hour the crimes of Louis are recited in the Convention. Patriotism calls him the chief criminal, guilty of those slain on August 10th, and at Valmy, etc., and will have him tried. The Jacobins are determined; but Gironde Respectability wavers between becoming the horror of the nations and offending Patriotism.

5 (1792). Robespierre, again accused by Louvet, a Girondin, of aiming at Dictatorship, after a week's delay, vindicates himself in a written speech. The Girondins mistrust the black spot which is the Apex of the everlasting Abyss; and yet, but for that boiling up of the Nether Deep, Patriotism would now be swinging on Prussian gibbets. The Jacobins complain that the Girondins are men with private ambitions who will ruin Liberty and Equality. . . . Question of the Trial is stimulated by Gamain, Louis's former instructor in lock-making, who reveals a secret cabinet in the wainscoting of the Tuileries, containing treasonable correspondence. Mirabeau is involved among others: and his bust in the Jacobins is thrown down. Debates continue in the Convention, and Robespierre makes the clinching remark that Right is Might.

6 (1792-3). On December 11th Louis attends the Convention and answers in the negative most of the fifty-seven questions which ask whether he is not guilty of trying to continue King. He is well fitted for placid endurance, which is all that now remains to him. . . . Tronchet, Malesherbes, Desèze, come forward as his Advocates. . . . The Convention must find Forms and Methods to acquit itself without blame : the Tribune drones with oratory. . . . On the 26th Desèze pleads for three hours ; and Louis, who was present, speaks only of his grief to be held guilty for the bloodshed of August 10th. . . . The Convention still loiters, and member after member will speak. Girondins try to create delays and difficulties of procedure, mindful of the Respectable Classes. Foreign Courts interfere, and petitions flow in from all parts of France. Widows and Orphans of those slain on August 10th petition in a body. Paris pipes with Rage, Hunger, Suspicion. Dumouriez returns from the frontier and appears to side with the Girondins. And the oratorical droning extends into January, till it is decided that it go to the Vote.

7 (1793). While Paris floods round the Hall, the Convention vote that Louis is guilty and refuse appeal to the people for fear of civil war. The third voting remains : what Punishment ? Death, Banishment, Imprisonment. Each member must rise to the Tribune and say : while dusky Patriotism floods the corridors, and bellows. The Girondins under such bellowing say Death, with jesuitical reservations. Egalité's vote for death causes a shudder in that Hall of Doom : yet the scene was not a funereal one. Refreshments and small talk proceed, and there is betting in neighbouring coffee-houses. From Wednesday till Sunday morning it endures ; and the verdict is Death by a majority of fifty-three. The Advocates demand delay, and this also is put to the vote, while Patriotism growls, but is refused. Death within twenty-four hours : for Louis is denied his request of three days, but granted a Confessor.

8 (1793). The son of sixty Kings is to die on the scaffold ; for injustice breeds injustice, and innocent Louis bears the sins of many generations. It is not Kingship, but the man who dies : for death is hard to King or beggar. . . . During two hours of agony he takes leave of his family ; he promises to see them on the morrow, but finds it beyond his power. At 9 o'clock on January 21st he sets out, through a city stricken silent, where no vehicle moves but his own, where the blinds of every house are drawn, and none but armed men muster in the street. . . . He would speak on the scaffold, but Santerre cuts him short by ordering the drums to sound. . . . All about are soldiers and cannon trained ; and the Executioners, desperate lest themselves be murdered, seize the King and perform their duty. . . .



Fierce shouts of "Vive la République" rise : and not for some days after did men see how grave it was. The King's life, round which all parties struggled, is hurled down ; and they now stand face to face. England and Spain declare war ; all friends are divided and enemies united.

III. 1 (1793). Will the volcanic forces now subside, and allow the Girondin respectable Republic for the Middle Classes ? Unlikely : as long as hunger and nakedness oppress the twenty-five millions. The Movement will probably follow a course of its own, and split France into parties. Two parties at one time will divide the Convention ; and, as soon as one falls, the other will break up self-destructive. . . . In February there is scarcity of groceries ; and Jacobins say it is the work of Girondins who are sold to Pitt. . . . For several years the French had believed in a Millennium ; but Perfect Felicity always hovered at arm's length. The miracle was that Faith did arise ; for there had been no such universal impulse since the Crusades. It was the soul of the Revolution.

2 (1793). Gironde and Mountain are the two parties now opposed. All battle is *misunderstanding* ; and they see not one another truly, but distorted phantasms. When a man is committed to republican or other transcendentalisms, he loses his individual self. Fanaticism and Fatalism possess and hurl him along strange paths. . . . The Girondins are learned and eloquent ; the Mountain simply bold and impetuous by nature, and more likely to win popularity. And the Mountain outstrips the Gironde in its beneficent intentions towards the sunk twenty-five millions. The Girondins are for Law and Respectability, and look coldly on the "masses." Throughout France, especially the southern cities, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Lyons, similarly divided parties rise up and fall to strife.

3 (1793). The sore points of the Mountain are the September massacres, Marat who incites to the pillage of shops, Egalité who may wish to become king. . . . Danton would act as peace-maker ; but the Mountain regard him as too easy-tempered ; and the Girondins see on him a shadow of September. The thought that the unphilosophic Mountain may triumph over them, the flower of France, sends a pang to the heart of the Girondins.

4 (1793). On the frontier victory deserts us. Dumouriez is in retreat, with Mentz retaken, Spain advancing through the gorges of the Pyrenees, and England preparing for war. And the rudely armed peasants of La Vendée spread panic among out best Nationals. It were time that the Convention acted rather than argued. Danton as usual starts up, and proposes instantaneous recruitment in Paris, and Commissioners to spread the fire-cross over France. "Fatherland in danger" is again



proclaimed ; and Paris in no mild mood reacts against the theorist-Girondins who shackle Patriotism, and, instead of bread, give the people lectures on Free-trade. The Girondins are fearful of plots and another September ; they cease to attend the Convention, or go armed. They were strangers to the People they would govern ; Pedants of the Revolution, the reality of which was incompatible with their formula of a Republic founded on the Respectabilities. . . . Dumouriez is defeated at Nerwinden, and retreats more rapidly. In despatches he denounces the Convention and the murder of the King. . . .

5 (1793). The Revolution Prodigy is attaining terrific stature. The Mountain creates Revolutionary Committees that sit in every town, consisting of twelve Patriots, to examine the Suspect. Then it decrees the Revolutionary Tribunal—Sansculottism's most fearful weapon—of five judges and a jury who vote audibly without Law forms. The head of all is the "Committee of Public Salvation," at which the world still shudders : nine men—Danton is one—renewable every month. . . . The "Law of Maximum" fixes the price of grain ; and "Ascending Taxes" make France an impossible country for the wealthy.

6 (1793). It is known that Dumouriez would extinguish Jacobinism ; and the Convention summons him to Paris. He refuses : on which symptoms of revolt break out in the army ; and he rides over to the Austrians with his staff—one of whom was Egalité's son—and disappears from history. In Paris, Egalité the father is arrested and imprisoned.

7 (1793). In the Convention strife continues between Gironde and Mountain. Gironde accuses Danton of complicity with Dumouriez : and Danton rives them with fire-words in a speech like a lava flood. . . . Then the Gironde succeed in having Marat put under Accusation because he would have hanged Forestallers at the door-lintel : Marat, who after all has grown dingy and bleared in the cause of Liberty and Equality. It is war without truce between the two parties.

8 (1793). For six weeks the struggle continues. Girondism is strong in Formula and Respectability and has many friends in the Departments ; but the Mountain has Reality and Audacity. Marat is acquitted, and borne home shoulder-high, crowned with an oak-garland. . . . Patriot Sections demand the purgation of traitors. Shrill women vociferate from the Convention galleries. . . . Suspicion grows preternatural, for it seems that the Millennium would arrive but for traitors who cause a shortage of groceries. . . . The Girondins have contrived to get their Commission of Twelve, and proceed to arrest. They convulse Paris by arresting Hébert, the popular magistrate. Roaring multitudes besiege the Convention doors.

9 (1793). The Sections overpower the Municipals and demand the suppression of the Girondins : nor are they content with a temporary triumph. The tocsin sounds, barriers are closed, and the Volunteers will not leave for the frontiers till treason is punished. The Girondins, offered the chance of withdrawal, for the most part refuse : on which the Galleries rush out, saying they must save their country. One hundred thousand Volunteers surround the Convention, who are prisoners in their Hall. They march out to meet levelled muskets and cannoneers with lit matches, and to hear shouts, "Live the Republic," "Die the Gironde." They return and vote as bidden—the detention of the thirty-two Girondins in their own houses.

IV. 1 (1793). The greater number fly to Caen in Calvados, where they publish tirades in the local newspaper against the Mountain. And against this nucleus of Civil War, besides Cimmerian invaders, and La Vendée, the Mountain and Marat must struggle. . . . At this time (July) a young Lady, of stately Norman figure and beautiful still countenance, by name Charlotte Corday, leaves her home at Caen on a mysterious errand in Paris. She proceeds to the house of Marat, who is ill, and she secures admittance by saying she is from the seat of rebellion and can do France a service. Marat is stewing in a slipper-bath, but eagerly writes down the names of the Deputies she mentions : till she cuts short the colloquy by stabbing him to death. . . . Public funeral, burial in the Pantheon, is accorded the People's Friend. . . . At her Trial Charlotte says, "I killed a savage wild-beast to give repose to my country." . . . Sheeted in the red smock of a murderess she is conducted to the Guillotine. . . . Thus have the Beautifullest and Squalidest come in collision and extinguished one another. . . . That twenty-five million hearts have got to the temper of Charlotte Corday's is indeed Anarchy. . . .

2 (1793). In the south Girondins triumph, and they set up a Revolutionary Tribunal at Lyons, at which Jacobins and Anarchists tremble. But little came of the Calvados war, the opposing forces having taken to mutual flight. The seventy-two respectable Departments, who had sided with the Girondins, now forsook the cause : but Lyons had gone too far.

3 (1793). Eleven Girondins, disguised as National Volunteers, retreat through a country grown hostile, and where noise of them spread abroad. They march by night, but rumour outplods them ; till at last they reach the woods of Quimper on the sea coast, where they hide, hoping for a ship. . . . Others are arrested in Paris. . . . Meanwhile Mentz has fallen on one frontier, Valenciennes on another—and the Cimmerian Coalition presses on.



4 (1793). On August 10th a new Feast of Pikes took place, to celebrate Chaumette's new Constitution, with much processioning, raising of statues to Nature, Liberty, etc. . . . It is the first year of the Republic; and now we have Rome's Calendar of four equal seasons and twelve equal months of thirty days with five odd Festival days. . . . How will the new Era and Constitution work? They cannot yet be set going; for the “*Salut Public*” declares the state of France to be Revolutionary.

5 (1793). La Vendée blazes, while Prussia, Austria, England pour in through the north, and Spain through the Pyrenees. Toulon goes over to the English. . . . Day and night Lyons is bombarded, till her Powder-tower explodes. . . . The Municipality will become Royalist: on which the Girondins lay down their arms. . . . Those Girondins who lay at Quimper now reach Bourdeaux in a Scottish ship: to be met by worse perils that compel them to hide underground.

6 (1793). In Paris a “Levy in Mass” is proclaimed, and the whole population makes superhuman efforts. Young men shall go to the battle, married men make arms, women sew clothes and tents, children prepare lint. . . . Then comes the “Law of the Suspect,” frightfulest law that ever ruled; whereby any person grown suspect may be arrested. Prisons become crowded to the ridge-tile, as the 44,000 Committees throughout France glean their harvest. Daily at eventide the Death-tumbril passes like a black Spectre towards the Guillotine. . . . General Custine dies for unsuccessfulness against the invader. . . . On October 2nd Marie Antoinette is transferred from the Temple to a dreary cell in the Conciergerie. . . . And the Guillotine goes quicker and quicker. A Deputy falls; and Jacobinism clamours for the heads of the Girondins.

7 (1793). On October 14th the trial of the Queen begins. She remains calm as the hideous indictment is read, and returns clear, brief answers. After two days and two nights of interrogation, sentence of death is passed. Twenty-three years ago she left Vienna, in sorrow, and often looking back at the Palace of her Fathers, but with the fairest hopes on earth. Now in another kind of procession she moves to the scaffold.

8 (1793). The twenty-two Girondins arrested in Paris are the next to appear at Fouquier-Tinville's bar. Their eloquence draws tears, and the trial threatens to be long, but Jacobinism cuts its short and condemns them to death. . . . All Paris is out to see the eloquent of France pass in the Death-cart. At the foot of the scaffold they sing the *Marseillaise*: but the chorus wears weak as the sickle reaps them away. . . . It fares little better with those in far Bourdeaux. Louvet with incredible risk and



suffering escapes to Switzerland ; but most fall by the Guillotine or their own hands. Such was the fate of those who would regenerate France.

V. 1 (1793). We have reached the edge of the Abyss : Terror has become the order of the day. It is the harvest of centuries of injustice from Hugh Capet downwards. . . . History so far has not been able to classify this new Product of Nature. . . . We see in it Destruction wrought by Despair : destruction of Formulas and Respectabilities by the hungry suffering people. . . . A whole nation, having lost its habits, must devise new ways of satisfying its wants : and the result is most strange. . . . Yet life goes on as usual—theatres, dancing, etc.—against the background of Terror.

2 (1793). In November Philippe Egalité is brought to Paris, and, accused of Royalism, he goes to the scaffold with an air of Brummelleian politeness. A Jacobin Prince of the Blood : strange combination ! . . . The noble Madame Roland follows : at the bar she could not but weep at Fouquier's brutal questions. Her husband killed himself on hearing of her death. . . . Innocent Bailly, Barnave, many Deputies, Generals who prosper not against the enemy—all perish. And the property of the victims goes to the State.

3 (1793). Paris representatives visit the Girondin cities of the south, and lives fall by the thousand : even those of children and aged men. Most are nameless, but each had a life which he lost with a pang—as when a Kaiser dies. Rebel Lyons would have been razed to the ground, but for the strength of its stone buildings. To guillotining succeeds fusillading, for greater despatch, and butchery with spade and bayonet. . . . Toulon is recovered from the English by the genius of Napoleon : and guillotining and fusillading begin there. . . . At Nantes in La Vendée the headsman sinks worn out : fusillading of men, women and children is followed by *Noyades*. At first the victims are confined in flat-bottomed boats, which are scuttled : then, to save boats, men and women are bound together and flung into the Loire. The men and the Time are rabid ; and this is the blackest page of Sansculottism. This monstrous birth of a Republic knows only the law of self-preservation. It is a terrible Fact of Nature in an age of Formulas.

4 (1793). At the same time proceeds the destruction of religion. Priests renounce their faith and acknowledge only "Liberty." Church plate is sent to the Mint ; and many outrages are committed, such as drinking brandy from chalices, and reining mules with stoles. . . . Attempts are made to introduce a new Formula, and grotesque scenes are enacted called *Feasts of Reason*. . . . The Revolutionary Army of 6,000, detachments of which

had done the work at Lyons and Nantes, continues to scour the country, seeking prisoners, destroying churches, etc. Ronsin, the commander, described his troops as the elixir of the Rascality of the Earth.

5 (1793). But Anarchy has organised itself, and despatched armies to the frontier. The Committees of Public Salvation and General Surety are the two that dominate : with Robespierre, Billaud, Collot, and still meaner names. Carnot organises victory : but the talent of the others is one of instinct ; they divine what is willed, and will it with greater frenzy. . . . Jacobinism flourishes throughout France ; and the Mother Society in Paris overpowers the Convention. All decisions of “Salvation” and “Surety” are shaped beforehand in the Jacobins : and attempts to start an Opposition lead to the Guillotine.

6 (1793-4). France cut off from the world must learn to make steel, and forges by the hundred stand in Paris. One thousand muskets are produced daily, while, to obtain saltpetre, the earth of Paris cellars is dug up. Sansculottism, ill-equipped, shows its brightest aspect on the frontier, where it dies gloriously ; and Generals know that failure means the Guillotine. The Spaniards are driven back and their country invaded through scarped heights and passes. Convention Representatives attend each General, and perform wonders in hurling back Austria, England and Prussia. Hoche and Pichegru become known ; parchment nobility is no more ; and the way to Generalship lies open for low-born valour. One nation faces the world, which cannot conquer its new spirit. . . . But our colonies pass into the hands of Pitt ; and England cannot be beaten on sea. Six French ships are taken in naval fighting off Brest ; and the *Vengeur*, rather than yield, sinks with all hands, shouting “Vive la République.” . . . (All France believed this latter incident, but time has proved it to be an inspiring *blague*.)

7 (1794). We pass over the various improvements and inventions heard of at this time. . . . Crimes go unpunished except against the Revolution. . . . Aristocratism crouches low, too happy to escape with life ; and safety lies in poverty. . . . Daily passes the Death-cart ; its occupants are guilty before the Revolution, if not before Heaven. . . . At Meudon there is a Tannery of Human Skins ! Is man’s civilisation only a wrap-page ? An Infernal, as well as Celestial, is in Nature.

VI. 1 (1794). The Revolution is simply the madness that dwells in the hearts of men. The Revolutionary Government is not self-conscious, but blind and fatal ; and each man has become a blind brute Force. . . . Why are Hébert, Chaumette, and other Cordeliers Patriots arrested ? Because their excesses against the Church have made the Revolution odious and must



have originated in the gold of Pitt. And the Jacobins purge themselves : Cloutz and Paine are sent to prison. . . . Danton's great heart is weary, and he retires to native Arcis. . . . Camille is purged out because he attacked the "Law of the Suspect" with his sparkling wit. . . . The Hébertists die—and among them Ronsin, General of the Revolutionary Army, which is now disbanded. The Revolution devours its own children.

2 (1794). Danton is recalled ; for it is evident that he and Robespierre, chief products of the Revolution, are incompatible : the sea-green Formula and the colossal Reality. . . . Friends urge Danton to fly, but he was careless of personal safety. He and Camille are arrested and imprisoned ; and we now behold them at the Bourne of Creation. Danton is heard to regret the frightful welter in which he leaves the Revolution. . . . Fouquier's task at the Trial is a hard one ; for Danton shivers his best witnesses into ruin. The people may rise to deliver him, and Justice and Culprit change places. . . . The *Salut Public* hastily pass a decree that if a man insults Justice he may be thrown out of the Debates. . . . In the Death-cart Danton bore a high look and consoled the weaker Camille. "Danton, no weakness !" he said, when thoughts of his wife threatened to unnerve him. He was a very Man, fiery-real, from the great fire-bosom of Nature herself.

3 (1794). Robespierre and the *Salut Public* are now supreme ; the Cordelier Rabids and Dantonist Moderates having annihilated one another. It is the world outside political parties that will next suffer. Terror of the Guillotine was never terrible till now. Indictment ceases to have even plausibility ; and "Plot in Prison" can always be advanced. Fouquier's daily "batches" sometimes rise to sixty. . . . We note old Malesherbes, who defended Louis, going to his death. . . . Elizabeth, sister of Louis. . . . Only the Dauphin and his sister remain of the Royal Family. . . . Condorcet, last of the Girondins, forced to leave his hiding-place, is taken, but dies in prison. . . . And yet citizens arrange "Brotherly suppers" in the streets, as if still believing in the reign of Brotherhood. . . . An attempt is made to assassinate Collot ; and the mood is catching, for a similar attempt upon Robespierre follows.

4 (1794). On June 8th Robespierre, as President of the Convention, organises a festival in honour of the New Religion. He decrees "Existence of the Supreme Being," and "Immortality of the Soul." . . . He sets fire to a pasteboard statue of Atheism : and it is replaced by one of Wisdom. A *conscious Mumbo-Jumbo* ! Will this abate the plagues of hag-ridden France ? . . . At Couthon's suggestion the *Law of the Suspect* is extended ; and four Tribunals, each with its Fouquier, are



created : at which even the Mountain gasped. Death and always Death ! The "batches" now rise to one hundred and fifty.

5 (1794). There are twelve prisons in Paris containing now twelve thousand persons in squalor and noisome horror. Even in these a kind of order springs up, and the rules of politeness are obeyed. All implements of needlework, etc., were removed when "Plot in Prison" arose. . . . Fouquier's judgment is a known mockery ; and his Tumbrils nightly visit the prisons. Prisoners rush to the Grate to hear the fatal roll-call. Those whose names are in are removed to the Conciergerie, for death on the morrow. . . . On all high roads flights of prisoners converge towards Paris. From Nantes come even Jacobins because they had disapproved Noyading. . . . But Anarchy is suicidal and cannot endure.

6 (1794). Robespierre goes little to Convention, and walks apart meditating one knows not what. Some say he will murder the Convention, make the Jacobins dominant, and himself Dictator : and that new Catacombs are digging for a huge butchery. . . . By a strange chance Carnot discovers a list of forty names in Robespierre's possession, his own among them. Soon after, Robespierre appears at Convention and speaks on Republican degeneracy, which the Guillotine must cure. There is no applause, and he retires foiled ; but the Jacobins remain loyal to him and threaten to purge the Convention. . . . To-morrow Paris will see a thing.

7 (1794). Mutiny breaks out in the Convention against Robespierre ; and he is denied a hearing and declared accused, his brother with him. Amid confusion and attempts at rescue he is sent to the Luxembourg, and, being refused there, to the Town hall, where he redacts Proclamations. The alarmed Convention declare him Out of Law. . . . In the prisons, terror of another September prevails. . . . Paris rushes confused, and civil war all but breaks out. But the dissident party, terrorised by the decree of the Convention, "Out of Law," disperses. Robespierre attempts suicide, but only shatters his jaw with a pistol shot. He is dragged to the Convention, bullied and insulted—thence to the Guillotine amid unsurpassed crowds and cursing women, while joy penetrates even to the prisons (July 27th). . . . Was he worse than other Advocates ? In luckier ages he might have become an incorruptible Pattern-Figure. . . .

VII. 1 (1794). It proved the end of the Revolution. Millions of men, struck dumb with terror, now rose out of their hiding-places and created a new Public Opinion. The nation was weary of Sansculottism and desired order and method. The Convention frees itself from Committees : and prisons emit the Suspect. The Nantese prisoners arrive in time to denounce

Noyadings and horrors. . . . The Jacobins Mother Society suddenly becomes decrepit and childless. . . . All is getting abolished ; foes of Terror rule in the Convention, and the Mountain shrinks silent. The whole nation is in Committee of Mercy.

2 (1794-5). The bewildered Convention knows not which way to turn. . . . There is a great breaking forth of luxury, entertainments, etc. . . . Much dancing goes on. . . . Young men of the dandy species parade the streets with clubs to beat down Jacobins.

3 (1794-5). The Republican Army of eleven hundred thousand continues to repel the Cimmerian invaders. It has a fire in it which the soldiers that oppose it, animated only by the drill-sergeant, have not. Spain and Prussia make peace ; but Pitt is inflexible, and restrains Austria. Hoche pacifies La Vendée ; but Pitt rekindles strife with his Quiberon expedition : though the invaders are hurled back.

4 (1795). Gilt Youthhood tears down Marat's busts and assaults the Jacobins. Authority has to suspend the Jacobin sessions for ever. . . . But trade cannot revive ; while Assignats sink further ; and there are doleful Bakers' queues : on which Sansculottism grows at the contrast with dancing and luxury. . . . Once more Paris rises and floods the Convention Hall with cries of "Bread." But Gilt Youthhood sweeps Chaos forth with bayonets. . . . Billaud, Collot and others are imprisoned. Legislation has got bayonets ; and cries of hunger are called a Plot of Pitt.

5 (1795). Fouquier, most remarkable of Attorneys, now goes to the Guillotine. Vengeance on Jacobins continues over France ; and at Lyons they are burnt alive ; while at Toulon they rise in revolt. The Convention is hard bested with action and reaction. What Assembly has seen changes such as this Convention ? A very nucleus of Chaos without path or landmark. . . . On May 20th Sansculottism rises once more and invades the Convention like a black deluge, shouting "Bread and the Constitution of '93." Deputy Féraud is killed, his head fixed on a pike : and the great deep has broken loose again. The President will not yield ; and tumult prevents the list of Grievances getting read. The Deputies glide out, all but the sixty remnants of the Mountain. They proceed to decree, and do the work of months in hours. . . . But enter Gilt Youth with bayonets : and Sansculottism, grown weary, can scarcely escape fast enough through windows. The decrees of the sixty are annulled. Sansculottism is sprawling its last, and sprawled for two more days, during which it was invaded and disarmed. Its leaders committed suicide ; only Billaud and Collot were transported before the summons reached them for trial.



6 (1795). The body of Sansculottism is dead, though its soul still lives in other forms : it has taught the wise man to found on his manhood, not on garnitures. It was the frightfulest thing ever born of Time, and numbered four thousand victims. Yet starvation is frightful : and at no time did the dumb twenty-five millions suffer less than in the Reign of Terror. It was the speaking Thousands and Hundreds and Units who suffered then. The inference is that if the gods of the lower world neglect the living Chaos of Ignorance and Hunger, that Chaos will rise. . . . We have now attained to an orderly Republic of the Luxuries. . . . Note the scantiness of the working man's repast! Is this what six years of insurrection have brought him?

7 (1795). Are we then to return to the Gospel of Mammon, and the basest Aristocracy of all—that of the Moneybag? But like Anarchy it cannot endure : for Thought rules the world, and the beginning of Thought is Love. . . . At least let there be Peace and Order. . . . The Convention has once more made the Constitution, and it votes re-election of two-thirds of its members. On this, the Sections, that had hoped much from a new election, once more rise, led by Lepelletier. They are forty thousand strong ; and the Convention has but five thousand Regulars. General Menou fares ill against Lepelletier, and must give place to young Buonaparte. A man of head, he seizes the Artillery and points of vantage, and surrounds the Convention with a ring of steel : the Convention labouring like a ship nearing port. Lepelletier wishes to fraternise, but, making nothing of it, bursts out in onslaught. “Fire,” say the bronze lips of Buonaparte : and his great guns blow to pieces some two hundred men. The Sections cannot stand such horseplay ; they have to disarm, and lose for ever the sacred right of insurrection. This was the Whiff of Grapeshot promised by Broglie : but now the time is come and the man. It has blown the French Revolution into space.

8 (1795). Milder methods will follow in the new France that has arisen. . . . Shams are burnt up, but the new Realities are not yet come. . . . Cagliostro prophesied truly of Imposture in flames, and Thrones hurled in, and Prebendal Stalls, and all the *Gigs* of creation. . . .



## CHAPTER XIV

### “FRENCH REVOLUTION”

THE *French Revolution* is Carlyle's central book, and, as a work of art, the greatest. The vast world of *Frederick* may excel it in breadth, wisdom, even insight ; but the reader is doomed there to many a cloudy day and murky night ; while the planet of the *Revolution* circles through infinite space amid unceasing alternation of fiery sun and moonlit starry skies. The interest is never quenched, to be rekindled with an effort ; though the death scenes are many, we do not regret those who fall : even the giant Mirabeau drops out without diminishing the momentum of the narrative. For the book is truly named ; and, despite the sympathy and humour of the character-drawing, the interest is with no one man or group of men. Nor is it of the scientific kind, but rather, as Carlyle himself would say, transcendental : with something given off by the human spirit. And if we add, by the French spirit, it is because Carlyle deemed the French character, from its vehemence and excitability, to be the most capable of the art of revolution.

It is the central book of his life, in so far as it established his fame, and of his literary life, as we now have all his qualities, including humour, in their full expression. It would be untrue to say that a decline succeeded, for until the close of *Frederick* his mind preserved an undiminished striking-power ; but it is the culmination of the earlier happy mood of the essays, with the philosophical background of *Sartor*, untainted by the note of personal anger that informed his political writings. The whirlwind chapters dealing with the most fearful impulses of the human spirit are irradiated by the divine beam of poetry ; and although there are intermittent passages in later books, *Heroes*, for instance, of equal beauty, the light is less fixed and permanent.

*Frederick* is a greater work, but admits a like distinction as between *Paradise Lost* and *Comus*. The beauty of *Paradise Lost* is cultured and meditated, and derives only from the things of God ; that of *Comus* is the spontaneous outburst of the young poetic soul and its pagan delight in Nature. The mountain summits of the *French Revolution* stand up sharp and defiant on the Carlyle landscape ; but the lake of poetry laps their bases, and reflects a softened image of the riven tortured peaks. The beauty of *Frederick* is connected with the resolute will and great deeds of men, and resembles *Paradise Lost* in being moral beauty. As to the *Life of Sterling*, it belongs to a different section of Carlyle's mind, and remains apart from his other writings, like a sheltered creek unused by his ocean-going messengers to mankind. We know under what circumstances the *Revolution* was written ; it seemed to Carlyle that he was delivering his last message to a world sorely in need of counsel if it would escape catastrophe. He spoke more as prophet than poet ; the resulting beauty is accidental rather than premeditated ; it is the spontaneous re-assertion of his true nature : a Samson-like rending of his self-imposed withes. There is also the delight of the artist in fully matured powers, and enlargement of long-prisoned thought.

Lest the previous analysis should have dispersed the reader's attention among details, we will briefly summarise the main events of the great convulsion. The death of Louis XV, and the birth of Democracy, occupy the opening chapters : to which succeeds a false age of Hope under the young King and Queen. Then the spectre of National Bankruptcy appears ; and the vain efforts to raise money bring about the summoning of States-General. The democratic leanings of the Assembly impel the Court to a display of military force : on which the Paris mob, aided by the defection of the Gardes-Françaises, storm the Bastille. The troops are withdrawn, but a few months later the spirit of the Court revives ; and stories of banquets at Versailles reach hungry Paris ; whereupon the women rise and march to Versailles, followed by Lafayette and the National Guards. Louis must yield to all demands, and even suffer removal from Versailles to Paris.

While the Assembly make the Constitution and Jacobinism increases, the idea of Universal Brotherhood expands into



National Federation. All France takes the oath on a particular day ; but the promises are soon broken by the spread of unrest to the army, culminating in the "Massacre of Nanci." Since the death of Mirabeau, the last man who might have preserved the Monarchy, the Royal Family had meditated flight : but the result is a miserable failure. The Constituent Assembly gives place to the Legislative, but the Constitution will not march ; and meanwhile Feudal Europe is arming against France. From all parts men rush to Paris to enlist ; and demand for the King's Forfeiture results in the encounter between Marseillaise and Swiss, and death of twelve hundred Patriots. The Royal Family, having sought refuge with the Assembly, are transferred to the Temple Prison.

Search for arms in panic-stricken Paris, threatened by the invader, produces the September massacres. Dumouriez repels the Prussian hosts ; but the question of the King becomes paramount ; and the solution is his death. Thereby party strife is intensified ; and Gironde and Mountain are first in conflict. Popular feeling turns against the Girondins ; they fly to the departments ; and their attempts to raise civil war produce the horrors of Lyons and Nantes. Victory deserts Dumouriez ; the invaders press on ; and in Paris the Reign of Terror begins in earnest, and prisoners go daily to the Guillotine. Parties further split up, and the death of Danton leaves Robespierre supreme. The pace of the Guillotine accelerates ; the prisons are full to bursting ; and the world outside political parties suffers now. But the fall of Robespierre terminates the Reign of Terror ; and moderate opinion once more rules throughout France. A few sporadic attempts at rebellion are suppressed : the last by the young Napoleon, who delivers the promised "whiff of grapeshot."

The common complaint that Carlyle does not define the stages of the Revolution with sufficient clearness makes it necessary for us to preserve in our minds these headings ; but the very complaint gives a clue to his conception of history. The Revolution is not a mere shifting of institutions—a change, for instance, from Constituent Assembly to Legislative—but something in the interior nature of every man and woman. At best the Assembly is like the hands on a dial-plate that point the hour ; but the vital force urging the machinery is the people's rage. We get some idea



of this contrast when the frenzied mob of women invade the Assembly Hall at Versailles : and the members, having at last succeeded in edging in, proceed to discuss the Penal Code ! The fate of Foulon and Berthier is a sudden outburst of fury that reveals the people's temper at a time when calm was said to have been restored. And the beautiful Charlotte Corday, brought up in refinement and seclusion, who could nerve herself to a desperate murder, is proof of a whole nation's mood. The subject matter of the *Revolution* is the accumulated subterranean anger boiling up through one vent after another in these terrible years ; and the force of each explosion may seem to blot out the connecting path. Nevertheless the path is there, though hard to discern in the dazzling light or Egyptian darkness.

Carlyle's conception of history is moral rather than philosophic ; for he rejected “philosophy teaching by experience.” The cataclysm of the Revolution was the result of departure from the laws of God ; and although he had set aside miracles and revelation, he could tolerate no merely human authority for the moral code. Morals came from God and were written in the intuition of each one of us. The Church existed to body forth the Divine Idea : but otherwise it was a human institution ; and the danger was, with the progress of time and dulling effect of familiarity, that men retained only the outward observances, such as sacraments and church-going, and forgot the inner mystery. This was to live by formulas and seal up the passages by which the divine influence entered. The Church and Kingship had lost the ways of communication with their supernatural source ; they must therefore disappear from the earth ; and in France, from certain causes, their manner of death was violent.

Realised Ideals such as the Church and Kingship are not necessarily abolished with fire and sword when they fall into decay ; they moulder down imperceptibly, and even throw off “organic filaments,” or promises of new birth in a different form to supply the same need of the human spirit : thus the inculcation of daily moral truths is passing from the Pulpit to the Press. But with the progress of the thousand years of Kingship and Priesthood in Europe came abuses and violations of justice. The world grew old, and preoccupation with material cares led to a failing consciousness of the ever-watchful eye of God. Religion consisted

more and more in the maintenance of forms ; and there is but one step further to Cant and Hypocrisy—to care for appearances only. The attitude of man towards God should be one of child-like faith and trust ; it is in decadent ages that he invents theories of the Universe and Christian apologetics, and the wells of the spirit become choked with the desert sand of speculation. In such ages the noblest suffer ; but the common type can push their fortunes in a world without God. Pleasure is pleasant, and they have five senses and a sixth sense called Vanity.

When the divine Author of Morality is banished from men's conceptions and they make their own laws, the end may be foreseen, however noble and disinterested their professions in the beginning. To a heart not conscious of its secrets lying open to an omniscient eye, acknowledging no higher tribunal than the opinion of others, there will come temptations to deceit. Private sins will be practised and condoned by what is called "tolerance," so long as a fair outside is preserved ; and the transmutation into Vanity of an atrophied spiritual sense will hasten the wreck of a world. The spectre of Atheism, which had but shown itself in the seventeenth century, stalked openly abroad in the eighteenth ; and the world beheld Kings attended by mistresses, noblemen famous only for their debauchery, dissipated Cardinals climbing high on the mount of politics. Such is the spectacle disclosed by the four opening chapters of the *French Revolution* : and throughout the whole range of literature it would be hard to equal them in impressiveness.

The immediate progenitors of the Revolution were Voltaire and the band of Philosophes who made it their life-work to destroy the Church—and Rousseau, who formulated the Rights of Man. Although the French have a genius for revolution, it is no easy thing, and the dumb twenty-five millions could not have risen unaided, but they found leaders in the classes above them, as history shows must be the case in all popular outbursts. As the frenzied years roll on the older leaders disappear and a meaner type of man comes to the fore ; and if the sunset of the Revolution belied its splendid dawn, the absence of great men accounted for it, according to Carlyle. At the present day we are used to think of great men as hastening rather than causing events ; and in many instances Carlyle pushed to extremes his doctrine of their



all-powerfulness ; but in times of crisis, when events move at an undreamt-of pace, and history is made or marred in an hour, he was surely justified. We believe his statement that had Mirabeau lived another year, he would have saved the Revolution.

It has frequently been said that military despotism was the inevitable anti-climax of the Revolution—that had Napoleon never lived his part would have been played by Hoche or Moreau ; that, given the tendency, the right man will appear. But Carlyle would not have endorsed this theory : he maintained that great men are the fire-pillars in life's pilgrimage, the clearest symbols on earth of the divinity. Roads into the unexplored future are not prepared by the patient industry of unnamed thousands, but riven by the thunderbolt of the individual. We might quote many misapplications of his doctrine : for instance, that Dr. Johnson made possible the victory of Waterloo ;<sup>1</sup> or that the wonderful traits of the Scottish character were created by Knox. But let us not lose sight of the doctrine itself : that man is a spirit, united to his fellow-men under the Parenthood of God, and that boundless is the effect of the living word on the human soul.

In writing history Carlyle has fuller scope for testing character than in his biographical essays ; for history is the arena where the gladiatorial contest of wills takes place. We know the part played by will in his view of character, and we have not yet reached the danger-point in his mental evolution where the activity of the spirit, effected by the will, justifies itself, apart from consequences in the external world : in which he differed from Plutarch, who never omitted the careful education and virtuous direction of the will. But we see the beginning in a certain readiness to condone vice so long as it does not impair the full development of the character. A man like Louis XV, famous only for his debauchery, he despised ; but the amours of Mirabeau, or the various unlovely traits of successful men of action, he took for granted. Tolerance is good, but the logical development of this theory led Carlyle to diverge widely from his own nature.

Between Mirabeau the greatest and Robespierre the meanest, many diverse types of men defile before us—like the procession of Kings revealed by the Witches to Macbeth. It is faith that

<sup>1</sup> Essay on *Boswell's Johnson*.



removes mountains, and, before a man can reign among his fellows, he must have belief, though not necessarily of a theological kind. Belief is more easily attained by the small nature than the great in which there is much to be developed : indeed some of the greatest men, like Bacon with his wish " To be more bold," never arrive at certainty. In times of upheaval which demand instant actions and decisions, men rise to the surface like Robespierre with his narrow convictions and absence of humour, like Marat, whose whole nature is condensed into hatred of Aristocrats. Danton, with an equal devotion to the cause, but free from personal bias, who never pursued his private enemies, and granted mercy where he could to the individual, was of nobler temper. The sufferings of his youth had developed the great-minded Mirabeau into clearness, and saved him from doubt ; he had swallowed all formulas and would re-create the world.

Carlyle's belief that had Mirabeau lived he would have saved the Revolution is an important clue to his conception of character. In *Sartor* we know how he found work a cure for spiritual unrest ; and this doubtless explains his advocacy of toil as a relief from all mental and moral sufferings. At about this time began his praise of the handicraftsman over the so-called educated man, because the former operates upon nature and must test his theories there. In all of this we see a longing after certainty and the beginning of a contempt for doubts and scruples which hampered thorough and continuous action. We must connect this with what has been already said about his tolerance for evil so long as it does not interfere with the will to do strenuously, and remember that an idea germinating in the mind of one who lives apart from the world and studies men through books is likely to thrive unchecked. Only let its origin be noted, in the best part of his nature : his horror at the excesses of the Revolution which a great man might have spared ; his despair at a Louis XVI who cannot make up his mind, or " has no orders to give " while a world is on fire.

Strength comes from belief—belief in something impersonal—in all of which we see Carlyle's primal doctrine of the annihilation of self. The Revolution produced few great men but many individuals driven rabid ; and at such a time a vast-minded Bacon would have fared ill beside a narrow but convinced Robespierre

or an intense though squalid Marat. The writing of the *French Revolution* was the central event of Carlyle's inner life, and determined the future of his thought ; for it showed him that a world which could display such horrid portents was no place in which to take one's ease. He had learned from Goethe that doubt could only be removed by action ; and it seemed to him that the spiritual doubter, who over-pondered the direction of his voyage through Chaos, was not free from thoughts of self, from care for mere respectability, for the suffrages of his fellow-men. In a world where such frenzied scenes either were or might be enacted, let all use their talents for the removal of injustice and advancement of good, without meticulous care for detail. For the right use of its central energy will absolve the soul before its Maker, to whom alone it is responsible whether or not it violates the conventionalities of earthly men. A state approaching Martial Law in the Spiritual World was therefore proclaimed by Carlyle ; and the origin of a theory which has been used to discredit him was terror-struck solicitude for the common weal. Belief is good, less for its own sake than that of the believing mind, which is thus at harmony with itself and can better accomplish its Father's business on earth.

If we refer back to *Characteristics*, the most intimate of Carlyle's intellectual revelations, as *Sartor* is of his moral, we find that creative power is ever a mystery to itself. Doubts, therefore, will infect with self-consciousness the central energy, besides being disturbers of that inward silence which we know from *Sartor* to be necessary for the full concentration of the character. Hence Carlyle's contempt for his own profession of author, because of the perpetual need of the conscious will in numbering and choosing from the treasures yielded by the deep seas of meditation. Hence his admiration in later years for the Prussian Generals and men of action who surrounded Frederick, whose faces showed “ inarticulate thought.” When a man, stimulated by volition, has once put his hand to the plough, let him study only to drive his furrow deeper ; and thus even a mean Robespierre has this of admirable, that he believes every word he says.

The power of Belief is one of Carlyle's outstanding ideas : as it is the strength of his own convictions which gives him so mighty a sovereignty over the reader's soul. And the wonderful

thing about the Revolution was the spread of belief to a whole people, to a degree unparalleled since the Crusades.<sup>1</sup> It was belief in human perfectibility, in the gospel of Rousseau, in an earthly paradise, and therefore doomed to disappointment; but the miracle of its appearance was not the less great.

And here we return to the theory of the indispensable great man; for it was lack of the God among men that sent the Revolution over the abyss. With Mirabeau for head and Bouillé for hand, much might have been done; but Mirabeau died, and Bouillé retired in disgust over the marches. In a deep-souled man the whole universe lies mirrored; the eleventh book of Wordsworth's *Prelude*, for instance, is said to epitomise the spiritual history of contemporary Europe.<sup>2</sup> The proceedings of the Assembly, the making and re-making of the Constitution, were unrelated to the eternal deeps; they expressed the mere wishes of a people suddenly freed from despotism, and intent on earthly happiness. Only the deep-feeling and thinking man could have gone beyond the Paper Constitution and invested the unchanging moods of the human soul with the new garments of freedom. But instead of a true leader there came a pedant Robespierre with his celebration of the "Supreme Being," his "conscious Mumbo-Jumbo": and the result was that madness seized a whole nation.

It is this madness that Carlyle succeeds in conveying to the reader. The remoter causes were ten centuries of injustice, but the immediate cause was collapse of the framework of habit that holds society together. As Nature's fair outside rests on volcanic fire-abysses, so does every human being conceal a madman. Each of us from birth is surrounded by fixed ways of thought and action, and it needs the disruption of a world to prove that the path of habit, which we thought to be cut in the solid rock, was a mere film between ourselves and the fathomless deep. We are wont to think of the Commandment against murder as the Law of God, and so far no merely human authority for ethics has proved adequate. But the sapping process of scepticism was complete towards the close of the eighteenth century, and the aftermath of religion—Habit, Respectability—perished in the first convulsions. France presented the spectacle of a whole people turned adrift from its allegiance to God or man.

<sup>1</sup> III. iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Emile Legouis.



It is now we see the impotence of the Assembly, with its Rights of Man, and gospel according to Rousseau. The pavilion of the Assembly, as Carlyle said, was spread on Chaos ; the work before it was the absolute reconstruction of human nature. It failed, it proved the crankiest of machines, veering suddenly round from east to west according to the latest speaker, because it possessed no great man : none whose spiritual life endured below the level of argument and hearsay ; whose soul had grown in solitude and by communings with the Eternal ; and who therefore could discern the permanent needs of men in the agony of revolution and give them the institutions they unknowingly desired. For all is in perpetual change ; the leader of yesterday suffices not for to-day ; and when the heavens vouchsafe him not at all, then madness must run its course. Nor must be forgotten the effect of terror of invasion and massacre on the soul of a people that had reverted to Chaos.

We have seen that Carlyle's conception of history was moral rather than philosophic : broad-based on eternal verities rather than scientific formulas. The commandments once divinely given, it is unnecessary to support them with theory ; their application is here and now—in every age, in every quarter of the globe. His preliminary labours were therefore bent upon finding out exactly what did happen in France and Paris during the revolutionary years, not what might or should have happened. And the facts he has thus fixed in his mind he transfers to the reader's in language of surpassing vividness. He reverences the meanest Fact as coming from God—since it has *been*. In this spirit he makes us see Berthier whirl towards the Lanterne,<sup>1</sup> or De Launay with lighted taper sitting near the Bastille Powder-Magazines like a bronze Lamp-holder.<sup>2</sup> And yet—lest anyone should travesty his doctrine of the omnipresence of God—he reminds us, in connection with the September massacres, that Satan, too, has his part in the world.

It is thus that he enlarges the bounds of interest, to the discomfiture of those who seek for a purely national history. The Revolution is a portent of human nature, with the reservation of the French temperament, rather than a parochial incident. We do get the rise and fall of institutions, the history of societies,

<sup>1</sup> I. v. 9.

<sup>2</sup> I. v. 6.

etc., but the ground-tone is the madness of the people ; and it is strange how little he tells us of the effect of the Revolution on a reconstructed France. Only that men have learnt to found on their manhood rather than parchment ; but of the modifications of Government we hear little.

✓ Carlyle has been accused of an insufficient care for justice, of preaching that Might is Right : whereas his belief was that Right is Might, that what is based upon injustice, like the Napoleonic Empire, will not endure. And yet French Kingship endured for ten centuries, during which many lived and died in suffering ; and the Napoleonic Empire exacted a holocaust of victims. The time is not yet for full discussion, but the question whether Carlyle's assurance of ultimate justice allowed sympathy for the individual may at this epoch be answered in the affirmative. Innocent Louis XVI bears the sins of many generations ;<sup>1</sup> and Marie Antoinette's fault in the Revolution was to be the Symbol of the Sin and Misery of a thousand years.<sup>2</sup>

When books are described as hard to read, or likely to improve on continued reading, it is because they abound in seeming contradictions and inconsistencies. Carlyle was a poet and idealist—a state of mind, one would think, scarcely justified by the sanguinary page of history under discussion. And yet, as in the device on the shield of Achilles, battle scenes alternate with scenes of peace ; and a fair picture of life unrolls beside the wild beasts' orgy. Those deafened by the shrieks of victims and the clang of arms may be confused at the sudden transference, and fail in their attempt to see the whole in its true proportions. The deeper reconciliation can only be effected by the reader who has allowed the words to filter down below the conscious level. For Carlyle left the impress of his whole mind upon his subject : not only what life has become, but what life should be. Beyond the crime-area the oak grows silently in the forest, the earth yields her kind harvests, and the bright-glancing stars appear in the heavens. The amenities of friendship fail not, the joys of family life, even innocent amusement. His love of freedom and its cause cannot blind him to the beauty of Marie Antoinette, or diminish one jot of the squalid wretchedness of Marat. The warring elements—fury in the foreground and peace in the

<sup>1</sup> III. ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Diamond Necklace*, 7.

background—are united in the deeper mind of Carlyle. No one proclaimed with greater emphasis than he that this world is not a Lubber-land or Elysium, or that the life of any man, with the Universe storming in upon him, can be other than toil and strife : but to the poet and transcendentalist Nature is the living Garment of God ; and therefore man’s world of hate is interpenetrated by God’s world of beauty. His mood is that of Milton, who, in *Lycidas*, follows his denunciation of the Church of Rome by the unearthly beauty of “Return, Alpheus,” and the flowers that strew the laureate hearse.

In attempting to resolve the complex emotion derived from Carlyle into its component parts, we must not omit his own method of reading history. We recall his delight at meeting in the pages of Clarendon “a genuine flesh-and-blood Rustic of the year 1651,” and how he follows in imagination the chances of that poor life made sacred by Time and by the Past.<sup>1</sup> A similar emotion rules in his mind when selecting traits for the presentation of characters. Homely details abound in his biographical essays ; there is Richter, for instance, who writes in the same room with his mother who cooks and scours—and on her death the kettles hang unscoured on the wall. The impact of such a mind as Carlyle’s forces the reader into a like channel of speculation. Let us take the single instance of Charlotte Corday, who journeyed to Paris from her home in Caen to stab Marat to death : Charlotte Corday “of stately Norman figure, in her twenty-fifth year, of beautiful still countenance.”<sup>2</sup> How we yearn to know something of her previous life in the old-world Manor House ! Her friends, her books, her preferences, the walks she took, her daily habits in summer and winter ! But the quest is endless. . . .

Like Æschylus and Shakespeare, Carlyle gets to the heart of his characters, and, no matter how brief an appearance they make in his pages, exposes their whole life by means of a single incident. So deep is his descent into their natures that all writers who have treated the same subject seem reduced to his understudies. Should we read, for instance, in the book of another any description of Louis XV or the Dubarry, our minds instantly revert to the immortal pages in which Carlyle tells of the death of the King and flight of his mistress. No student of Tacitus, however

<sup>1</sup> Essay on Biography.

<sup>2</sup> III. iv. 1.



familiar with his author, can escape a recurring shock of wonder at the famous allusion to "Christus" and Pontius Pilate,<sup>1</sup> and we feel a similar emotion—as at the handling of a sacred theme by a layman—when we read in Horace Walpole<sup>2</sup> how Dubarry overthrew Choiseul and exalted Aiguillon: by such remote paths has Carlyle led us into the true country of the soul. At a certain depth of the spirit all men are brothers, and to this depth his plummet reaches. We feel an interest in his characters as for our own flesh and blood: not only in their brief dramatic appearance, but their whole life uncelebrated in story that lies before and after. The formal centre is thus surrounded by a vast allusive interest in universal life.

Some remarks on Carlyle's style fitly apply to this his most consummate achievement in literary craftsmanship. The first characteristic is his intense power of vision, whereby he sets his object before the reader, beginning with its external trappings and proceeding backward, through its relations to the moral and historical, to the Infinite and Eternal. And the strong beam of light is directed steadily upon the past till it has yielded up all its treasures. Carlyle would not have fallen into Shylock's error of demanding a pound of flesh without thought of blood. His vision widens, becomes more and more comprehensive; his imagination prolongs itself in a series of impulses, gathering minuter detail that pleases by contrast with modern times and is therefore picturesque. And his moral fervour and strength of belief enforce unqualified acceptance upon the reader's mind.

The metaphors that give universal interest to his conception express his love and awe for Nature, and high thoughts of what man should be: but words do not become ends in themselves. His writings, when studied in their totality, reveal that his most splendid metaphors do duty twice. The greatest writers produce their effects by economy; but Carlyle, after thrilling the reader with sound and beauty, will boldly repeat the same words in self-commenting mood. And yet the result will not be to disgust or stale—so shaken to its depths with interest and enthusiasm is his mind, which buoys up these words on its surface. To Shakespeare words are like the "justling rocks" between which the *Argo* winged her way; to Carlyle they are the fixed Pillars of

<sup>1</sup> *Annals*, xv. 44.

<sup>2</sup> See Letters of 1769-71.

Hercules, allowing him but a narrow aperture to pour through the oceanic volume of his mind.

If Carlyle's vocabulary, unlike Shakespeare's, is limited, there are times when he does use words in their highest poetical sense, that recall the dying speech of Othello, or the last speeches of the victorious Edgar at the close of *King Lear*. It is on the subjects that impress him most strongly—the mystery of life and death in its simplest form. We would recommend as examples the death of old Mirabeau,<sup>1</sup> and the appearance in the Assembly of Jean Claude Jacob, the oldest man in the world.<sup>2</sup> Having raised emotion to its highest, he drops his words slowly into the reader's soul, creating an interval of awestruck silence between the spent echo of the one and the toning of the next.

Before leaving the *Revolution*, there remains the matter of its connexion with Carlyle's earthly self. We know his contempt for “impressions,” and the part he took in the battle between “reason” and “understanding”; yet a display of feeling is not reprehensible when its strength is such as to overthrow a disciplined habit of self-control. We do not blame Themistocles for failing to conceal his rapture at his apotheosis at the Olympic Games after the victory of Salamis, when the people turned from the games to watch and applaud him and point him out to their friends.<sup>3</sup> And we are told that the official sternness melted out of Kitchener when Khartoum was retaken under his leadership.<sup>4</sup>

If we ask what is the ultimate emotion derived from the *French Revolution*, the answer will be, “The horror of sudden death.” Carlyle was well fortified against love of life and craving for “pleasure” by his Presbyterian upbringing, his dyspeptic trouble, and his immense intellectual horizon: yet he had a weakness of temperament to which we owe this new and strange colour in the prism. At the moment of parting from the earth it would seem less despicable than he had thought.

Carlyle was a poet, though born out of his due time, and the poet remains a pagan at heart and does seek his Paradise in this lower world. Though he take upon himself the sins of mankind, he goes halting all his life under the burden, and most appears

<sup>1</sup> I. v. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch.

<sup>3</sup> II. i. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Times*, June 7, 1916.



himself when laying it off. Carlyle could not disguise his love of beauty : witness his repulsion for Marat—the People's friend, the self-sacrificing champion of radical ideas—and his involuntary homage to feudal Marie Antoinette. And it was his love of life in disguise that made him, as regards outward form, a historian rather than poet. He had proved to himself by logic that this world is not our abiding-place, that life is worth little and death no evil—but logic was not stronger than death.

Writing of French insecurity while Louis XVI yet lived, he says : " Always one most important element is surreptitiously (we not noticing it) withdrawn from the Past Time : the haggard element of Fear ! Not *there* does Fear dwell, nor Uncertainty, nor Anxiety ; but it dwells *here* ; haunting us, tracking us ; running like an accursed ground-discord through all the music-tones of our Existence." <sup>1</sup> Surely this is an intensely personal revelation, this implied longing for a Present unspoilt by fear, and where music-tones are heard. It voices the sorrow of the modern poet born into an alien world of unlimited competition, from which Religion and the Brotherhood of Man are disappearing. Carlyle's love of life is proved by the fact that he did find beauty in the past, that the past became sacred for him, that he seized with breathless interest upon any small detail that had pertained to the meanest existence now swallowed in the gulf of Time. He repudiated the present because, in the extension of commercial competition and decay of religion, he read reversion to a state of savagery, and belief that all men are born enemies. Beauty and love are the daily needs of the poet : but the modern world gives hideousness and fear.

But Carlyle's strength of intellect was counterbalanced by weakness of temperament, and the present became less despicable to him when the hour for departure arrived. His deepest need was for belief in a Personal God, a true Father who would listen to his children in distress : and only fleeting visitations of it were vouchsafed him, that became rarer as years went on. For with it is connected belief in individual immortality, without which, as Max Müller said, " religion is like an arch resting on one pillar, like a bridge ending in an abyss." <sup>2</sup> Carlyle praised Milton and Cervantes for working at their tasks heroically,

<sup>1</sup> III. ii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Selected Essays*, ii. 155.



indifferent to the praises of men ; and condemned Burns as a "self-seeker." But he adds that they had true religion, while that of Burns was an "anxious wish." The bitterness in Carlyle's cup was that with all a poet's need for sympathy he had no enduring faith in the unseen Friend, and his mighty intellect transcended the world of men, so that the gift of fame could not compensate him. He sought but did not find God, and no man, save Goethe, was his equal on earth ; therefore, his way through life was solitary. He could resign himself in normal times, but when the conviction of mortality pressed home, then his armour of proof, his Presbyterian upbringing, crumbled into dust. Then appeared the note of regret and anguish, the cry of pain, for a world he had not valued, or loved too late—since nothing might lie beyond. And then came a sudden resurrection of the condemned and sunken earth, clad in all its hues of persuasive beauty, as his bark unmoored from its shore.

Thus there are no scenes in Carlyle's books to equal the death scenes ; and the word "Reality," often on his lips, is most used of the supreme event. Jeffrey commended the parting between Conrad and Medora in Byron's *Corsair* above all scenes of the kind in poetry : it pales before the actuality of Louis XVI's parting with his family.<sup>1</sup> Note, too, Carlyle's frequent allusions to the massacre of St. Bartholomew and all similar outbreaks of the beast in man, where the innocent and unsuspecting are caught suddenly by the scythed chariots of murder. Dr. Johnson suffered all his life from hypochondria, and when, at the age of seventy-five, he felt the approach of death, confessed how he longed to postpone the evil hour. A similar universal wail rises from the pages of the *French Revolution*. We get the noble Madame Roland in prison, conversing serenely with her visitors at the grate ; and yet, as Carlyle quotes from her maid : "Before you, she collects her strength ; but in her own room, she will sit three hours sometimes leaning on the window weeping."<sup>2</sup> Then there are the scenes in the prisons, the nightly roll-call of those destined for the Guillotine on the morrow : "Men rush towards the Grate ; listen if their name be in it ? One deep-drawn breath, when the name is not in ; we live still one day ! And yet some score or scores of names were in."<sup>3</sup> How intense

<sup>1</sup> III. ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> III. v. 2.

<sup>3</sup> III. vi. 5.

is the writer's sympathy for this horror of sudden death ! How eloquent the emphasis laid upon even one day's respite ! The French Revolution, therefore, became the central fact of his mental life ; its horror persisted with him, transforming itself into bitterness in his later political writings at the blindness of a world he would fain save from a repetition. It was the bitterness of thwarted love such as the poet feels for a world he wishes to make ideal, and which rejects his love and goes on its wicked way. This was the joint in Carlyle's armour—this discovery of his sympathetic imagination that life is sweet and untimely death terrible, and that each one of us may arrive at that "black Mahlstrom and descent of Death" like Louis XVI,<sup>1</sup> or that "Bourne of Creation" where, like Danton, like Camille Desmoulins, "gazing into that dim Waste beyond Creation, a man does see the Shade of his Mother. . . ." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> III. ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> III. vi. 2.

## CHAPTER XV

### LATER ESSAYS : ANALYSIS

CORN LAW RHYMES.—In these days when poetry has almost ceased to be, it is pleasant to meet with a genuine little book of that character : the meaning of which has been believed by the author and is therefore again believable by the reader. The author is a Sheffield worker in brass and iron ; but he is not to be patronised as an “uneducated genius.” To a man of uncommon character it is a less misfortune to lack education ; for injudicious culture aggravates wrong tendencies ; and victory comes from struggle. Besides, who need be uneducated now that books are accessible to all, and the Mystery of Existence revealed to the inner sense ? The grand schoolmaster is Practice ; and the so-called uneducated classes have this advantage, that they must work ; they must grapple with Nature and try their theories there.

Our Corn Law Rhymer, though in humble guise, is a genuine man ; no theoriser, but a practical man of work, who speaks what he has known. And this, the authentic insight and experience of any human soul, is real knowledge. A true poet, a man with a warm and kind heart, naturally, in these days, turning to Politics, and therefore a Radical. He feels the inequality of Social pressure, and the frightful condition of present times when Self-interest has vanquished Principle ; but he seems to think that all evils would disappear, including the bitterness in every heart, were the Bread-tax repealed. He is destructive, but religious ; and his upbraidings are ennobled into music by the belief that after all this is God's world. He feels the deep mystery of ever-flowing Time, the primary idea of Poetry. His faults arise from his imitativeness, which makes his development incomplete : echoes of Byron and Hemans are found in him. He lacks humour ; deals meanly with mean things ; and should remember that discourtesy springs from dullness, not poverty. He is no “uneducated poet” ; but we would recommend wider reading ; though we deny not his power to spell sentences from the Book of Existence.



One thing we note : that fear of Beggary and the Workhouse is always in the background. It is mournful that a Man should pray anxiously for what his horse is sure of ; and certain that things are worse than twenty-five years ago. Yet these very volumes, issuing from the Gehenna of Manufacturing Radicalism, are a sign of hope. All true Reform is Moral ; and a good man is a mystic creative centre of goodness. . . . In our poet's latest utterance we discern an epic tendency—the true epic “Tools and the Man.” . . . To those members of our Aristocracy who feel their responsibility towards their humble brothers, these books will be a document promoting better understanding. To others it will be alarming as the speech of Balaam's ass. . . . To conclude with our Rhymer, we would suggest that he try prose, in which much may be expressed. As for poetry, if the inward thought do not sing itself, what signifies the outward phrase ! And in Politics let him not only concern himself with destruction. All men are appointed to work ; and no man can be king of more than his own mind.

**HISTORY AGAIN.**—History is the message of all Mankind to every man. It includes all other studies : as every word, written or spoken, that is past becomes historical. Our Universal History is little more than Parish History, so small is our knowledge. The little we know is precious as an index of what will follow ; but the want of Perfection in History is one cause why we cannot use the past as an unfailing test of the future. The second is the superabundant outpouring of historical matter in modern days, thanks to the printing press. Through want of Honesty and Understanding the event worthiest to be known is omitted. History above all needs compression, and Memory and Oblivion should operate like Day and Night. As the Individual cannot remember fully the events of one hour, so Mankind needs to forget much, and to contract and epitomise. To explore the past of what is now vital, is a sound rule to govern selection. Thus do trivialities, and things that have borne no fruit, drop away ; but the compressing habit grows with the growth of time. Charles II is allotted infinitely more space than heroic Alfred. . . . Universal History advances like a magic web, growing out of *Memoirs*, ever changing with the new interpretations put upon the old writers, and narrowing more and more behind us.

**DIDEROT.**—We will not condemn the enormous growth of *Memoirs*, for they are desirable so long as true. Literature should move more and more away from Fiction towards Belief and Reality. . . . Our first duty is to understand, not condemn, the Philosophes. They lived in the eighteenth century when thousand-year institutions were falling in ruins. Diderot was an epitome of his age ; but we must beware of claiming to

“understand” him ; for each is a Reflex of the All. His writings are hasty and scattered ; and the recovered biography by Naigeon tells nothing of his daily life. More informing is a strange series of love-letters, if we can bear with the “noble sentiment” of a sexagenarian.

He was born at Langres in October 1713 : his father, a Cutler, was a worthy man, an ancient craftsman of a type now extinct, whose virtue was to *do*. He attended a Jesuit school and gladdened his parents’ hearts by winning prizes and garlands. Later on he was removed to a College in Paris, but it seems to have diminished his taste for the Jesuit career. Law was suggested to him, but he preferred to follow no profession and indulge his taste for study : on which the good old father withdrew his allowance. However, he contrived to live in an attic, though often on the verge of starvation. He taught mathematics, but was careless of payment, and declined stupid pupils. If a Langres man came his way he would borrow, and the father eventually paid, while the mother sent him direct help. We surmise that his Paris connections were chiefly among Rascaldom. Literary hack work and translation began to engage him ; and he fell madly in love and married without his father’s consent.

His Sophie was a woman of excellent qualities, devoted to her rather unstable husband. When he dined out she would eat bread only, to provide better fare next day. She won his parents’ hearts in face of a cold reception : for he devised the heroic remedy of sending her thither on a visit. But she returned to find him occupied with another woman ; and such affairs were constant in his life. Into the lap of these Scarlet-women he cast the proceeds of his work : for he was advancing in letters, and even wrote the beastliest of all novels.

As in England, it was the age of Booksellers ; Puffery was not yet, and Thought sure to be recognised. The fire of the Philosophes was working in the interior mass, and the volcano-crater of the Revolution forming. We will ask less Why it is, than What it is ? Hence the value of Diderot’s letters, giving a picture of Paris in such critical times. Voltaire, the most French of Frenchmen, was living retired at Ferney, encouraging his disciples from afar. There was D’Alembert, renowned for clearness, but, according to Diderot, eventually failing in enthusiasm for the cause. Rousseau hovered in the distance, great but misarranged and lonely—his whole life a soliloquy. Grimm owed his marvellous change of fortune to Rousseau, who introduced him to Diderot and the D’Épinay. There were also Helvetius, Marmontel, Holbach. . . .

The grand object of these Philosophes was to pull down the Church, and they naturally roused some antagonism. . . . In



foreign Courts, notably with Frederick and Catherine, Philosophedom flourished. With their own Government the relations of the Philosophes were contradictory. The *Encyclopédie* was formally stopped, but circulated under thin disguises. Diderot's editorial labours were boundless—his excursions into every science, his trouble with contributors. Then the Goth Lebreton, fearful for his head, cut from the proof-sheets all the daring Philosophe sallies. . . . Only at Holbach's hospitable country house could he find a little rest in the fine autumn weather, and exercise for his social talent : but—strange content for love-letters which are the source of our information—we learn that his excesses at table led to serious indigestion. And the staple topics were Blasphemy and Bawdry.

Returning to Paris, ample labour of proof-sheets awaited him ; and he spent much time in succouring poor authors. He was universally successful, second only to the unattainable Voltaire ; and no self-listener, but a healthy-living man. Not rich, he found an imperial benefactress in Catherine of Russia, and the last great scene of his life was a visit to her : though he was no courtier and treated Prince and Polisson alike. His closing years were spent in seclusion, but he conserved his interest in Philosophedom, dying in 1784.

His head was the most encyclopedical ever seen, and he was an unsurpassed talker. There was a poetic tinge to his universality : he saw the world as a whole within him. But he never went beyond the Appearances of Life and the World ; for he was a Polemic, and born in a Mechanical Era. Man may make his circumstances ; but the circumstances are the element he is appointed to live and work in, and he is modified by them. A perennial spirit orders the highest ; but birth ten years earlier or later changes the course of inferior men. Polemical Philosophism was, perhaps, the best channel for Diderot ; and what concerns us now is the fraction of truth in all human convictions. He was a proselytising Atheist ; in his opinion, logic could not account for a Divinity. As if the smallest of Finites could include within itself the Highest Infinite ! But he has taught us the limits of speculation. Man can prove nothing of final causes, yet has an infinitely higher power of Faith or intuition. The theory of the Universe as a machine, made by God and left to itself, is likewise wearisome. What we learn from Diderot is that the Mechanical System of Thought is atheistic. But he dwelt in the " thin rind of the conscious," recognising nothing higher than Logic. He ignored the Divine Idea behind Appearance : hence the distortions in the Appearances he described. He denied any sacredness in Man, and had the least belief that any man ever had. He called marriage suicidal, because of man's instinct to change :



forgetting that an Unchangeable, also underlies the human destiny. His shameless indecency is the result of his Mechanical theories. One who acknowledges nothing sacred could hardly appreciate the divineness of Silence. He was not without conscience, but explained it as Reward and Approval, and called Virtue Pleasure : in which he differed from St. Paul !

At present we can detect signs of a nobler, more comprehending moral system than has yet been ; and Diderot, at least by his sincerity, may have helped towards it. As a talker he was superior, but not supreme : theoretic rather than practical, in which he yielded to Johnson. Akin to this was his facility of composition ; his books were printed talk, clear but superficial, with gleams of deeper vision. He attained to being an Encyclopedic Artisan, or less than his nature promised. He is now little known, for, like all Polemical works, his were self-annihilating. Yet he was not wholly a Mechanist ; and there are rays of poetic thought in his Pictorial and Dramatic criticisms. And he perpetrated two surprising fictions, almost poems. . . . In conduct he was no hero, rather an impulsive female character ; and he consorted with women or men who flattered him rather than the earnest. He was neither coward nor brave man, but aimed at Duty-made-easy. From the point of view of Universal History, compare the *Encyclopédie*, shrivelled up within sixty years, and Isaiah alive after three thousand ; and remember Goethe's saying that epochs of Belief are fruitful, and epochs of Unbelief barren.

DEATH OF EDWARD IRVING.—Irving's warfare with the Spirit of our confused Time is over. He sleeps in his native Scotland, far from this mad Babylon. He was a genuine man in an Age of Shams. He strove to be a true Christian Priest in spite of controversies. Fashion cast her eye on him, intoxicated him : his very excess of sociability and sympathy forwarded his ruin. Fashion forgot him ; but he could not forget and live neglected. He adopted Singularity—Gift of Tongues—and strove to win the world's ear in vain. Nothing was left but to die.

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO.—Man, reverence thy fellow-man, for his origin is supernatural ! Every man is a poem composed by the Supernal Powers. Know others rather than thyself ; and work while it is day ; for all working and knowing are a faint interpreting of Life's mystery. Life is divine : sate man in his five senses, he has an unappeasable sixth called Vanity. There were three ways of reading the Bible of man's existence : the Hebrew sacred way ; the Arabian fantastic way ; the way of beauty with the Greeks. The modern world has collected all under Fiction ; but the sense of Life's Infinitude is lost, and we eagerly wait a fourth departure.

An original man's life cannot fail to interest, even a knave's, for it is Will incarnated. Only a half-knave is despicable, who cobbles together the True and False and makes the Plausible. A completer liar than Cagliostro never existed ; he lied not only in word but thought. First ask a man if he has an aim and follows it with undivided will : then if it be right. Cagliostro rose from nothing to a height of prosperity, with no external advantages : and we ask, How ? . . . Some boldness of imagination is needed to fill in the outlines of a story half told or mistold in unreliable books. . . . Balsamo was born at Palermo in 1743. He was early given to dissimulation, and spoke truth only for gain. Moral sense he had none ; he preferred stratagem to violence in the satisfaction of his many wants. He ran away from school, and for long would choose no profession, seeming to have no power except to eat ; but he finally decided for the Ecclesiastical. His life took its bent from the Convent Laboratory, where he fell in with books on Alchemy, etc. But here again, to attain enjoyment without work, he takes to stealing and suffers punishment. Signs of grim humour show in him : he reads out the Martyrology with blasphemous improvisations. . . .

He returned to Palermo, lived with his uncle, and tried painting ; but this brought not the means of satisfying his great hunger. He kept the worst company, was prominent in all mischief, became a pander, and committed the first series of forgeries in which he persevered all his life. Stupidity, with vulpine astucity and a plausible look, marked his appearance. Of choleric temper, he was ready to strike if victory seemed sure. It was plain he was well launched on the career of scoundrel and could not recede. Threat of vengeance from a man whom he had swindled was the cause of his leaving Palermo and trying his talents on a larger world.

The time was the conclusion of the Seven Years War, when Feudal Europe had lain down to sleep : to be awakened by Democracy and transform herself into Industrial Europe. As usual in times of social decay and decreasing work and wages, impostors flourished. With Economic distress there is decline of moral principle : but be it remembered that Misery is not the cause but the effect of Immorality. For had all men kept their posts the evil would have been abolished. The sluggard says, " It will last my time " : but will it last his Eternity ? Quackery is composed of Dishonesty and Hunger. . . .

We know little of Balsamo's first wanderings, save that they led him far down into Rascaldom. In Rome he just lives by forging pen-drawings ; and he also wins a handsome bride, though himself unlovely of person. His wife now aids him to enchant the foolish rich ; he calls himself Count Cagliostro, and shoots



through Europe in a four-horse carriage. Now and then he runs against Justice and his wings are clipt. Returning to Palermo, for instance, he is imprisoned for the old offence ; but his wife persuades the Prince to order his release. . . . Great are his vicissitudes ; we trace him to England, engaged in house-painting. . . . He sells beauty secrets and potions to faded dames and gentlemen of quality. When this branch of industry decays, and his seraphic Countess shows signs of years, he takes to Prophecy. In London he foretells Lottery numbers and swindles swindlers : now and then meeting his match, himself fleeced, imprisoned, so that English national character is vindicated.

He became a Freemason ; and then disinterred from old manuscripts "Egyptian Masonry." He promised his followers perfection through physical and moral regeneration : the Philosopher's Stone, and immortal youth. We pass over the mysterious and extraordinary rites of the Egyptian religion : phantoms, skeletons, phosphorus, etc. He played on men's imaginations by connecting it with Enoch and Elias ; and the result was ready money for himself. Arriving at a city, he would acquaint himself by masonic grip with the Venerable, and, welcomed to the Grand Lodge, discourse for hours : promising his Pentagon—which cost money, as it came from afar—else he would give it gladly. He was a confused, halting speaker, but he had the power of impudence, and one grain of Superstitious Belief which impregnated a whole inward world of Quackery.

His career is like a comet, with a nucleus of dupes and thinner tail of fame over all lands. . . . At Petersburg he must fly from the arbitrary Police. . . . In Poland he fares badly ; his alchemy is seen through. . . . But he travels on through the great European cities with distended pockets. . . . Great was his cunning, the result of short vision, but he had no intellect. His portrait reveals a perfect quack-face : greed, sensuality, obstinacy—eyes that languish seraphically. He used philanthropy as a salve for conscience. Nature's command, "Man, help thyself," was his self-justification.

At Strasburg in 1783 occurs his apotheosis, where he ministers to the poor and turns a cold eye on the great. Cardinal de Rohan, greatest of his dupes, merged his whole will in Cagliostro's. Witnesses speak of his mysterious wealth and generosity, and how not only the great but the learned believe he had penetrated the secrets of nature. . . . But now appears Lamotte to share Rohan with Cagliostro, and we reach the stupendous affair of the Diamond Necklace. Cagliostro predicts success to Rohan : instead of which both find themselves in the Bastille. At the trial, Cagliostro with his front of brass prevails over Lamotte ; but he is pillaged and ordered to quit France. He reaches



England, but his fortunes decline, and the world gets too hot for him.

In April 1787 Goethe at Palermo reports an interview with Cagliostro's kindred. The old mother, poor and pious, longed to see her son again. A young nephew regretted that his rich and famous uncle took no notice of them. . . . Cagliostro must leave England, and all countries seem closed to him. Urged by his wife he visits Rome, attempts to found an Egyptian Lodge, and is imprisoned. In vain he protests, even confesses. . . . Four years he languished in prison, dying in 1795. . . . His life was a Reality ; therefore it was worthy of record that Nature produced such a man. . . . The moral is that each of us is alive and has capability : shall we use it as Men, Quacks, or Gigmens ?

DIAMOND NECKLACE.—1. Romance always is, though hidden under "social forms." Sad is the sight of an Immortal Nature fettered by innumerable packthreads. Man has waited a whole Eternity to be born, and he wastes his life. But few men think ; their vision is blinded by Self, which is Vanity. The historian looks not at the *Thing*, but at what others say of it, or of *him* for what he says of it. Thus history and biography become unromantic : you must be a ridiculous Boswell to write a good Life. No Age ever seemed Romantic to itself, for your hero must be *unconscious*. To the Writer of these lines the nineteenth century seems as romantic as the ninth. He sees the infinite Heavens, the Seasons, and *himself* standing between two Eternities. Force, too, he sees, and Being, and the appearance, passage, and disappearance into Oblivion of men. Let the poet paint any object, however mean, for it is a portion of the miraculous All. In Reality Romance exists ; therefore we choose this matter of the Diamond Necklace, an actual transaction.

2. Boehmer, of Saxon origin, now throve as Court Jeweller in Paris, in partnership with Bassange, and could enter the Court at his pleasure. He was too ambitious, and willed to make the beautifulest or dearest Jewel in the world. Thus the Necklace was *made*, or rather agglomerated—for who shall tell the real history of the stones ? So men speak of making money, who do but clutch and heap together. . . . Thus Boehmer makes his necklace, with its festoons and threefold rows and tassels, and values it at between eighty and ninety thousand pounds.

3. No neck will ever wear it, such distress is in the world. It was intended for Dubarry, but she sits retired on half pay. Marie Antoinette replies that ships are needed for the American War rather than diamonds. No crowned head will buy : it is the age of Bankruptcy.

4. But no work is isolated ; unconscious helpers environ every man. Rohan was one of those born to honours and troubles ;

his family excelled in the do-nothing trades—Cardinalship, etc. But what could Rohan have done, brought up at the Court of Louis XV, with man's desires, in a world of lies, with no virtue but conventional politeness? He is surfeited with foul pleasures and ecclesiastical honours. A shameful spectacle—a true Mud-volcano—from whom the young Marie Antoinette instinctively recoils. And this man a Cardinal! . . . He is now ambassador in Vienna, with his Jesuit Familiar Georgel, the true author of the gibe supposed to be Rohan's: that Maria Theresa's grief for Poland is assumed, and her eagerness to partition great. This circulates at the French Court, and is heard and remembered by Marie Antoinette. . . . She will not see Rohan when he returns after Louis XV's death, and she is Queen. He is in despair, having no resources outside the Court, no other game in this world or the next, and he knows not the reason for his exclusion. For ten long years, possessed by a fixed idea, he tries every device in vain to reinstate himself. Neither the wonders of creation bring any tidings for him, nor the pleasures of sense attainable through his quarter-million revenue—because one pair of eyes look on him askance. Such is the power of fixed ideas; and Boehmer, too, has his fixed idea: to sell the Necklace. Creditors torment him from without, and mocked hopes from within; and he one day, like Rohan, bursts into the Queen's presence and entreats her to buy. Better had Boehmer and Rohan both drowned themselves; for the two fixed ideas may unite.

5. The individual who effected their union was Jeanne de Saint-Remi, who boasted her royal descent, though her parents lived in actual beggary. Succoured as a child by Countess Boulainvilliers, she grew up to an uncertain position with pretensions rather than possessions. We must consider her as a bundle of desires—Vanity and Hunger—not developed into Will. Flattery and cajolery have always been her weapons, and she sees but the surfaces of things. She marries Lamotte, who afterwards called himself Count: but the problem of ready money remains unsolved. She gets acquainted with Rohan through the chance of her Foster-mother visiting him at Saverne. He is under the management of Cagliostro, and in this she sees her chance.

6. The death of her Foster-mother further abridges the Lamotte resources. She goes to Versailles, and in the spring (1783) Rohan arrives, driven by his fixed idea. There has been gossip about the Necklace; and now to Lamotte comes a creative thought. Rohan was in the most perfect humour of deceptibility, and for years the Quack Cagliostro has had him in leading. Not beauty but "piquancy" was Lamotte's charm.

7. She tells Rohan that she has gained the Queen's ear in secrecy, that the Queen has mentioned his name. She becomes



the recipient of his long exculpatory correspondence ; and returns verbal messages or even Royal Autographs. . . . Marie Antoinette has been blamed for want of Etiquette, which helped to loosen the Frame of Society. How poignant was her fate : her delicate upbringing, her hideous death—the sea of maniac heads through which she progressed to the Guillotine, with none to say, God pity thee ! Her fault was to be the Symbol of the Sin and Misery of a thousand years.

8. Lamotte's acquaintance with Lesclaux, the Queen's valet, explains her visits to the Trianon ; and she comes forth to find muffled Rohan waiting on the terrace. Cagliostro can serve her, and though he deceived all Europe, she will deceive him. . . . Boehmer has heard rumours of Lamotte's favour with the Queen and begs her help with the Necklace. . . . Rohan disburses some thousand pounds for the Queen's charities through the agency of Lamotte, who will deliver the money. Now and then the Necklace is mentioned : that the Queen desires it but is too poor, and her husband stingy.

9. July 28, 1784, is come and Rohan is exalted to the skies, for this night the Queen will meet him in the Park. Midnight tolls ; it is a dark cloudy night ; and from Arctic to Antarctic men lie like swaths mown down by Sleep. Attended by the Black Domino, Rohan seeks the Hornbeam Arbour. There hovers the white Celestial, to whom he kneels—who drops him a rose, speaks a few words, and vanishes. . . . He sees himself Prime Minister : and was there not a deeper quaver in her voice ? . . .

20. Needless to say it was not the Queen, but a Parisian unfortunate-female whom Lamotte named Gay d'Oliva and used as Queen's similitude.

11. Lamotte returns to native Bar-sur-Aube in prosperity. She has ostensibly discouraged Boehmer ; yet he gleans from her that Rohan is the man. She hints to Rohan that the Queen desires the Necklace but will not be seen in the business, and therefore he might transact in her stead. In January 1785 Rohan is in Paris conferring with Boehmer, while Lamotte manipulates the gilt autographs. The Queen apparently is whimsical and will give no direct order, but at last she signs a paper authorising a middle course : payment by five instalments at a certain interval of months ; the Necklace to be delivered on Rohan's receipt.

12. Only men with fixed ideas could have failed to discover the forgery. . . . Rohan proceeds to Versailles with the Necklace to Lamotte's apartment. One enters to receive it like in every way to Lesclaux, the Queen's valet, whom Rohan saw on the Trianon terrace : but it is the rascal Villette in disguise. So vanishes the Necklace.



13. Still Rohan is not openly received at Court ; but Lamotte hints at intricate cabals ; and Cagliostro arrives with soothing prophecies. . . . At the suggestion of Lamotte he stands in the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, through which so much of the history of France has passed since the time of the Grand Monarch, to see the Queen come forth. Inspired by Lamotte, he believes that she beckons : not knowing it was her daily custom.

14. Rohan, still disappointed, but with the Queen's signature, retires to Saverne ; while Lamotte's husband sells diamonds in London, and Villette in Amsterdam. Why did not Lamotte herself escape ? Was she brave ? No, it was a negative quality—that of the cork which shoots Niagara. Besides, there were Cagliostro and Rohan, who was rich, to bear the blame. . . . Meanwhile Rohan is getting desperate, and Boehmer is nigh distracted, for July 30th comes, and no money. . . . Lamotte arrives from Versailles in a like condition to say the Queen capriciously denies having had the Necklace.

15. It is August 15th, Assumption-day at Versailles ; and Rohan, about to worship, is arrested. Yet he contrives to send a message to Paris to destroy the gilt autographs before the official seals are imposed. Cagliostro, Lamotte, Gay d'Oliva, Villette, follow to the Bastille.

16. The trial lasted nine months ; but we will borrow the conclusion from a supposed discourse of Cagliostro. After glorifying scoundrelism, without which the world's business could not be carried on, and ridiculing all religion save fear of the gallows, he predicts the fate of Lamotte : branding, imprisonment, escape to England, hideous death from fall out of a third-story window. . . . Villette shall die on the gallows. . . . Only Oliva goes free. . . . A fire sea is about to envelop the world and burn up Imposture. . . . Rohan, who was not all ignoble, shall live to old age safely beyond the Rhine. . . . Count de Lamotte shall survive the September massacres. . . . Himself he sees dying in Roman prison. . . .

MIRABEAU.—What should the world remember if not its original men ; for they are the world's wealth, though it may misjudge them during their lifetime ? Religion and morality, whereby society is ordered, are due not to logic but the example of great men. The French Revolution, which some say was brought about by the smallest men—Robespierre, for instance—did nevertheless produce three who were original—Napoleon, Danton, Mirabeau. These are now becoming better known as the dust settles. Needless to speak of Napoleon ; Danton, since he worked with his whole mind, is more commendable than many of the *juste-milieu* angels that abound in our days.

Mirabeau was of finer nature than these, with genius equal

to Napoleon's. Biographers have made little of him ; one of them, by name Dumont, uses him rather as a means of self-glorification. The present work by the Adopted Son is a monstrous biographical quarry : some silver veins among thick masses of stone. . . . Mirabeau's father was known as the *Friend of Men*, but only in theory ; for he was actually the enemy of every man he met, beginning at his own hearth. The family came from Florence and settled in Provence : a notable kindred, exempt from blockheads but liable to blackguards : a stormy line of men, prompt to quarrel. They became trading nobles at Marseilles, but in the Venetian, not ignoble, style. They enriched their lineage by discreet choice of wives, but their courtiership was indifferent : a Mirabeau once chasing an usher into the very cabinet of the Grand Monarch.

Previous to the *Friend of Men*, the race had nearly become extinct, old Jean Antoine in battle being trampled down and wounded twenty-seven times ; in which case the course of the Revolution would have been other. But perhaps strangest of all was the *Friend of Men*, gnarled and unwedgeable as the oak-root, with great speculative intellect, but the crabbedness which is want of strength, and of the Pedant species. He saw the decay of France and might have become Prime Minister and redressed the grievances of the poor, but he could not take the first necessary step of flattering the Pompadour. He tried literature, for which he had first-rate talents, but his tortuous style abolished his chances. In the family circle it fares worse ; and he must even quell mutiny with Lawsuits and *Lettres de Cachet*. Sublime Pedant he became, World-schoolmaster, with the mincing ways of a French Seigneur.

Under such auspices, in 1749 was born Gabriel Honoré, the great Mirabeau, in whom met all the family strength and wildness. His birth and that of Goethe were the two most notable on this Planet ; and ten years later came Robert Burns. . . . A large mass of *life* lay in this Mirabeau, had it been rightly developed ; but the Pedant father assisted Nature at every turn with his clock-work theories of education. His object was that the son should be as the father ; but young Mirabeau offended by over-elasticity. Put to school in Paris under another name, he masters languages and all other accomplishments, and subdues all by his personal charm. He could talk men over, for his soul that purposed no unkindness was felt to be a *brother's* soul.

At eighteen he joined the army, and began his long career of *amourettes*. His Colonel, already ill-disposed, informs the father ; and Mirabeau finds himself in the Isle of Rhé, under a *Lettre de Cachet*, bemoaned by the Atlantic. He enchants the Prison Governor, and is therefore sent to the fighting in Corsica, where he does a giant's work and enjoys the death-tumult. This, with



encouraging reports from kindred, softens the rigid old father, though he regretted Gabriel would not read his books. His name was now restored, he spends a winter in Paris and carries all before him : while the father babbles in letters about his credulity, superficiality, impetuosity, though admitting his freedom from deliberate wickedness. How true that he had "swallowed all formulas" ; and the time was near when France must do the same. The state of the people alarmed old Mirabeau, and yet, but for his pedantry, France might have been remade by peaceabler methods. For if Gabriel had had a normal father he could have risen by natural steps to the official summit and grappled with the great question.

Meanwhile he grows in the paternal favour, and is sent to Provence to get married. A bride with connections but no great charm is found, and the pair settle at Aix. The future seemed not brilliant, and there are debts which old Mirabeau, involved in a lawsuit with his wife, will not pay ; and, hearing that application had been made to the father-in-law, he despatches a *Lettre de Cachet*. Behold him at Manosque, writing an essay on Despotism ; but unfortunately, for a generous reason, he rides beyond the limits allowed in the Sealed Letter, and becomes involved in a brawl on the highway. A new Sealed Letter sends him to solitary confinement in the Castle of If near Marseilles. But again the Governor is won over ; letters are allowed to reach him ; and he is given paper on which he writes Memoirs. His brother contrives to visit him, and joins with the wife in soliciting old Mirabeau ; but the only concession was Gabriel's removal to the Jura. Soon the wife, whose child was dead, will forget him and take to theoretic flirtation.

In neighbouring Pontarlier he discovers old Monnier with a beautiful young wife, Sophie. She is struck by this wild-glowing mass of manhood, acknowledges his fiery eloquence, and is sent home to Dijon. Mirabeau follows : while his father gets ready new thunderbolts, and will imprison him in Mont Saint-Michel with its belt of quicksands. All through south-west France he is hunted ; but he crosses the torrent of the Var, and with Sophie escapes to Switzerland and thence to Holland. The wild man and beautiful sad-heroic woman occupy a garret at Amsterdam and live their romance—not without tropical squalls, for both are hot-tempered. Mirabeau toils for booksellers, while Sophie sews and scours : the dread of discovery hanging over them. It comes, and Mirabeau is locked in Vincennes, and Sophie in a Convent. The father remained deaf as destiny ; and, within sound of Paris, Mirabeau wore out forty-two months of despair and physical suffering. The toughest living man, he survived what ten men might have died of. The merciful Police-



captain permitted him to correspond with Sophie : but when he and Sophie again met after years, it was to quarrel and part for ever ; and in 1789, when Mirabeau had become a world's wonder, she died by her own hand.

At last he is hurled forth like an Ishmaelite, and his proud heart bounds for the fight again. At Pontarlier he pleads for revocation of his former sentence. The old father snuffles approval : he had now laid by his thunders, lost his lawsuits and much of his fortune, and retired to the chimney nook. Mirabeau, to his credit, loved his father and explained away his cruelties. . . . Meanwhile he has no money, and must plead to get back his wife, for the sake of the rich old father-in-law. Crowds gather to hear him at Aix ; even travellers turn aside at the rumour of his eloquence : but the result is no wife and no money. For five years he wanders over Europe ; hard fortune and loss of the world's esteem do not drive him to desperation like weaker men. He lives by his wits, is seldom without a " wife," writes books, is intimate with many men, but feels that their homage is accorded to his talents rather than his character. At Berlin he just sees Frederick : the Drill-sergeant of the World meets the Mutineer of the World.

The character of his eloquence was sincerity and strength ; he had an eye that saw through the formulas of things. . . . The portentous decade of the Eighties nears completion, and States General are convoked for May '89. Mirabeau's activity is enormous ; his speeches and pamphlets multiply ; he is motionless under reproaches lest even his enemies throw him off his guard. He believes the People to be right, and advises the Nobles and Clergy to accede voluntarily to the assemblage of the Three Orders. He enjoys a kind of Roman Triumph through the cities of Provence, and is chosen Deputy for Aix. At last a career opens ; the mountain-tops are scaled ; and the twelve Hercules' Labours accomplished. . . . In the procession of Deputies at the opening of States General he attracted universal notice : his immense black head of hair, the very ugliness which gave his face expression. . . . We know how he lifted up his voice and turned the tide—at the risk of Bastilles and scaffolds—when the King ordered the Assembly to disperse. . . . He discerned what was to be done and proceeded straight to do it. . . . The old father lived to see his son's victory, and rejoiced in it. . . . For twenty-three months he was the man of the Revolution, dying on April 4, 1791, and earning a four-mile-long Funeral Procession.

. . . Let us note as a moral that men are not born demi-gods, but god-devils ; and that neither thou nor I, reader, had a hand in making this Mirabeau.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LATER ESSAYS : ANALYSIS

**HISTORY OF FRENCH REVOLUTION.**—The Revolution was the event of modern ages, and now that it lies fifty years back we can begin to understand it. Among the multitude of books, let us first mention Thiers, who is superficial and inaccurate. Mignet is compact but without life, altogether a *prosaist* ; jingling and rumbling take the place of thought. Older books profit little ; our English ones abound in reflections rather than facts. More helpful are contemporary journals and portraits ; but the Parliamentary History by Buchez and Roux is a noteworthy compilation : excerpts of all kinds, from contemporary newspapers, pamphlets, even Placards, making it up. The editors are honest and accurate, and their democratic faith, though strong, is quiet. . . . Examples follow of noteworthy revolutionary scenes. . . . We read again the fate of old Foulon, the insurrection of women, etc. . . . As regards speculation, our present editors are as unfortunate as Mignet : one of their theories being that the Revolution was an attempt to realise Christianity.

**SCOTT.**—There is a natural tendency to look at distinguished people, although men make the gods that themselves worship. Yet hero-worship is good, especially in these disobedient times ; it is proof that man must reverence a higher soul than his. If not great, Scott was notable, and enjoyed enormous and select popularity. His *Life* by Lockhart, creditably done, is not the heroic poem that the life of a man should be. To guard against diffuseness, authors should be paid by the quantity they *do not* write ; for Silence is deep as Eternity, Speech shallow as Time. The present *Life* is a compilation rather than a composition ; and in seven volumes, though it should have been in one ; but the public required it so. It is well done, though the author has been accused of indiscretion, of having caused pain to living men. Higher praise could not have been bestowed ; for man's life is a battle ; and it is these " respectable " biographers working with the fear *not* of God who have ruined the art. Yet more astonishing is the hypothesis that Lockhart disliked and would dishero Scott.



Scott is altogether lovely to him ; his faults are mistaken for qualities ; his hasty writings are analysed with a reverence due to Shakespeare.

The question of Scott's greatness cannot be affirmatively answered by his popularity. Lope de Vega was even more popular, but he is lost and gone out. We can scarcely call Scott great ; his life was worldly ; his love of beauty, which was genuine, did not exceed that of countless minor poets. He produced quantity without high quality ; he was not haunted by the mystery of Existence. He believed in little save power ; he acquiesced in the conventionalities of the world. He had no inner fire, was not possessed with an *idea*. Yet he was a genuine man, without affectation, invincible to good and evil fortune, with true humour and humanity, one of the *healthiest* men, which is pleasanter than greatness. For health is harmony ; a healthy soul is the greatest blessing on earth : it is the cause of just feeling towards men and things.

He grew up in burgherly comfort, without the cares of high place. To his strength of body was added lameness, which caused books to supplant games. Presbyterian Scotland left its mark on him, as on all the race : that man is responsible to God. A country filled with a religious idea has attained *majority*. Scott owes much to John Knox, though he little knew it. His school and college days resemble those of many others ; in the vacations he roamed on horseback over dim moory lands where his true work was to lie. When an Advocate he made yearly "raids" into Liddesdale with a companion who dwells upon his unceasing joviality and friendliness to the farmhouse people. Whisky played rather a prominent part ; he once caroused with a party from a keg fetched from a smugglers' haunt.

Till the age of thirty there was nothing unusual in his life. It is a comfortable truth that great men abound though unknown. Scott might have been happier and even more useful had he never written ; but Destiny chose him to be the spiritual comfit-maker of a singular age : an age destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism, seeking relief from its dead tedium. He restored the old life of men, not as a dead tradition but a palpable presence : it was a new-discovered continent or El Dorado in Literature. His works sold by the thousand, future success was assured, friends many. Yet he was happiest in his healthy soul, for ill health of body or mind is *defeat*. His attitude towards his fame, which he regarded as a superfluity, and therefore, unlike Byron, escaped much evil, was healthy. Those thou livest with will love thee as thou art lovable : those thou livest *not* with count for little.

The object of Scott's trade-venture with the Ballantynes—printing and selling his own books—was money and station in



society. He was perhaps too little of a fantast, burdened with no message to the world. Both Shakespeare and Scott were unconscious of ulterior aim ; their utterances, therefore, depended on the relative worth of their minds : and the result in one case was fire, in the other firework. In this serious Universe a speaker should have a gospel burning till it be uttered, or hold his peace : yet we must recognise the worth of Scott's honesty. His Metrical Romances had the merit of replacing artificiality with true human passion. They refreshed a spiritually-languid age with a picture of rough strong times ; and they exacted little from the reader. He may have owed something to Germany, which, besides Werterism, of which Byron was the English representative, had also its Chivalry Literature. Byron and Werterism, with its feelings rising from passion incapable of being converted into action, finally triumphed ; and Scott composedly relinquished poetry.

He turned to prose romance, and the success of *Waverley* was unparalleled. It brought him Abbotsford, a Baronetcy, and the love and admiration of all. In London he dined with the Prince Regent, and matched his gift of story-telling with his royal host's. He bought land at Abbotsford with the gold from each new novel ; and we get the picture of a Sunday walk over his domain with Tom Purdie. Abbotsford became the haunt of tourists, sixteen parties sometimes arriving in a day ; but Scott's healthiness asserted itself, and he simply let the matter take its course ; though when things became too trying for the temper, he would escape to a certain little cabin in the glen. Still, it was an ideal country life, and might have lasted, but for Ambition to be a country gentleman and found a race of lairds. He must needs write like a steam engine to make £15,000 a year and buy more land : as if he had been a vulgar, conquering Napoleon or Alexander.

As for the novels, they are worth far more than is usual with hastily written books ; and if the object of Literature was to amuse indolent languid men, they would be perfect. They show a deep sincere love of the beautiful in Nature and Man. His characters, if not *created*, are deceptively *enacted* : fashioned from the skin inwards, not like Shakespeare's from the heart outwards. His extempore method is one that we regret, for the seed of greatness lay in him and might have been unfolded. The sick heart will find no healing in these novels ; they are founded on trivial interests—in fact, on the contrasts of costume. Our own age will one day become antiquarian, for costumes are transitory and only man perennial. Their result has been to sate men with amusement who will henceforth seek something better ; they have also taught that bygone ages were peopled with human beings. Ready-

writing for him was the only method, for too much painstaking speaks disease, and one should give to each business the work it deserves. Not that great things are done easily, as the experience of all great writers proves, in their efforts to embody the True out of the Obscure and Possible. If Shakespeare wrote rapidly it was not till he had thought with intensity. Even manufacture is good or not according to the pains bestowed on it. Scott's rapidity was the result of his health of mind and body; but he has been the means of bringing about the glorification of ready-writing. Lest we be fearful of all Literature perishing thus in a kind of Noah's deluge, let us reflect that true Literature is the Thought of thinking Souls.

False ambition was the ruin of Scott; he must continue to buy farms; and his impromptu writing waxed thinner. Already an opposition party was forming; then came Constable's loud-sounding failure, and Scott's high-heaped money-wages disappeared. He met his trial bravely, proudly, would not own his fame was a delusion, but sought to retrieve it in the same way. For years he toiled and wrestled with his task to pay off his debt by writing: but the task proved the stronger, and he died like a spent projectile. He had seen his wife die before him, he was lonely, aged, embarrassed. . . . Let us not forget to say he was the soundest piece of British manhood of his century.

**VARNHAGEN VON ENSE.**—German Memoirs should interest us now that we have come to recognise Germany as a reality and Berlin as a living city under our common heaven. Men are brothers, and the inner experience of each is interesting to all. . . . Varnhagen's Memoirs are a record of his passage through life, and he has seen all manner of men and things, including battles. He has a catholic mind, clearness, deep insight—is one of the best of memoir-writers. He moved in the thick of things at the stormy opening of the nineteenth century, and he had the clear eye and open heart. In youth he met many celebrated authors, such as La Fontaine and Richter: with the latter he records a long interview. . . . His first experience of war was Wagram, and he witnessed Austria's disaster. . . . He describes Napoleon in ill humour, speaking in raspy tones, and the relief of the company on his withdrawal.

Most of all he delights to write about Rahel, his deceased wife. Her faculty equalled Madame de Staël's, but she wished only for private friends, and did not court admiration by writing. She was twelve years older than her husband, a Jewess, without wealth or beauty, and she became the most distinguished woman in Berlin. Her letters are too subjective and occupied with the writer's mental condition: and it is by treating external things that the mind becomes known. Goethe said he did not think about thinking,



and it is still more wasteful to feel about feeling. Yet she was a woman of rare gifts ; and a few grains of gold are met with in these large wastes of sand. But the letters alone do not justify the eulogies of those who knew her. . . . She was, however, a woman of genius, and she might have written books ; but it is small matter of regret that she did not ; for silent virtue persists in the world, and to live is greater than to write. No worth dies ; it flows on like a vein of hidden water. Ten dumb centuries were needed to produce Dante ; and no king or chancellor was as momentous as Burns's father.

CHARTISM.—I. The condition of the Working Classes is ominous, and if something is not done, something will do itself : as we may guess from the symptoms of riot after the failure of the "National Petition." The papers say Chartism is extinct : but its essence, bitter discontent, is not. Useless to treat symptoms such as Glasgow Thuggery, while the poison works at the source of life. Is it the condition of the people that is wrong or their disposition ? Surely the Condition-of-England question would be most pressing of all to a Reformed Parliament : but Parliaments, Reformed or not, go on travelling in their deep-rutted routine. If the upper classes could but understand what the inarticulate classes mean, as they struggle in pain—for all battle is misunderstanding ! Or could we know the Might as well as Rights ! Then one party would yield to Necessity, as we all yield to Death. By making Might and Right clear will the struggle be ended.

2. Statistics are but abstractions ; we have known our humane Jeremiah confuted by the fact, proved by the instance of one city, that the average duration of life in England is longer ; therefore life must be worn upon less among the most numerous class. . . . Statistics do not tell us rate of wages or constancy of employment. Can the labourer hope to become master ? What are his relations with his employer ? In a word, what is his degree of contentment ? . . . If he lays up money it proves that his condition is not desperate. From personal experience we would say thrift is decreasing. Enquiries of this nature should have preceded a Condition-of-England question.

3. The sole recipe of the Poor Law Commissioners was "refusal of outdoor relief." If paupers are made miserable in workhouses they will decline. This may sweep them out of sight but not out of existence. It is the policy of "let alone" in the best of worlds like ours, where Nero is Emperor and Paul dies on the gibbet. Yet laws should not be a bounty on unthrift, and England is no place for the idle man. He that will not work let him perish : and would that this were applicable to all. The day will come ; though so far it is only enforced on the manual



worker ; and meanwhile the new harsh Poor Law protects the thrifty labourer against the thriftless. It is also the preliminary of some kind of central control. The claim of the labourer is not for doles, but a manlike place and relation in the world. Let him welcome a harsh Poor Law and stand on the basis of his craftsmanship ; for he that can work is born king of something.

4. Saddest sight is the man willing to work who cannot find work. He asks but equality with the four-footed ; for a horse can find work. . . . One-third of Ireland's seven millions lack potatoes ; yet all men were made by God, and the Sans-potato is the same stuff as the Lord-Lieutenant. He has a life with Eternities depending on it, and feelings beyond the utterance of a Shakespeare. . . . The Irish character has become degraded, and the cure must begin at the heart. . . . England has been unjust towards Ireland and is now reaping the fruit. . . . The Irish Sans-potato darkens the English towns, lodging in any pig-hutch, and undersells the Saxon native and drives him to emigrate. For the Saxon will not sink with him ; and let no man awaken the central fire hidden in his nature below strata of traditions. The two have now common cause, and Ireland must be redressed for the sake of England. As it is, the condition of the English labourer is approximating to that of the Irish : the English farm-labourer works for nine or seven shillings a week. The greater part of labour is unskilled, and demand for it is ruled by the Steam-engine. The demon of Mechanism at every Proteus-like change of shape oversets multitudes of workmen. So works "laissez-faire"—as if a man should turn out his horses at the end of summer to shift for themselves. . . . Wages are no index of well-being owing to fluctuation. Cotton-spinners live either in superfluity or starvation. Devoured by discontent, strangers to all that is beautiful in the world, the sum of their wretchedness may be measured by the statistics of gin. Wretchedness seeks help in delirium, and no wonder such a glare as Chartism flashes up.

5. Injustice, not want, is insupportable to man : not outward pain, but hurt inflicted on the moral self. Men submit to unhappiness because a small still voice intimates in their hearts that it is not the final lot. If men lost belief in God there would be a universal act of suicide. Unjust conquest never endures ; the Romans held the world because they could best govern. Might and right in the long run are the same, and this fact is the polar star of the world's history. The wise man is the strong man ; all talent is moral, though shiftiness is often mistaken for talent : and thus only the Good is deathless. Injustice being the one evil, is the condition of working men just ? Their answer is Chartism, decay of faith and respect, sullen revengeful humour,

Look at the French Revolution, the crowning phenomenon of modern times—the end of much, the beginning of much. Europe, that seemed dying, rose against the Quack—the Falsehood Incarnate who sows the earth with chaff, so that next year brings no harvest. . . . What are the “rights of man”? All men have an ideal of right, and their first article of faith is that no unjust thing can continue in this world.

6. “Let alone,” having passed its new Poor Law, has reached the suicidal point and is no longer possible. Are the people taught and guided? Church and Aristocracy answer, Yes: Fact, with his Petitions, etc., No. “Let alone” is abdication on the part of governors, and confession of incompetence. All popular commotions are inarticulate prayers, “Guide me, govern me!” Most indisputable is the right of the ignorant to be governed by the wise. Democracy is clamoured for, but in Democracy is no finality; its net result is zero. Napoleon and Cromwell had to chain democracy under their feet before they could work out its purpose. The wish and prayer of the present day, when Speciosities can no longer be, is for a true leader. Aristocracy should be a corporation of the Best, such as men delight to honour. An apparent Aristocracy will not suffice the governed now. From a Priesthood men ask spiritual guidance; and we know the terrible way in which France dealt with her degenerate priests. And the cost to herself was great; for religious continuity was broken and a whole generation spiritually starved. . . . The old Aristocracy did govern, before cash payment was the only bond between men. As soldier and captain, clansman and head, subject and king, were low related to high. . . . People now say that Society exists to protect Property—by which they mean the Purse. The only true Property is the soul given by God: and let all resist the theft of that. Society cannot exist only to protect breeches-pocket property. All is imperfect, but an Ideal must persist within the Actual, else it expires. Nothing can exist among men without truth or worth in it—even Mahometanism and Dalai-Lamaism.

7. The question of governing is not insoluble, and the first step of the Aristocracy should be to know that a thing must needs be done: then the second will grow clearer. Eighteenth-century Parliaments became mere wrestling-grounds for office-seekers: and they produced the French Revolution! The toiling classes are now demanding that Parliament should govern; and misery is apt to spread upwards. Cash Payment cannot continue the sole bond between men: for there are many things not to be bought. And astonishing mistakes are made, as when d’Orléans was overpaid and Rousseau not paid at all: and the result was the *Contrat Social*.



8. It is a new Era that has come, and there must be change of outward relations too. . . . Let us look back on the toiling generations from whom the British Empire has issued. They have subdued the land, given us roads, cities, wealth, and all the means of civilisation. Picture Hengest and Horsa landing in Thanet in 449, and all the future they carried with them. . . . Aboriginal England was peopled with wolves and bisons, till the coming of the Celts. They had a better right, or a better might, to turn it to use. Then came the Norman Conquest. Whom Heaven permits to take possession, his is the right. The strong thing is the just thing. . . . England's business has always been to conquer half the world and then rule it justly—and she does the latter least well. . . . Rights should be called *Mights*, and the difficulty is to articulate them correctly, as with *Magna Charta*. The periodic so-called “rebellions” have been expansions : gift of articulate utterance descending ever lower. When the Barons were satisfied, the Middle Class began to revolt. . . . England was now drained and tilled ; the foundation of her manufactures was laid ; and her seven incorporated trades numbered a million guild brethren. Ideas were circulating, as we know from Shakespeare. Milton and Cromwell brought a new expansion : liberty of conscience. . . . The third Constitutional controversy, that of the Working Classes, is still in progress ; and the advantage of Parliamentary warfare is that the contending parties can ascertain each other's strength, and the weaker yield before violence is resorted to. . . . Let us not despair of a new awakening : like the tree that seemed dead and is suddenly clothed with leaves at the breath of June. The calumniated eighteenth century produced Watt and Arkwright. Think not Manchester hideous ; soot and despair are accidents, not the essence ; and cotton-spinning clothes the naked. Watt and Arkwright were no romance-heroes, and had to struggle before “moneyed-men” would patronise their inventions. Would that we could admire Reality rather than Appearance. Our greatest men are lost : for who can compare with the man who tamed a bison to be the first milk-cow, or made the first knife, or invented fire ? . . . Unexpected, accidental, seemed the industrial outburst of the eighteenth century : but not unexpected by the Supreme Power. The coal and iron strata had lain side by side since the world's creation.

9. Chartism is the claim of the free Working Man to food, shelter and guidance ; and the “let alone” policy will no longer suffice as an answer. Some State-surgeons advocated extension of suffrage as a panacea. Parliamentary Radicalism does give an outlet for discontent, but it has been a mere Barmecide's feast for the grimed millions. Politicians who espouse the people's cause are apt to resemble the *Girondins* of the French Revolution,



who traded in the misery of the masses for the sake of their own theories. Rebellion is not to be undertaken lightly ; obedience is a primary duty ; and every man has a hierarchy of superiors above him, extending up to God. But shall we blame the disappointed millions if they turn from a Reformed Parliament to Chartism ?

10. The practical man will cry, "Impossible," and say there is no remedy ; but most things have been declared impossible. It was thus said of poetry and great deeds : and then came Burns and Napoleon. Paralytic Radicalism measures the sea of troubles and decides that nothing can be done. Let us rather say that evil once manfully fronted ceases to be evil. The practical man must gird himself up to do. . . Universal education, the duty of imparting the gift of thinking to those who cannot think, is the first step. A physically-maimed race were a cruel sight : how much crueler the maimed soul ! A man without education is cut off from all the toil-won conquest of the Sons of Adam over Necessity and Might. Education is now not only an eternal duty, but a temporary one ; for the twenty-four million labouring men will rise and burn ricks and mills if their affairs are not regulated. But only their own intellects, awakened into action, can undertake the task. . . Religion and education must not be divorced, for an irreverent knowledge is no knowledge, and there must be culture of the soul. You ask, "How teach religion ?" By no mechanical preaching ; but by contact of soul with soul ; and by first finding a man who *has* religion. . . In the meanwhile at least let reading and writing be universally taught. No Churchism or Dissenterism would dare to gainsay that. . . Would we had eyes only for the real ! Then we should be free of many false terrors and see only the true one : which is Eternity.

The second great thing is Emigration. Over-population is the present grand anomaly ; and a certain small western rim of Europe is over-peopled, while a whole vacant Earth waits to be tilled and reaped. Surely a white European man is the greatest mercantile commodity, and can bring money to the market as well as the less wonderful Negro or horse. Malthusians tell the people they have the remedy in their hands and can diminish the supply of labourers : but how can a scattered class, twenty-four millions strong, unite to take one resolution ? . . . A certain Marcus, with a sorrow not divine like Dante's, recommends painless extinction for all children of working-people after the third. . . Such is the present state of once merry England ! . . . And all the while nine-tenths of our planet are vacant ; forests are standing unfelled ; while at home ships that might bridge the ocean are rotting ; and trained men who might lead an Emigrant host are dying of tedium. We said that all new epochs are

expansions : surely Europe is now on the verge of an expansion without parallel.

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SINKING OF THE “ VENGUEUR.”—A refutation of the *Vengeur* legend which Carlyle had believed and adopted in the *French Revolution*. On June 10, 1794, Lord Howe fought a victorious action with the French fleet off Brest. The Convention, then ruling in France, first proclaimed a French victory ; but when it became no longer possible to conceal the truth, President Barrère invented the *Vengeur* legend as something better. He told how the *Vengeur*, when disabled, rather than yield, sank with all her tricolor streamers aloft, her crew shouting “ Vive la République,” and firing to the last. This was believed in France, and proved a successful lie, for it made the French fight better. It is now refuted by the correspondence of Admiral Griffiths, who was present at the battle. The *Vengeur* sank only after her crew had been rescued by English boats ; and there was not a mast left standing on which to hoist tricolor. The moral is that no lie is permanently successful.

BAILLIE THE COVENANTER.—A certain Parish Minister named Robert Baillie lived in the west of Scotland early in the seventeenth century. A quiet life of study would have pleased him ; but he was drawn into the vortex of religious controversy ; and, once roused, his Scotch *canniness* made him a leader and a man deputation to the London Parliament. As an eyewitness of the great transactions he has become notable to later centuries by the accident of his voluminous correspondence. The books carelessly sent forth have at last been well edited by the Bannatyne Club. They are for the student rather than the careless reader. It is the breathless talk of a man face to face with the great whirl of things. Yet, if not wise, he is veracious in word and thought, without malice, of transparent nature. Rarely does he make a picture : but then he wrote not for us but his cousin, Mr. Spang. His book has the interest of a Contemporary ; the great phenomenon does exist in his pages, though so obscured that we cannot read it. The inference is : let every man read faithfully and write his wisest, or he is guilty of stealing men's time and brains.

This applies not to poor Baillie, whose talent was never epic. The student of History will profit from him when he has once read himself into the century and made acquaintance with strange personages and their aims. Baillie will then appear to him something of a Boswell, with rays of insight amid his babblement.



His writing resembles a contemporaneous newspaper, and he himself, with his shrewd simplicities and Scotch humours, becomes more interesting. . . . (There follow extracts from his letters describing scenes previous to the Civil War, intermingled with homely details such as instructions to his wife to mind her prayers and care for the children and their schooling.) His most notable picture was the Trial of Strafford, where we look upon the very body of the old Time. . . . He shows us our far-off Fathers alive but unattainable. The Centuries are transparent but impenetrable. . . . One thing we learn : that the difficulty of his age was the "Divine Right of Kings." We have a harder thing to settle : the "Divine Right of Squires." Are they to keep to themselves the land God made for all ? As Time advances many "rights" grow undivine ; and a Divine Right without a Divine Duty becomes a diabolic wrong.

DR. FRANCIA.—The heroes of South America are but little known in Europe : neither Augustin, the Napoleon of Mexico, nor Bolivar, the Washington of Columbia : although Bolivar rode more miles than Ulysses sailed, and entered Potosi and the fabulous Inca cities. As for San Martin, his march over the Andes in 1817, to drive the Spaniards out of Chile, was equal to Hannibal's over the Alps. He fared along with his six thousand men on the narrow roadway through the stony labyrinths, and emerged on the eighth day to defeat the Spaniards at San Iago. Then there is the Irish O'Higgins, whose father Don Ambrosio made the first roads worthy the name in South America, and hewed passes through the Andes and built brick cottages where the traveller can rest amid the pinnacles of the world. The Chilenos have since neglected and damaged the roads ; and it is no wonder that an O'Higgins now and then loses his temper and becomes a Dr. Francia ; for both are phases of the same character. Governing is a rude business in South America, where hanging is the method of displacing old Ministers to make room for new. Yet justice is coming ; Trade Monopolies are suppressed ; the wings of the blood-sucking clergy are clipped. One of our authorities on Chile complains that the people use no soap and speak no truth, and that their spiritual nastiness rivals their personal.

The most notable of the South American phenomena was Dr. Francia and his Dictatorship in Paraguay. In these days of constitutional liberty he initiated a "reign of terror" and maintained it for nearly thirty years, breaking Paraguay's commercial relations with the world and allowing none to enter or leave the country except at his pleasure. He executed more than forty persons and suffered no expression of private judgment. We know little of him, and that from foreign sources. Here is a book by two Swiss surgeons who entered Paraguay, and, finding



they could not quit, remained for six years, after which the embargo was lifted. It is brief and not unreadable, and the stupidest man may claim a hearing if he be brief. Then there were the Robertson brothers who traded in Paraguay and even saw Francia, but left before he assumed the power. They published a book of some merit on their voyagings in these remote sunburnt countries, but unfortunately added a diffuse volume on Francia, of whom they knew next to nothing. How different is the small and lucid book of Condamine, who, a hundred years ago, underwent experiences in South America—sailing the entire length of the Amazon, for instance—compared to which theirs were trivial. No man has the right to wag his tongue or his pen without saying something, for he may do incalculable mischief.

Meanwhile, how are we to fabricate a picture of Francia from such poor material? He was born in 1757, and it is not known whether his father, a cattle-breeder, was Portuguese or French. There was madness in the family; Francia, who all his life was subject to hypochondria, was a taciturn child, and he was destined by his father for the church. At Cordova University in Tucuman he probably fared badly as regards education, as do most boys of genius who cannot disobey eternal Nature. He chooses to be lawyer rather than priest, and returns to Assumpcion to practise, having gathered little formal knowledge at Cordova. And yet the flame of knowledge, though poor and blue-coloured, and having much poisonous lumber to burn up, was kindled in Francia's soul. He became one of the best and justest advocates in Assumpcion, as even the Robertsons admit. Can we then believe that in his riper years he belied the noble promise of his youth? But little is known of his early life in that distant city lying deeply embosomed in forest, the inhabitants of which sleep much, eat pumpkins, bathe, import ornamental goods in exchange for Paraguay tea. As for the Gauchos, they are a rude people, unfit for constitutional liberty: veritable centaurs on horseback, far surpassing Newmarket and Epsom, given to drink, gambling and superstition. And yet something might be made of them—if only the seven devils could first be put out of them.

In these strange regions Francia had the perennial fireproof joys of employments: much law business, and a habit in leisure hours of "interrogating Nature." They say he was sensible to bright Andalusian eyes; but no pair affected him permanently. He was known for veracity, rectitude, iron methodic rigour. Witness his conduct in the matter of a Naboth's Vineyard, when, rejecting all bribes, he opposed a rich, covetous and unjust friend and espoused the cause of his enemy. A lonely, splenetic, earnest man, with lightning flashes in him, hating injustice, no lover of money. In old days he might have made a Jesuit Superior, but

the world is changing. The terrific explosion of the French Revolution has reached even to the New World. The Paraguenos were among the latest to start their career of freedom in 1811, to summon a Congress and become a Republic. We know little save that Francia was made Secretary, and that he resigned owing to the unspeakable corruption of Government House. At this time we get a striking picture of him, from one of the Robertsons, at his country cottage, among his books and scientific instruments for "interrogating Nature."

At last corruption reached a height, and Paraguay, subject to Indian ravages, and threatened with war from Buenos Ayres, must get itself governed. Francia is flattered back to the new Congress in 1813 and made joint Consul with Fulgencio ; but next year he gets himself declared *Dictator*, and thenceforth ruled without a Congress. He reduced everything to order, including the finances ; posted troops on the frontiers to hurl back the wolf-hordes of Indians ; and, as all South America was seething in revolution, he cut Paraguay off from external communication, and made it the one peaceful spot. He had plots to deal with—one that occupied him for the two years, named "reign of terror," when he executed forty persons. There he showed himself inexorable, with his terrible cross-questioning and St Dominic eyes. A twenty-years' "reign of rigour" followed, terrible only to those who broke the law. In 1820 a visitation of locusts destroyed the crops, and threatened Paraguay, which had no foreign trade, with starvation. Francia ordered a portion of land to be sown anew ; the result was a moderately good harvest ; and it was discovered that two harvests a year were possible.

It were foolish to talk of Francia's "love of power." A man of his Spartan habits had no care to see flunkies come and go for him. He loved power in so far as it enabled him to overcome disorder. He infinitely improved agriculture ; he promoted education ; enforced justice ; would himself accept nothing, not the merest trifle ; he made all men work, and hated quacks. Drunkards and prostitutes he condemned to a kind of Paraguay Siberia. He studied the military art and personally instructed his army. The steps he took against robbers made the country absolutely safe. He had recourse to capital punishment : but so does Nature. Peculating tax-gatherers were forced to refund ; Indian ravages were quelled by the system of guard-houses on the frontiers. . . . Perhaps the Paraguenos will look back to him as we do to Cromwell : the one veracious man. . . . He remodelled and paved the city of Assumpcion, and even compelled private citizens to rebuild their houses at their own expense. . . . When one of the Robertsons left for England, Francia entrusted him with a bale of goods, hoping for trade relations between



the two countries ; for he wished to trade with the English. . . . He opposed the kind of religion that works mischief, but exhorted people to be of any religion rather than be Atheists. . . . He was greatly troubled by "imaginary workmen" who produced inferior articles, and had them walked under the gallows as a warning.

We possess an account of his daily life, showing him hard working, frugal, regular, mild to his attendants, above all, solitary. His brother was mad, and he banished his sister for employing a soldier on a private errand. He disliked crowds about Government House, and once issued an order to shoot those who refused to move on, though he afterwards revoked it. . . . The case of Bonpland, Humboldt's friend, is yet to be explained : how his plans for improving Paraguay tea were suspect to Francia, who invaded his territory and destroyed his plantation. . . . The anecdote that he refused to forgive his dying father, with whom he had quarrelled, is unconfirmed. If true, let no man forgive Francia. But on what authority does it rest ? . . . We will lastly mention his pleasure in intelligent conversation, his interest in the ways of men in foreign places. . . . So he lived : a life of terrible labour. . . . He died in 1840.

AN ELECTION TO THE LONG PARLIAMENT.—In 1640 Pym and Hampden rode about the country electioneering in the Puritan cause. The Long Parliament was getting elected, the most remarkable that ever sat : that, among other feats, was to cut off the king's Head. Contemporary men knew not what an enormous work was afoot, and have left no written record to elucidate it for us. . . . Now by a lucky chance the official papers relating to the Ipswich election have come to light. The glass is dark through which we see ; yet it is a glass, and reflects old contemporary England on that "extreme windy day" of the election. There were two Puritan candidates and one Royalist. Let us try and fancy their old Great Houses warm with breakfast fire on that "extreme windy morning." In Ipswich itself the old Market Cross recalls the vanished population. . . . (The papers themselves, which now follow, describe the election, the success of the Puritan candidates, and the action of Sir Roger North, father of the defeated Royalist, who accused the High Sheriff of unfairness towards his son.) It is not known whether the case came before Parliament ; but the accusation had not a leg to stand upon. . . . The High Sheriff, Sir Simonds, himself sat in the Long Parliament, and took notes of it. They have not yet been elucidated, but may yield much valuable matter.



## CHAPTER XVII

### LATER ESSAYS

THESE later essays and miscellaneous writings of Carlyle date from his return to Craigenputtock in 1832, cover the period of the *French Revolution*, and extend to 1844 : a point to which our biographical road has yet to be constructed. Let us note as an instance of the inexhaustible resources of his mind that, while writing the *Revolution*, he threw off as by-products the *Diamond Necklace* and essay on Mirabeau, where, by undiminished interest and absence of repetition, he may be said to prove, like Francia in Paraguay, that two harvests a year are possible.

The outstanding pieces of this collection are the *Diamond Necklace*, *Chartism*, and *Dr. Francia*. They have the finality that made his earlier essays notable when the essay was his main channel of expression. He had now turned to history and politics, and the essay became a subsidiary rather than direct mode of utterance. In the former collection the several essays on Goethe, that on Burns—where the creative energy persists to the last word—on Dr. Johnson, Voltaire, give, through the veil of literature, his views on life and religion ; while *Signs of the Times* and *Characteristics* are prophecies of social reconstruction on a mystical basis. In the present collection the veil of literature grows thinner, or is even rent across, while the hard facts of politics replace the “imaginative reason.” Carlyle remains faithful to Burns and Goethe, the beloved of his youth, but references to them grow fewer with time, and eventually they disappear as completely as Socrates from the latest dialogues of Plato. His admiration for the truly poetic soul as Nature’s masterpiece seems transferred to the man of action. Not that he formally abandons his mystic point of view, but the reader must rather take it for granted and judge men by their works.

The beginning of the transition from inner to outer shows in *Sartor*, where he bids us cease the impossible attempt to know ourselves, but know what we can work at. We have seen the effect on a nation's manhood when the cry is raised that the country is in danger, and to Carlyle's mind, oppressed by the horrors of the French Revolution, there seemed danger in the present constitution of society and distress of the working classes. Hence he did violence to the finer part of his nature in putting by poetry and mysticism and answering the call to action. Music is the most perfect of the arts, but it was unpardonable of Nero to fiddle while Rome was burning ; and such seemed to Carlyle the attitude of contemporary song-writers. Burns and Goethe were endeared to him by the associations of youth, but he made no further favourites, and the enthralling melodies of Keats or Shelley would fall on a preoccupied ear.

And yet Carlyle's point of view is not less transcendental in these secondary essays, only he is more concerned with the result of man's work on earth. Strength comes from annihilation of self, from victory over sensuality and vanity ; let man be responsible only to God and not alter his course for fear of offending his fellow-mortals. Greed, sloth, cowardice, worldly ambition, are so many counter-influences that hinder the magnetic needle from pointing to the north. As always, it is volition that is the link between earthly and heavenly ; but whereas before it was the duty of the will to free the soul from fleshly encumbrances and restore its pre-natal vision, greater stress is now laid on the work which is the means to that end. Between the time of the essay on Burns and the first essays on Goethe, and the present, Carlyle had accomplished the feat of *Sartor*, and the message of *Sartor* is that work is the forge that tempers the individual.

Hence the question asked and answered in the biographical essays of this collection is how the subject of each performed his business. It is a lofty point of view, absolutely free from the personal bias of which, in judging of living men, he cannot be wholly acquitted. If he touches upon a weakness it is because the individual was thereby hindered from mobilising the full resources of his genius. In this spirit he warned the Corn Law Rhymer that discourtesy springs from dullness not poverty ; and complained that Diderot consorted only with women or men

who flattered him rather than the earnest. And he lamented that Scott's worldly desires led him to scatter his undoubted genius among superficial novels. His repulsion to a materialistic conception of the universe did not blind him to the good results of Diderot's philosophy : since he taught men the limits of speculation, and that final causes cannot be proved by logic. And he praises Diderot for following the true bent of his nature, which was Polemical Philosophism. No one who has read the essay on Mirabeau can forget the burst of eloquence with which is celebrated his hero's ultimate victory over the evil forces that held inactive his gigantic powers.

Carlyle knew from experience the healthful joy and the usefulness of the enlargement of a man's force and its direction upon what is outside himself. It is the identical psychological experience, though once removed, that he gave us in *Sartor* : of faith denied to the speculative unemployed soul, but granted to the active soul, which thereby shares the vital circulation of the universe. As he himself had found consolation in work, he recommended it to others ; but now a further step disclosed itself. Work was needful not only for individual health but to save the world. The French Revolution, besides making Carlyle's central book, became the central theme of his mind and branded him indelibly with its horror. It might occur again, for such things had previously been, namely Sicilian Vespers, Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Innocent and delicately nurtured women like Marie Antoinette or Princesse de Lamballe might again be done to death by brutal men.

The direction of his thoughts on these fearful pages of history synchronised with Carlyle's exchange of country for town life. As not infrequently happens, the immediate effect was slight, but as time passed, the habit of meditation was broken in upon, and the outer world displaced the inner. From the daily sight of poverty and the greater proximity of industrial unrest, his permanent mood became one of "Fear," that ran "like an accursed ground-discord through all the music-tones of his existence."<sup>1</sup> Hence he called on all men to aid in the task of regenerating the world, and not waste their time in doubts and scruples. Hamlet suffered from excess of thought and missed the time for

<sup>1</sup> F. R., III. ii. 3.



action. Robespierre was a sentimentalist, who resigned his first legal appointment rather than condemn a man to death. Danton, who worked with his whole mind, was more admirable than the *juste-milieu*<sup>1</sup> angels who abound in these days. Writing of Cagliostro, he even says that the first question to ask a man is whether he has an aim and follows it with undivided will ; the second, if it be right or wrong. To those who object the possible immorality of this doctrine, we reply that in Carlyle's opinion the world was in danger and needed the deploying of all the forces of all men for its salvation. Better that errors should be committed than that men should sit enchanted in self-consciousness or remain martyrs to respectability, to the desire to stand well in every way with their fellow-creatures. In a more ideal state of society, or on a less material plane, it might be possible to extend the term of education so that the faculty which the meanest of us possesses might be used to the best advantage ; but time was lacking in the present. We repeat that Carlyle proclaimed " Martial Law in the Spiritual World."

But let no one think that Carlyle's " fear " was of an ignoble sort, concerned with self, or that it was the only emotion in his mind. Its effect on himself was to make the past beautiful at the expense of the present and the future black with anxiety ; but he had also a sorrow divine like Dante's for the corrupting influences of wealth on the modern world. The poet is the true Christian, for his religion is love ; and the madness in which he frequently ends his career is due to his unbrotherly treatment by the world. Such a cause had Swift's misanthropy, Byron's bitterness in exile, Keats's despair. One of Macaulay's gibes at Boswell was that " when he had been to Court, he drove to the office where his book was printing without changing his clothes, and summoned all the printer's devils to admire his new ruffles and sword." But this very action shows the depth of religious feeling in Boswell, though transmuted into vanity, into worship of the creature rather than the Creator, with the inevitable temptations to hypocrisy.

And above all the principle of competition is abhorrent to the poet, with the threatened resurrection of the beast in man in a more insidious form. The world-organisations of Commerce

<sup>1</sup> Essay on Mirabeau.

and Labour have abolished peaceful agricultural life and intensified the struggle for existence—where, unlike the old-time honourable warfare, the quality needed is not courage but “shiftiness.”<sup>1</sup> Thus the poet, terrified at the condition of mankind, foreseeing the abandonment of Christianity—the most advanced position attained in the soul’s evolution—tends to hide himself from the world and fly to solitary places. The enormous strength of Carlyle’s intellect forbade him the line of least resistance; but the keenness of nerves and temperament filled his cup of affliction to the brim.

These thoughts naturally lead us to *Chartism*, Carlyle’s first formal treatise on politics—though the subject had been touched in *Sartor*—where he laments that cash-payment has now become the sole bond between men. Though deeply concerned with the misery and discontent of the working classes, it has not the incurable sorrow of the *Pamphlets*, and in a hopeful conclusion it offers the remedy of emigration. Annihilation of self, we know from Carlyle, was an intellectual as well as a moral duty; the writer must consider the thing itself, and not what others say of it, or of him for what he says of it.<sup>2</sup> Hence his preliminary labour to obtain an impartial vision, and subsequent clothing of the nude thought in metaphors drawn from his stored experiences of beauty. If now and then the pillars of his Temple rock to the blast, it is the blast of God’s anger, witnessed to by universal history, not his own.

At the outset Carlyle proposes that the two contending parties should ascertain their Might and Right, so that one party should yield to Necessity; and such a method he pursues himself. And the result of impartial enquiry is a measure of consolation, which shows that at this period of life his recuperative power was active. Of the horror of the condition of the working classes he extenuates nothing; yet it does not become an obsession; for such things have been in history, and the present grows out of the past. He looks back on what are called “rebellions” but should be called “expansions,” or the downward spread of freedom—from Magna Charta, which satisfied the Barons, through Cromwell, and liberty of conscience granted to the middle classes, to the present demands of the manual workers. The hideous remedies suggested by

<sup>1</sup> *Chartism*, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Diamond Necklace*, 1.



some sadden him with the revelation of the present state of once "merry England." He himself ascribes the prevailing discontent to over-population; and the remedy or "expansion" lies in emigration to the unpeopled corn-producing lands across the oceans.

The impression left is that the termination of *Chartism* finds Carlyle in happier mood: as if the effort to classify and co-ordinate and see things in their true perspective had wrought its cure. The book is also noteworthy as the seed-plot of many branching ideas that were to overshadow the future. Here we first read his condemnation of the "Let alone" policy and insistence on the need for organisation in the modern State. The only rights men have are to be governed by the wisest. Democracy means zero, and Cromwell and Napoleon had to chain it under their feet to work out its purpose. The doctrine of Might and Right is clearly formulated: that in the long run they are the same; the wise man is the strong man, and all talent is moral, and no unjust thing can continue in the world. This manner of thought is partly due to his transcendentalism, his reverence of the meanest fact since it came from God, and partly to his conviction of the need of working with the whole mind in a world like ours. Doubts and hesitation are failure to annihilate self, and strength comes from belief in what is not self. Talent is moral in so far as it means right relation, by means of work, with the central powers of the universe.

The *Diamond Necklace* is remarkable for the poetical impress left by Carlyle upon one of the most sordid transactions in history. The true heroine is Marie Antoinette, transcending in beauty and dignity of character the hollow world about her, and the wretched intrigues and chicanery of the Court. Her fault was to be the symbol of a decadent society that, among other things, made Rohan a Cardinal. The chapter that foretells her fate and describes her route to the guillotine sums up all that has been said of the horror burnt into Carlyle's mind by the facts of the Revolution. "Far as the eye reaches, a multitudinous sea of maniac heads: the air deaf with their triumph-yell! . . ." "O think not of these; think of HIM whom thou worshippingest, the Crucified. . . ." Such sentences are from the lowest depth of his heart; they reveal the agony of the poet's nature,



dependent on the love of men, and experiencing by imagination their hate.

Allied to the *Diamond Necklace* by subject is the essay on Cagliostro the Arch-Quack. His life was worth writing because he was no half-knave but a reality, and he lied not only in word but thought. Yet with the scrupulous fairness of one who strives to see his subject as it is on earth in order to emphasise more strongly the over-brooding shadow of Eternity, Carlyle affirms that Cagliostro's inward world of Quackery was leavened by one grain of superstitious belief.

The essay on Francia is a masterpiece, and one of the most characteristic products of Carlyle's pen. As he tells us in *Sartor*, man is a spirit, not to be explained away by heredity, education, or earthly influences; and he much affected Burns's saying that a certain person derived his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God. In Francia, here was such a man; and in his ordering of Paraguay, here was his work. His parentage was obscure, he derived little good from his course at the university, but his soul was in direct communication with the Highest; and, although governing is a rude business in South America, he fulfilled his mission in a selfless manner. He aspired to Dictatorship because he could best govern, like the Romans who held the world. Like Cromwell and Napoleon, he chained Democracy under his feet in order to work out its purpose; and he isolated Paraguay in a land seething with rebellion. His private life was the counterpart of his public; he was Spartan in his habits; he banished his sister for trenching upon State property; he remained practically insensible to bright Andalusian eyes.

And Carlyle's interest extends from the centre to the outermost rim of his subject. He does more than carve the image of Francia as from the mountain rock: Francia with his "reign of rigour," his terrible cross-questioning, his St. Dominic eyes. Francia's surroundings have the freshness of a new theme; we see his delight in turning from old European problems to an unworked subject; and his imagination is quickened by the stupendous natural features of the South American continent. He approaches his matter circuitously, wavering between fascination for the strange races of these remote sunburnt countries and the colossal imprint of Nature's hand. The great South American leaders

pass before him : Bolivar, who rode into Potosi and the fabulous Inca cities ; San Martin with his army "winding through the heart of the Andes, breaking for a brief moment the old abysmal solitudes." He is interested in the very equipment of the men, their strange food, the *ponchos* in which they wrap themselves to sleep. Then there are the explorers such as Condamine, who sailed the entire length of the Amazon, "the infinite tangled wilderness with its reeking desolation on the right hand of him and on the left." Note also Madame Godin's passage down the Amazons "and frightful life-in-death amid the howling forest-labyrinths, and wrecks of her dead friends." To return to Francia, there was the land over which he ruled, Paraguay, protected on its frontiers by guard-houses against the Indian "wolf-hordes," and the city of Assumpcion embosomed in forest and approached by avenues. A holiday humour pervades this essay, and the liberated mind passes from one new and strange object to another, without exhausting its infinite possibilities of fascination.

This collection also contains four important critical and biographical essays : on the Corn Law Rhymer, Diderot, Mirabeau and Scott. A sentence in the latter explains his attitude to his subject : the fundamental thought of Presbyterian Scotland, that man is responsible to God. Meditation teaches man to know God, and by the use of volition he finds his work, the sole safeguard in a distracted world. Faults are aberrations from this straight path, and Carlyle's individual mind appears in his treatment of faults, but the hour of intolerance is not yet. We saw his suggestion to the Corn Law Rhymer that discourtesy comes from dullness not poverty ; but in most cases his fault-finding is implied rather than spoken. It springs from his wider knowledge and more exact thought, and therefore conveys a silent rebuke to the reader hitherto content with hearsays : as when he utters a warning against patronising the Corn Law Rhymer as an "uneducated genius," and a reminder that the so-called uneducated classes must grapple with Nature and try their theories there. The essay, preceding *Chartism* by some years, was written when Carlyle was liable to visitations of the "fear" inspired by the condition-of-England question, and arising from his French Revolution studies, but before it had become a settled habit of mind. He finds in the psychology of the Corn Law Rhymer



distinct cause for hope : since here was a man living in the "Gehenna of manufacturing Radicalism" and yet convinced that this world was God's world.

Mirabeau was one of Carlyle's favourite heroes, a veritable Teufelsdröckh who looked through the shows of things into things themselves. Enceladus is a figure Carlyle often uses, and Mirabeau had indeed to move mountains before he could use his great powers and become the wonder of the world. The story of his life is again a silent, indirect rebuke to those who acquiesce in their own failure and plead that circumstances are too strong. Man is incarnated will, and only a giant's force of will upheld Mirabeau in the Castle of If or Vincennes, and saved him from despair when all men continued to look coldly on him. And in Mirabeau, with his "terrible gift of familiarity," his power of winning over his sternest gaolers, Carlyle read proof of the Brotherhood of Man and existence of God. For his soul that purposed no unkindness was felt to be a true *brother's* soul, and even the crabbed old father acquitted him of deliberate wickedness.

The biographical portions of these essays have the unique charm of revealing Carlyle's interest in the common things of life : the life of the past untouched by that fear which poisons the present. Writing of the Diamond Necklace, his imagination kindles at the true history of the stones since the first digging of them in far Indian mines. The sixteen tourist parties that daily unload at Abbotsford concern him little ; and he flits rapidly over Cagliostro's cosmopolitan progress to centre his interest in the homely details of the Arch-Quack's family at Palermo. And Diderot to him seemed less great than his father, the Cutler and ancient craftsman, who, content to work at his trade and feel his responsibility to God, lived the life that was in truth Carlyle's ideal.

Carlyle has been accused of injustice to Scott, and it must be owned that Scott's literary reputation does appear faded in the light of his criticism. To accuse Carlyle of injustice prepense would be absurd ; it was his conviction of the seriousness of life, the fear in his own mind, that made him look upon Scott as another Nero who fiddled while Rome was burning. He is not backward to praise him ; and Scott's healthiness—a better quality than greatness—is impressed upon the reader as never before. He admits that hasty writing has seldom been better done, and—



a fact which most critics leave unsaid—that Scott enjoyed not only immense but “select” popularity. The unpardonable faults in his eyes were that he had no gospel burning to get itself uttered ; and, his ambitions being mundane, he believed in little save power. Whether Carlyle has detected the flaws which will ultimately cause Scott’s writings to disappear, is too early to say ; but no one who in these fevered days has quaffed the bright elixir of a *Waverley* novel can agree that trivial incidents and contrasts of costume are the source of interest. More damning is the second accusation, that Scott believed only in power ; for it is the worship of power in modern times, as it appears in Prussianism abroad and commercialism at home, that has nearly turned the moral balance of the world.

To the causes already mentioned of Carlyle’s slight appreciation of the story-teller’s art, we must add his interest in the world of historical realities. Yet even so we cannot wholly explain his defects by his virtues, or affirm that the instincts of one man—even of a Carlyle—are more unerring than those of all men. As Wordsworth by his unconcern for music lived to see it fade out of his verse, so Carlyle by his preoccupation with the past and future lost the art of living in the present : an art to which poetry or fiction is supplementary. For it is in the power of these to create a finer world, subject to its own laws, and of a parallel interest to the historic.

The little piece on Edward Irving will come closely home to the student of Carlyle’s life. Irving was his earliest and best friend, and the following sentences occur in his brief autobiographical interpolation : “ But for Irving, I had never known what the communion of man with man means. His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with.” The essay is a miniature replica of the Burns essay ; for in Burns and Irving it was the same excess of sociability and sympathy that precipitated the catastrophe. Burns’s human longings were intensified by his lack of an assured faith, and we could have wished that Carlyle had told us how far Irving’s religion mitigated his despair. But we learn again by contrast the extent to which Carlyle’s mind towered above his fellows ; for the same vacancy existed in him, but without a thought that earthly joys could fill it.

Essays like those on Baillie the Covenanter, and the Election to the Long Parliament, though little attractive at first sight, reveal sudden potentialities of interest at the touch of Carlyle's mind. The first, indeed, strikes rather a false note at its conclusion, with a sudden leap across the centuries for the sake of pointing a moral ; but its main theme is reconstruction of the past through homely details. Likewise with the second, the Election taking place on an "extreme windy morning" in October, the houses of the candidates being "warm with breakfast fire." The reader, following the historian's wistful eye, is infected with desire for that peace which, from psychological causes, he discerned only in the past. The quotations selected from the correspondence of Baillie the Covenanter can teach us much about Carlyle Baillie's campaigning humour, for instance—how he had taken leave of the world, and found the favour of God, but, alas, when the danger was over, his old security returned. Also his letters to his wife bidding her neglect not her prayers morning and evening with the servants, and teach the children the beginnings of God's fear.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### LECTURE YEARS

(1837-40)

1837  
(41) THE *French Revolution* was completed on January 12th, to Carlyle's infinite relief, and his letters abound with allusions to the exhaustion following a three years' grapple with a stubborn task. He was conscious of its faults and called it a "wild savage book," yet he allowed "that no man, for a long while, has stood speaking so completely alone under the Eternal Azure, in the character of man only."<sup>1</sup> Two printers got to work upon it, and he appeared to take interest in the form the book was to assume; while from America came the cheering news that a second edition of *Sartor* was preparing.<sup>2</sup> He hoped to revisit Scotland in the summer; while Mrs. Carlyle, after her travelling experiences of last year, elected to remain at home. Only the affairs of Alick, who still could not prosper in the "Homeland," and was meditating emigration, gave cause for anxiety. Carlyle did not discourage emigration, and even hinted at such a course for the whole family. He was deeply perturbed by the condition of England, and it seemed to him that a country where "the fruitful land denies the toiling man food from it," lay under a curse; while in America the Earth promised sustenance to the industrious tiller.<sup>3</sup>

In March Mrs. Carlyle was prostrated by a severe attack of influenza, her "sad cough" reaching Carlyle through the wall, as he sat at his proof-sheets. Not till June could he report that she was gathering strength again; and, at his request, her mother arrived in April, to remain until his return in the autumn.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of lecturing, which had often occurred to Carlyle, was to take definite shape this spring. He delivered a series of

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 61-2, 64, 72, 78.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. i. 59.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 68, 71, 79-80.



six lectures in Willis's Rooms on German Literature, twice a week, beginning from May 1st. The celebrated Miss Harriet Martineau and Miss Wilson had spread his fame in the world of fashion, and secured about two hundred subscribers at the rate of a guinea each. The net result to himself was £135,<sup>1</sup> and he tells how on his return from the first lecture he presented his wife and Mrs. Welsh with a sovereign each, to their great delight.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Carlyle as usual showed herself sympathetic and practical, keeping a drop of brandy to administer to him at the last, as they drove down to the "place of execution."<sup>3</sup> Carlyle suffered much from nervousness, but he knew his subject, so that his lectures were "full of matter," and he impressed his "partly fashionable" audience with his sincerity and originality.<sup>4</sup>

In the latter half of June Carlyle left for Scotland, and immediately on his arrival appears to have suffered something like a nervous collapse. He had lived in a "fever-blaze" for three years, and the sudden withdrawal of occupation and quiet of the country intensified the reaction. As he walked with Alick from the harbour towards Scotsbrig, facing the magnificent view of the Cumberland mountains beyond the Solway Firth, he saw them changed and spectral, like Tartarus and the pale Kingdoms of Dis. Even the Mother could not raise his spirits; his wish was to be let alone; and the fate of his book was a matter of indifference.<sup>5</sup> Writing to his wife in August, he reiterates his desire for peace rather than fame; but he acknowledges the receipt of the *Times* with Thackeray's laudatory article, which seems to have given him pleasure; and he mentions how he read it, sitting under a hedge, to Alick and Jamie.<sup>6</sup> He reports that Alick had temporarily abandoned emigration and was resolved to open a shop in Ecclefechan.<sup>7</sup>

Mrs. Carlyle was then touring in the Midlands with the elder Sterlings, visiting Malvern, Worcester and the Wye Valley. She makes her usual vivacious observations on the outward expression of her friends' peculiarities; but she suffered from headache and ennui, and did not much affect natural beauty, which had been so thoroughly "exploited." It was now that she drew

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 78.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 286-8. Letters J.W.C., i. 76.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 83.

<sup>5</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 75.

<sup>6</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 75.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 84.

1837  
(41) forth Sterling's famous remark, "Do you know, Mrs. Carlyle, you would be a vast deal more amiable if you were not so damnably clever!"<sup>1</sup>

Carlyle returned to Chelsea in the middle of September, to the great relief of his wife. She wrote to his mother that many people loved her after their fashion, "but his fashion is so different from all these, and seems alone to suit the crotchety creature that I am." "Touching and strange to me" was Carlyle's comment on this letter, which came to light after her death.<sup>2</sup> The fortune of the *French Revolution* was now assured. "Oh, it has had a great success, Dear!" were her words on his arrival.<sup>3</sup>

"I am to be considered as a kind of successful man," he wrote to John in Rome. "The poor Book has done me real service; and in very truth has been abundantly reviewed and talked about and belauded."<sup>4</sup> "I am better known now; have a far better chance," he wrote to his mother; but he hastened to anticipate any fear she might have of the ill effects of fame. "When one is turned of forty, and has almost twenty years of stomach-disease to draw upon, there is great safety as to that."<sup>5</sup> In letters to John, where he unfolded his deeper mind, he would speak of his sadness with rare intervals of joy, of how the dead were as much his companions as the living, of his longing for peace not fame, and that he was granted some visitations of a peace not dependent on men and things but himself.<sup>6</sup>

The article on Scott for Mill's Review was his literary work of the autumn, and it brought him £50.<sup>7</sup> At this time the success of the *Revolution* emboldened Fraser to suggest a reissue of *Sartor* and his articles in volumes. He had now many friends, but the most beloved was Sterling,<sup>8</sup> who was temporarily in London again. "Select individuals of the Aristocracy" were taking notice of him: and Mrs. Carlyle, though devoid of social ambition, was pleased at the honours paid to her husband. In the remorseful mood of later years, Carlyle recalls how he more often attended these functions alone, to save the expense of flies.<sup>9</sup>

To one of Carlyle's mentality the pleasures of society could bring little more than recreation or fleeting stimulus; yet his

<sup>1</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 61-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 288.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 94.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 101.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 90.

<sup>6</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 77.

<sup>7</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 87-8.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 97-8, 102-3.

<sup>9</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 116-17.

predilection for the aristocracy is worth noting :<sup>1</sup> though it displeased a good radical like Lord Morley in his youth.<sup>2</sup> It was due partly to the higher Scottish standard, class for class, of refinement in living, and partly to his poetic love of beauty. But there was a further bond between the aristocracy and peasantry of those days : an aristocracy placed above competition and unpolluted by marriage with the daughters of pure money-getters ; and a peasantry which adhered to its religion. Both had a certain simplicity of nature and freedom from suspicion.

We gather from the correspondence that the years 1837-40, when Lectures were the main revenue, did not pass unhappily. Immediate financial anxiety had vanished, friends were plentiful, and books making their way—although Carlyle in perfect sincerity deprecated fame and longed for quiet—and the domestic sorrows of later times as yet were not. Now and then Mrs. Carlyle suffered from coughs and influenza, but she had a preference for London above other places, was a skilful hostess, and enjoyed the society of the persons of distinction who frequented Cheyne Row. Carlyle condemned all parties and dinners as a “malison,” and preferred “solitary evenings,” but he seemed ever to enlarge his acquaintance—now attending the reception of Spring Rice, Chancellor of the Exchequer, now consorting with the “Saints” or persons of religious mind.<sup>3</sup> Cavaignac and Erskine mounted in his regard, while Leigh Hunt and Mill were fading into the background : the latter’s path in the speculative world diverging more and more from his.<sup>4</sup> Sterling was the best beloved, but even with Sterling there occurred a hitch in friendship, partly due to Carlyle’s strange sensitiveness. At a certain dinner party Carlyle found him “argumentative” and “unprofitable” ; ascribed it to excessive praise of some verses written by him in *Blackwood* ; and made a memorandum not to dine in his company soon without cause.<sup>5</sup>

The Lectures on Successive Periods of European Culture took place in a room in Edward Street, Portman Square. Needless to say, Carlyle was wracked by nervousness till his subject gripped

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 117-18.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Morley complained of Carlyle’s gentle words for “our precious aristocracy.”—*Miscellanies*, i. 187.

<sup>3</sup> *New Letters T.C.*, i. 116.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 110, 133.

<sup>5</sup> *Froude*, iii. 138-9.



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(42) him ; and then he discarded the "showman" for the "teacher." He writes, "Nothing could be friendlier than my reception ; I have kind friends here, whom I ought never to forget."<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Carlyle testified that he delivered his lecture "without any air of thinking about his delivery," and that "having a very fine light from above shining down on him, he really looked a surprisingly beautiful man."<sup>2</sup> Of the audience she said : "There are women so beautiful and intelligent that they look like emanations from the moon ; and men whose faces are histories."<sup>3</sup> The net product of the Lectures was £260.<sup>4</sup>

The *French Revolution* had so far brought no money, but the faithful Emerson superintended its printing and circulation in America, and later in the year despatched a bill for £50. The essays, or *Miscellanies*, saw the light under the same kind auspices ; and these, with *Sartor*, were also published in England.<sup>5</sup> Carlyle was in Scotland when the news reached him of Emerson's £50. "Here is Fortune actually smiling on you over the seas, with her lap full of dollars," wrote Mrs. Carlyle.<sup>6</sup> From the proceeds of his lectures Carlyle had despatched £5 to his mother, for herself and his sisters to buy bonnets ; and he made her a like gift when the American bill was cashed.<sup>7</sup> When citing these instances of thoughtfulness, we must include his letter to Alick entreating him to get flannel for his little Bairn, who had suffered from a cough.<sup>8</sup>

About the third week in August Carlyle journeyed to Scotland by steamer alone, and stayed with his friends the Ferguses at Kirkcaldy : a place ever remembered for his former school-mastering days, and walks with Irving. The household was kindly and opulent ; he was discreetly "let alone," and wooed health by bathing and riding.<sup>9</sup> Edinburgh was easy of access, and he visited Jeffrey. Since the matter of the Astronomical Professorship Carlyle had renounced hope of "practical help" from Jeffrey, but he felt no anger against him, and was touched by Jeffrey's "visible embarrassment" at their subsequent meetings.<sup>10</sup> Some correspondence endured, and interchange of visits ; and on

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 114, 122, 126.

<sup>2</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 93.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 117, 127, 128, 130.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 130, 145.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 134-5.

<sup>6</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 68.

<sup>7</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 130.

<sup>8</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 100.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., i. 106.

<sup>10</sup> *Reminiscences*, ii. 267-8.

this occasion Carlyle writes to his wife: "The poor Duke and I seemed to have made up our minds *not* to contradict each other; but it was at the expense of saying nothing intimate."<sup>1</sup> From Kirkcaldy Carlyle moved by stages to Scotsbrig, and returned to Chelsea early in October after an absence of five or six weeks. He had previously written to his wife: "Forget my biliary temper, remember only the poor heart that does mean truly by thee. And be good to me, thou dear Goody! Also take care of all damps and etceteras, that I do not find thee coughing on my return."<sup>2</sup>

1839 was another Lecture year, but a few outstanding events besides marked its passage—such as first thoughts of *Cromwell*, *Chartism*, and acquaintance with the Barings. The *French Revolution* still yielded nothing at home, but Emerson remitted a further £100 from America.<sup>3</sup> Always the "millstone of Dyspepsia" hung round his neck, and would "shatter his poor frame of body all to pieces"; but he admits it was his one ground for complaint.<sup>4</sup> In March Mrs. Welsh paid a visit to Cheyne Row, during which Mrs. Carlyle organised a "soirée." It was successful, but "at midnight," wrote Carlyle to his mother, "I smoked a peaceable pipe, praying that it might be long before we saw the like again."<sup>5</sup> About this time he dined with the Barings, and described Lady Harriet as "one of the cleverest creatures I have met with, full of mirth and spirit—not very beautiful to look upon."<sup>6</sup> Arthur Buller, returning from America and convinced of Carlyle's popularity there, urged him to undertake an American lecturing tour: and this was warmly seconded by Emerson. Carlyle gave the project thought, as he might thereby realise enough money to live independently in quiet, but it was eventually abandoned.<sup>7</sup> One of the events of the spring was a visit from Count d'Orsay in dazzling equipage to Cheyne Row. Splendour and grimness was the contrast Carlyle drew with himself; but he detected a sufficiency of insight and good sense within the "Phœbus Apollo of Dandyism."<sup>8</sup>

The most important literary work of the year was *Chartism*, undertaken as a review article for Lockhart and the *Quarterly*,

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 143.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 149.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 155.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 158-9. New Letters J.W.C., i. 76-7.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 140.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., i. 155.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 157-8, 164.

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(43) but on its refusal from prudential motives, enlarged into a pamphlet for separate publication by the autumn. Lockhart had given "We dare not," as a reason; and Carlyle had said himself that "such an article, equally astonishing to Girondin Radicals, Do-nothing Aristocrat Conservatives, and unbelieving Dilettant Whigs, can hope for no harbour in any Review."<sup>1</sup>

The Lectures on the Revolutions of Modern Europe took place in May and realised £200.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Carlyle described the audience as more distinguished than the preceding year, "the fashionable people here being (unlike our Scotch gigmen and gigwomen) the most open to light of any sorts of people one has to do with." While sitting unknown among the audience she heard many exclamations of delight. One would say, "He's a glorious fellow; I love the fellow's very faults"; and another answered: "A fine, wild, chaotic, noble chap." Carlyle's psychology, however, had undergone a subtle change; his wonted agitation *before* a lecture gave way to regrets *after*, and conviction that he had bungled his subject. By contrast with the "whirlwind of glory" with which they left the hall, Mrs. Carlyle remarked "Mrs. Edward Irving sitting opposite me, in her weeds, with sorrowful heart enough, I dare say."<sup>3</sup>

On July 2nd or 3rd the Carlyles left for Scotland and divided their time between Templand and Scotsbrig. From Italy John had sent £30 to Alick to provide a horse and gig for Carlyle: an act of kindness which melted his heart.<sup>4</sup> "I enjoy unspeakably the silent green fields with their peaceable cattle, and no cackling Cockneys visible or audible," he wrote. "... Jane does not enjoy herself nearly so much; the reverse of me, she prefers London to all places."<sup>5</sup> From Templand Mrs. Carlyle wrote to her husband: "My Mother continues the worst-natured of women. . . . Once a day, generally after breakfast, she tries a fall with me. And in three words I give her to understand that I will not be snubbed." Carlyle wrote in reply, "Really one could weep to think of poor human nature." His part was frequently that of peacemaker, and he had written a few years before, "Quarrel not with your Mother, Dearest." Of the reality of the affection

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 161-2, 166, 173-4, 176.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 112-16. New Letters J.W.C., i. 79.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 160.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 167.



between the two there is no doubt, and we need only turn back <sup>1839</sup> to the letter written by Mrs. Carlyle in the spring of this year <sup>(43)</sup> expressing grief for her mother's departure from London.<sup>1</sup> But 'harmonious life' apparently could not survive more than a few days; and for this reason, Carlyle's defenders in the Great Controversy have pointed to the wisdom of his refusal that the three should live together when the difficulties of his marriage were in solution.<sup>2</sup>

When returning to London in the autumn Carlyle used the railway for the first time, from Preston.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Marshall of Leeds had given him a horse, and, instead of walking and paying calls, he rode daily in the Parks or out into the country beyond the river, which surprised him by its loveliness.<sup>4</sup> He writes in his Journal: "For two hours every day I have almost an immunity from pain . . . joy on a basis of apprehension; thankfulness kept constantly alive by the insecurity of the thing one is thankful for. . . . Had I work to keep my heart at rest, I should be as well off as I have almost ever been. . . . Too much society is likely to sweep me along with it, ever and anon, that I too, become a vain repeater of its hearsays, and have no thought or knowledge of my own. . . . This last year . . . I have . . . been free . . . from the bewildering terror of coming to actual want of money. . . ." <sup>5</sup> About the same time he wrote to his mother: "My sore sufferings, poverty, sickness, obstruction, disappointment were sent me in kindness; angrily as I rebelled against them, they were all kind and good. My poor painful existence was not altogether in vain. Everything goes very tolerably well with me here; I have a prospect of being able to live now with less misery from terror of want—that is the chief good I find in the thing they call 'fame'; the rest is worth little to me, little or even nothing." <sup>6</sup> Carlyle's Journal for the most part reflects his moods of dyspeptic misery; his letters to his mother are touched with the religious emotion which he knew she would welcome.

In 1840 correspondence was facilitated by the introduction <sup>1840</sup> of the Penny Post. From Mrs. Carlyle's letters we infer that <sup>(44)</sup>

<sup>1</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 72-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 84-5.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, iii. 167.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 169, 170, 174.

<sup>5</sup> Froude, iii. 171.

<sup>6</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 171.

1840 acquaintance with John Forster dates from this year,<sup>1</sup> and also  
 (44) with Mazzini and Tennyson. It was the year of the termination of John's duties as travelling physician to Lady Clare ; and we smile at the mother's expression : " He has been mercifully preserved in his wanderings." <sup>2</sup> A project which had been in Carlyle's mind for some years, to secure a better distribution of books, was to be worthily realised. To him in the first place, though ably seconded by Spedding, Forster, Bulwer and others, we owe that perfect institution of its kind—the London Library. The first public meeting to discuss ways and means took place in June, at which he delivered a noteworthy speech, pointing out the inconveniences of the British Museum and public reading, and the necessity of being alone with a good book, since it is " the purest essence of a human soul." As he wrote to Sterling, he considered access to books as one of the Rights of Men.<sup>3</sup> Friendship with Sterling, who the previous year had performed a health-journey to Italy but was now living near Bristol, continued unabated. One letter to him concludes : " Be a good boy, and love me." <sup>4</sup> The two friends of Carlyle's heart were Irving and Sterling, but he had friends in abundance of varying degrees of intimacy ; and it is interesting to note his friendly attitude of mind and bent towards expansiveness in letters to unknown correspondents such as Thomas Ballantyne.<sup>5</sup>

*Chartism* was making its way, earning loud rather than melodious greeting from the press ; and Carlyle's disgust with self-seeking Radical leaders, and conviction that abrogation of the Corn Law would not ensure the Millennium, exposed him to the charge of " Conservatism." <sup>6</sup>

The last and best known series of Lectures, on Heroes, took place in May, with even greater success, but also increased wear and tear of nerves and loss of sleep. " I calculate," he wrote, " and Jane too is of that mind, I shall not try the thing at all again, unless I see myself in greater want than I was in this year." <sup>7</sup> During June, July and August he occupied himself in writing down the Lectures, though with many misgivings as to their worth in the form of a book.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 188, 198-9, 212.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 214-17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 194, 195.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 222.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., i. 214.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 181-3, 191.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., i. 196, 201-2, 207, 208.

Riding continued to bring health and a measure of enjoyment, as he wrote to Alick. "My chief delight is to get *out* of the confused whirlpool with its noises, smoke and confusions, altogether ; to see quiet cottages and fields. . . . I study never to grudge the great expense ; to think indeed that it is a profitable, needful *commercial* outlay. . . . The best view you have is that of London in the distance . . . monstrous London, filling half your horizon, like an infinite ocean of smoke, with steeples, domes . . . confusedly hanging in it. . . ." And in another letter : "Our old wooden Battersea Bridge takes me over the river : in ten minutes' swift trotting I am fairly away from the Monster and its bricks. . . ." <sup>1</sup> "Three times out in the Wimbledon region," he wrote to John, "I have heard the cuckoo almost with tears." <sup>2</sup> Carlyle had many thoughts of returning to Craigenputtock, but he weighed his wife's preference for London against what he knew would prove but a temporary alleviation ; for the seat of unrest being his own heart, no change of residence could remove it.

To John he wrote : "With an independent stock of money I should indeed not continue here. But it sometimes strikes me of late that before long I shall be spoiled for any other place ; and obliged to continue, money or no money. On the whole I begin to grow more and more quiescent. The rule of heeding no *hearsay* of others, but minding more and more exclusively what *I* do like or dislike, what is really important for *me* or not for me, shows many things in a new light. . . . I find in the British Empire astonishingly little that it would do me essential benefit to have. I sit in a sort of mournful inexpugnable acquiescence. . . . I hope a new Book is ripening in me . . ." <sup>3</sup>

These thoughts sprang from a review of the economic position ; Fraser, who had published the *Miscellanies*, proving an indifferent paymaster. Total receipts from him amounted to £100, in spite of "popularity" ; whereas America had now sent £400. "Happily I am not likely to be in want of cash for any time visible yet," Carlyle wrote. "Much cash, I feel often, would do me no good. To buy Books, and without any anxiety keep a horse, were perhaps almost all the benefit of wealth for me here." <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 190, 197.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, iii. 184.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 201-2.



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No visit to Scotland took place this year, and the money saved was sent to the mother to buy winter clothing.<sup>1</sup> But in August Carlyle undertook a riding-tour of about a week through parts of Surrey, Kent and Sussex : among the places visited begin Hurstmonceux, the late residence of John Sterling during his curacy. He confessed to have been horribly tired and scorched by the sun, and the prevailing sentiment in his letters was, "Thank Heaven the tour is over" ; but several impressions of beauty remained with him ; for he looked at all with the eye of history.<sup>2</sup> "My day-dream," he wrote to Sterling, "is always that I shall by and by get out of this inane hubbub altogether : a small cottage by the sea shore, with Books, with Pen and Paper, with hills and sky."<sup>3</sup> Before the end of the year he parted with his horse, from economical motives : an action much regretted by Mrs. Carlyle.<sup>4</sup>

Autumn came round with its measure of afflictions, the first being a Jury summons. Carlyle attended the trial, which he denounced as a "mad thing" ; and, one of his colleagues proving recalcitrant, succeeded in coaxing him round and saving a new trial at £1,000 a day. "My poor man of genius had to sit on a jury two days," wrote Mrs. Carlyle, "to the ruin of his whole being, physical, moral, and intellectual. And ever since, he has been reacting against the administration of British justice, to a degree that has finally mounted into influenza."<sup>5</sup>

October brought servant troubles, a fruitful theme in Mrs. Carlyle's letters. Helen Mitchell, their servant since 1837, who stayed with them in all eleven years, gave way to drink and reduced the kitchen to a state of chaos. Carlyle had to seek his dinner at a tavern, and Mrs. Carlyle stealthily purchased cold meat at a cook-shop. She wrote : "Figure the head of the mystic school, and a delicate female like myself, up till after three in the morning, trying to get the maddened creature to bed." It was decided she should return to her native Kirkcaldy, but at the eleventh hour Mrs. Carlyle revoked the sentence of dismissal, believing that no influence but her own could avert ruin from the unfortunate girl. Carlyle wrote to his mother : "The poor

<sup>1</sup> Froude, iii. 198.<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 214.<sup>3</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 203-6.<sup>4</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 126.<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 118-20.

creature . . . looked so entirely broken down with woe, hopeless, 1840  
 silent, without any *tears*, almost without any words, that Jane . . . (44)  
 determined to try her yet another time. . . . She *may* last us  
 a few months ; she may save her own little soul and body : let  
 her have a fair *third* chance ! . . . Cheerful as a cricket, handy,  
 quiet, easily supported and dealt with : all *right*, if it were not  
 that unhallowed malison !”<sup>1</sup>

Serious reading for *Cromwell* set in with the autumn, and to  
 Carlyle Cromwell first appeared as a great “amorphous” soul  
 buried under the two-hundred-year-old stupidities and curses of  
 the world. “It is not tenth part such a subject as the French  
 Revolution ; nor can the art of man ever make such a Book out  
 of it,” he wrote. The books and documents were dull enough  
 to threaten locked-jaw, he complained ; but in the conviction  
 that a Great Man and a Great Action lay hidden “under this  
 waste continent of cinders,” he toiled on.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Carlyle completes  
 the picture by writing to her mother-in-law : “Carlyle is reading  
 voraciously, great folios, preparatory to writing a new book.  
 For the rest, he growls away much in the old style ; but one  
 gets to feel a certain indifference to his growling ; if one did not,  
 it would be the worse for one.”<sup>3</sup>

The Lectures on Heroes were still unpublished, in the absence  
 of satisfactory terms. Carlyle congratulated himself on possessing  
 a small sum of money as a security against “beggary” on one side  
 and “carnivorous Booksellers” on the other. Negotiations  
 failed for the present, including a personal interview between  
 Mrs. Carlyle and Fraser ; but the book was eventually purchased  
 by Fraser for £75 and published the following year.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 218-20. Letters J.W.C., i. 121-6. New Letters  
 J.W.C., i. 86-7.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 213-14, 220-1.

<sup>3</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 126.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 221-2. New Letters J.W.C., i. 88-90.

## CHAPTER XIX

### "HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP": ANALYSIS

DIVINITY : ODIN.—Universal history is that of Great Men, and the whole world we see is the embodiment of their thoughts. Heroism is the divine relation of a Great Man with other men. A man's religion is the chief fact about him—not his church-creed, but the thing he believes without even asserting it to himself concerning his relations to the Universe : his religion or no-religion ; for feeling determines thought, and thought action. It is hard to understand Paganism and believe that man worshipped man ; but it cannot be explained away as Quackery ; for Quackery, though present in the later diseased state of religions, never originated anything. There is some truth in everything that endures, even Grand Lamaism ; and men once had a genuine belief in Paganism. Nor, according to another theory, is it Allegory ; for the Faith, the scientific certainty, must first be there. Bunyan's Allegory could not have *preceded* the Faith it symbolises.

To primitive nations and deep-souled men who first think, Nature is *preternatural*. Clouds and sunrise, sea and river, appal them with their mystery. We no less should feel this mystery, but we dismiss such things with *words*, and encase ourselves in hearsay and tradition. It is the same with TIME, which makes men be as apparitions ; with FORCE, which is everywhere, even in the rotting leaf. In rude ages the world was divine to all ; not as now only to the gifted who can strip off wrappages. Worship is transcendent wonder ; and this is the secret of Paganism. If all Nature is an emblem of God, man is much more—His supreme Revelation. Primitive races were not diverted from worship of Nature and Man by scientific names. Hero worship is the deepest root of Paganism. Admiration for one higher than himself is man's noblest feeling : the germ of all religions, even Christianity. Loyalty is akin to it, and thus Society is founded on Hero-worship ; it represents a graduated Worship of Heroes. Nowadays people explain away a Hero as the creation of his Times ; but we have known the Times call loudly enough



and no hero arise. To deny the heaven-sent Great Man is saddest proof of man's littleness, and the last consummation of unbelief. Yet Hero-worship endures, and even in the eighteenth century Boswell venerates Johnson, and the French Voltaire : who, though a kind of Antichrist, was their realised ideal, the thing they all wanted to be. We all love heroes, and are ourselves made higher by worshipping the great. In these revolutionary days when all is rushing down, Hero-worship is the adamant below which things will not fall, and the corner-stone whence reconstruction shall begin.

Scandinavian mythology is interesting as the most modern ; Odin having been worshipped eight hundred years ago. The *Edda*, or collection of religious poems, was composed in Iceland : that strange, chaotic island, burst up by fire from the bottom of the sea. Impersonation of the workings of Nature was the primary trait of the old mythology : a world divided between friendly and unfriendly powers. Flame, Frost, etc., were demons ; Thunder the wrath of the God Thor. . . . Paganism is recognition of Nature's forces as godlike and personal. Here there is not the grace of the Greek system, but a deep rude homeliness and face-to-face inspection of things. . . . Consider their symbol of Igdrasil, the Tree of Existence, rooted in Death and stretching heaven-high : and its meaning that all life is one, and all men bound together. . . . This view of Nature came from the first original man who awoke the thought that slumbered in each. We would now call him a Poet, but in rude ages he was deemed a God. Thus did the Norse people look upon Odin, who had solved the mystery of the Universe for them and given them assurance of their destiny.

Of Odin himself we know little ; his very existence has been denied. Perhaps he was considered a God because men had no limits to their admiration ; and, a deep soul being a mystery to itself, he may have both felt himself divine and been influenced by what others took him for. After his death Time and Tradition would have done much to make him mythic. . . . The thought once kindled is further shaped by the national mind, modified by the nature of the individual. . . . Odin we know invented Runes ; and if he first taught the people Letters, it might well have been thought a miracle. He is still admired as a Hero : how much more in the first morning-light of Europe when the wild Norse souls were awakening to thought ! . . . The people admitted him to be God, and thenceforth adopted his way of thought ; so that the whole Scandinavian Mythology is his portraiture. Thus the history of the world is the biography of great men. A touching thing is this unlimited admiration of a great man and calling him God. . . . Recognition of the

divineness of Nature is the essence of Scandinavian mythology ; and its sincerity consoles us for the absence of Grecian grace. A later stage was recognition of Man and Moral Duty, and that all power is Moral.

The soul of the Norse belief was inflexible *Destiny*, and the need to be brave : as indeed it is still a man's first duty to subdue fear, if he would act and think rightly. Odín told his people the infinite importance of Valour, and their hearts responded to it and thought it a message from Heaven. . . . As for the old Norse poetry, there is homeliness, even humour, about it ; and, since nothing dies, but all branches out like a tree, we find traces of it in our greatest literature. Like all great souls they recognised the outer world was but a show. . . . (There follow some stories of the allegoric period, illustrating the Brobdignagian Norse humour.) They discovered the law of mutation—that all dies, but it is a phoenix fire-death and new-birth : the fundamental Law of Being for creatures made of Time in this Place of Hope. . . . *Consecration of Valour* was the old Norse religion, and it is well to know of it, for the old faith is still in us. What was true of the Past is the possession of the Present, and the actual True is the *sum* of all these.

PROPHET : MAHOMET.—The second phasis of Hero-worship is to look upon the Hero no longer as God but as Prophet or God-inspired. We guess men's spiritual condition by their manner of welcoming a Great Man. At heart all great men are the same ; they differ by the world's reception of them. . . . Let us try and understand Mahomet and not dismiss him as a Quack, considering the millions of God's creatures who have believed in him for twelve hundred years. A man cannot build a house without conforming to Nature's laws, much less found a religion. A great man must first be sincere, but not conscious of his sincerity. He lives always in the awful presence of the unseen Reality : an *original* man, sent to us with a message from God. . . . Let us not call Mahomet an impostor, or make too much of faults : for the greatest fault is to be conscious of none. Of all acts repentance is the most divine : and what are faults, or outward details, if the temptations, the inner struggle, be forgotten ? David sinned greatly, but he was the man according to God's heart : and the Psalms record his earnest struggle.

Let us now glance at the Arabs and their country : a notable country, with rock-mountains, deserts, strips of verdure. The people are meditative, enthusiastic, noble—the Italians of the East, combining Jewish earnestness with something graceful and poetic. Great religiosity was theirs ; of old they worshipped the stars and many natural objects as symbols of God. The Book of Job, one of the grandest things ever written, belongs to this



region. . . . Consider their Black Stone and Caabah beside the well of Zemzem : thought to be the well Hagar found with Ishmael. The Caabah is an authentic fragment of the oldest Past, and the eyes of all praying men turn towards it five times a day. Mecca became a place of pilgrimage from the sacredness attaching to the Black Stone and Hagar's well, and thence indirectly a centre of trade.

Mahomet was born A.D. 570, of a leading family, and as he soon lost both parents, he was brought up by an uncle. He accompanied this uncle on journeys, and in Syria became acquainted with the Christian religion. He had no education, was cut off from the world's collected wisdom, but was thoughtful, taciturn, and spoke only to throw light on the matter. Yet he was brotherly, with a good laugh in him, comely, with a black vein on the brow that swelled when he was angry. When twenty-five he became steward to Kadijah, a rich widow aged forty : and in return for faithful service she married him. He lived with her for the next twenty-five years, a quiet life, untroubled by ambition ; and this should check the impostor theory, for the heat of his years was now done. He was too much occupied by his own thoughts : What am I ? What is the Universe ? The Hero looks through the shows of things, and no hearsay can content him. The answer must be now, or never through Eternity : and of what use is gratified earthly ambition ?

In his fortieth year he received the revelation that there is one God, and idols are not real. This he believed, and also *Islam* or willing submission to God and Necessity—the great fact of moral life, common to Islam and Christianity. . . . To *know* or believe is a mystic act, and Mahomet felt this was a revelation. Except Kadijah, who listened and said it was true (and this was her greatest kindness), none believed him. His assembled kindred broke up in laughter ; and the chief men, who superintended the Idols, took offence. Yet his doctrine did spread as years went on, but he had to fly from Mecca for fear of the Koreish or leading tribe, and his life and doctrine more than once turned upon a straw.

In the thirteenth year of his mission, when he was fifty-three, he fled from his enemies to Medina. It was now open war with the Koreish ; and let it not be blamed that he propagated his doctrine with the sword. Nothing conquers that has not some soul of truth. Nature is umpire : as, if you sow wheat and rubbish, the Earth grows the wheat and absorbs the rubbish. The question is not how much chaff is in you, but whether you have any wheat. Islam is a bastard kind of Christianity, and there is life in it. The wild son of the desert with his flashing natural eyesight had seen into the kernel of the matter : that only God is great, and



submission to His will is best. Surely this is the best definition of Duty, for hereby man co-operates with the real Tendency of the World.

It was during his warfarings that Mahomet wrote the Koran. To us it seems a bewildered rhapsody ; yet, coming from a great rude human soul, it has sincerity. The thoughts are the unshaped ones of a man who has not studied speaking. Any light of decision dawning in his troubled mind would seem to him inspiration. . . . And now and then he brings home to us the truths he has become convinced of. The whole Universe seems to him a miracle : the clouds that revive the earth, the cattle that turn the grass into milk. . . . Allah, he says, has made men “having compassion on one another” : this is a glance at first hand into the very fact of things. . . . He understands that the solid-looking earth is a shadow hung out by God on the bosom of the void Infinite.

His religion is not an easy one, with fasts and lavations—and he did not encourage but curtailed the sensual indulgences that were common. Men are not to be seduced by ease ; the meanest has something heroic ; and you kindle him by appealing to what is highest in him. Mahomet himself was not a sensual or “hungry” man, and his household was of the frugalest : else the wild men fighting by his side would not have revered him as they did, and called him Prophet. There is neither pride nor false humility about him ; he can stand no toying with Truth, for it is a business of Reprobation or Salvation. His moral precepts, though not superfine, always tend towards good. He allows revenge, but not in excess ; Islam equalises all souls ; one-tenth of your income is the *property* of the poor. . . . His Paradise may be sensual, but the Arabs had it so already, and he intimates that the highest joys shall be spiritual. And, that men might be masters of their inclinations, he instituted Ramadhan. Besides, this sensual Heaven and Hell shadows forth the infinite nature of Duty : that men’s actions reach high as Heaven and low as Hell. He does not balance Right and Wrong like Bentham and Paley : one is Life and the other Death. It is a kind of Christianity, this religion ; and the Arabs *believe* it and live by it. Belief is life-giving ; it made a poor shepherd-people world-great, and carried them to Grenada on this hand and Delhi on that.

POET : DANTE ; SHAKESPEARE.—The Hero as Divinity and Prophet is possible only in a world vacant of scientific forms. Every kind of greatness should be possible to the Hero : a poet could not sing the Heroic warrior unless he were one at heart. Napoleon has words like Austerlitz battles ; and Burns might have made a Mirabeau. True, there are aptitudes of Nature, but circumstances determine even more. Poet resembles Prophet in that he reads the *open* secret of the Universe : the Divine

Idea of which Nature is the *vesture*, and Man also. He knows it from direct insight and belief, not hearsay ; but he seizes it on the æsthetic rather than moral side. The two provinces unite, for the highest voice heard on earth said, "Consider the lilies. . . ." Goethe placed the beautiful above the good, for it includes it. . . . A vein of poetry exists in all men ; where it is developed enough to become noticeable we call a man a poet. The essence of poetry is music ; for the utterer of a musical thought has seen into the heart of a thing and detected its inward harmony of coherence whereby it exists. It turns upon intellect, for see deep enough and you see musically. It is as great a gift as formerly led men to worship their fellow-man as God. And although reverence is declining, and men worship shows rather than things, at times it flashes forth, as when Duchesses gathered round Burns. . . .

Dante and Shakespeare are Saints of Poetry, a peculiar two. Little note was taken of Dante while he lived ; he is now known by his Book. His face, from his portrait, is the mournfulest ever painted ; softness and gentle affection converted into indignation and life-long protest. He was born in 1265 at Florence ; his education was scholastic, he fought in two campaigns, became a magistrate. We know the story of Beatrice, the only one he loved with his whole strength ; and he himself was wedded not happily. . . . Had Dante's affairs gone well, Florence would have had another prosperous Lord Mayor and the ten dumb centuries continued voiceless. He was banished with his party, his property was confiscated, and he had no home in the world. Too proud and bitter to conciliate men, he wandered from patron to patron. His great soul, homeless on earth, made its home more and more in the awful other world : he doubted not the veritable existence of *Malebolge*. The labour of writing was great, and he died at Ravenna, on completing his Book, broken-hearted, at the age of fifty-six.

All right poems are *song*, and a man should rhyme only when his heart is rapt into true passion of melody. Where there is no inward necessity, let the thought be expressed plainly in prose. The essence of Dante's work is rhythmic : go *deep* enough, there is music everywhere. It is the sincerest of poems, coming from his heart of hearts after a sore struggle : for true labour is the child of pain. His soul, and therefore that of the Middle Ages, is rendered rhythmically visible. His mind is narrow, even sectarian ; he is world-deep, not wide. He has an intense power of vision : one smiting word and then silence. The test of a man's intellect is the likeness he gives you of an object : his power to see the essential point. In the episode of Francesca we have infinite pity, but also infinite rigour of law. The pity of a man



who knows not rigour will be cowardly and sentimental : and there is no affection and tenderness equal to Dante's. The modern world shows not his parallel for rigour, earnestness and depth. . . .

The surpassing beauty of the *Purgatorio* is that it shows man purified by Repentance ; for Repentance is the grand Christian act. . . . But the three compartments are indispensable to one another and make up the unseen world of the Christianity of the Middle Ages ; the real world being the threshold of an infinitely higher Fact of a World. The poem is an embodiment of Christianity ; it expresses Good and Evil as the two polar elements of Creation and shows their incompatibility, not the preferability of Good. It is no allegory but a record of awful fact ; and, while Paganism was a religion for the sensuous nature, Christianity was for the moral. . . . Dante is the spokesman of the Middle Ages ; his ideas are the fruit of the Christian meditation of all the preceding good men. His Christianity is the noblest ideal yet made real. Nothing so endures as a truly spoken word from the inmost heart, and the great souls of all generations will find a brotherhood in Dante. Of his "uses," we will only say that he feeds the life-roots of all excellent things. Mahomet may seem greater as he influenced large masses of men ; but Dante speaks only to the noble, pure and great.

Shakespeare gives us the outer life of Europe, the Practice or Body, where Dante gives the Faith or soul. He was so complete and self-sufficing that probably we should not have heard of him but for the prosecution. In some way the glorious Elizabethan era was the fruit of Dante's Catholicism ; for Religion is the soul of Practice. Shakespeare is the greatest intellect that has left literary record ; in the constructing of his dramas there is a faculty of understanding equal to Bacon's : so perfect is the result, as if done by nature, out of such poor materials. The test of intellect is how a man constructs a narrative, and discerns the relative importance of circumstances : for he must first *understand* the thing. To Shakespeare the object revealed its inmost heart and generic secret ; it is reflected in a *level* mirror great as the world, not the convexities of self. He is rightly related to all men, the true brother of all ; other intellect is earthly by comparison. He has the seeing eye to discern Nature's musical idea, often in rough embodiments. It is the poet's first gift, bestowed only by nature, to *see* the inner harmony without which nothing could exist. Superiority of intellect is Shakespeare's faculty, and it includes all, for faculties are not distinct, but man's spiritual nature, including his morality, is one and indivisible. Without morality, intellect were impossible ; for to know a thing you must first love it. Nature is a sealed book to the bad, the selfish, the



pusillanimous. Shakespeare's intellect is still greater because unconscious ; it is part of Nature ; and his works grow up like the oak with the symmetry of Nature's laws. He is greater than Dante in that he fought truly and did conquer. He too knew deep sorrows, and yet he exaggerates only in mirthfulness and love of laughter. Of the man we get no full impress in his work, for he wrote under conditions for the Globe Playhouse. He was also a Prophet, but of the "Universal Church" : indifferent to creeds, but no "Sceptic." He was greater for being *conscious* of no heavenly message ; for all that Mahomet was conscious of was error, and the great in him was the unconscious. . . . This Shakespeare, this Stratford peasant, is the grandest thing we have yet done. We would give up our Indian Empire rather than him. His voice will unite Saxondom scattered over the globe, as Dante unites dismembered Italy. Look at dumb Russia that lacks an articulate voice, while a nation that can speak is bound together.

PRIEST : LUTHER ; KNOX.—The Priest interprets like the Prophet, but in a more familiar way, the "open secret of the Universe," which so few have an eye for. Luther and Knox were warfaring, Reforming Priests in violent times. A finished poet means that an epoch has reached perfection and requires a Reformer. Catholicism sufficed Dante's great intellect, but not Luther's a century later : for nothing endures. No man can believe exactly as his grandfather, for the Universe is infinite and embraces all theorems. When Belief decays so does Practice, and injustice prepares Revolution : thus Luther exploded Catholicism, and the French Revolution Feudalism. To do faithfully you must believe firmly. But all death is of the body only, not of the soul, and no honest thought ever perishes. It is a melancholy notion that all times but our own were wrong. . . . Worship proceeds by symbols, and the lowest mortal mistakes not his idol for God. The man who worships a Fetish is better than the horse that worships nothing ; the idolatry that moves the Prophet's wrath is *insincere* idolatry, when you only believe that you believe. It is Formulism, and the beginning of all immorality. . . . Did Protestantism, with its "private judgment," abolish Hero-worship, since, by revolting against spiritual kings, it begot both Puritanism and revolt against earthly, and the French Revolution that destroyed all authority and introduced Ballot-boxes, etc. ? No, it was but a revolt against *false* sovereigns. Private judgment always existed, and need not end in selfish independence or isolation. The believing man is the sincere man and can unite with all who seek truth. He need not *discover* the truth to believe it sincerely, for originality is not novelty. Ages of Faith are original and fruitful, because all men are sincere and

work on substance not semblance. A self-subsistent man will not lack reverence, but he will *disbelieve* other men's dead formulas. Luther was revered as a true Pope, and Napoleon became King in an age of Sansculottism : for Hero-worship never dies.

Luther was born in 1483, of poor parents, under circumstances that recall another Birth in a yet meaner place. He grew up among the realities of beggary and hardship. The shock of a friend's sudden death made him a Monk. Assailed by doubts and scruples, he believed himself doomed to eternal reprobation ; till an old Latin Bible which he discovered taught that he might be saved by the grace of God. Delivered now from darkness, he rose rapidly in his Convent. Sent on a mission to Rome, when twenty-seven, he was amazed at the condition of the "Sacred City" : but how should he, a mean man, reform the world ? Modest and quiet, he might have left things alone had not the priesthood come athwart him at Wittenberg. A certain monk sold Indulgences to his congregation : on which he declared them a mockery, and so began the Reformation. The Pope would have burnt him ; and he now rose in wrath against God's vicegerent who would slay him for speaking truth. He burnt the Pope's decree ; and the nations shouted approval at one who again proclaimed that God's world stood on realities. He also was an idol-breaker, who told the Pope that Indulgences were paper and ink, but Heaven and Hell realities ; and, based on this belief, he was stronger than them all. In 1521 he was summoned to recant at the Diet of Worms before the world's pomp. His speech was wise, respectful, but he said it was not safe to recant against his conscience. It was the greatest moment in modern history, and the germ of the Europe that was to be lay there. . . . He is not to be blamed for the wars that followed : those who forced him to protest are responsible. The Pope can no more now revive than Paganism, nor die wholly till the soul of the good in him has passed into the new. No war began in Luther's lifetime, but all Protestants looked to him for guidance.

He was tolerant, discriminating ; his writings show that he might have been a poet, but he had to work his poem. He believed that men were beset by devils, and the story of the inkstand at Wartburg shows that he could defy Hell itself. But his courage was not ferocity, and he had a heart full of pity and love. From his *Table-Talk* we catch glimpses of his domestic affections, his wonder at Nature, his mirth, love of music. . . . His face was plebeian, but showed rugged energy, with laughter and tears, based on sadness and earnestness. . . . A true Hero who set not up to be great at all. . . .

In Germany Protestantism became theological jangling ; but its offsprings were Puritanism in England and Presbyterianism in



Scotland : a true heart-communication with Heaven. Strength is the measure of worth : give a thing time, if it can succeed it is a right thing. Knox's Reformation gave a soul to Scotland, hitherto lawless and distracted. He made a "nation of heroes," a *believing* nation ; but for him, Scotch Literature, Thought, Industry, would not have been. Knox's life to the age of forty, as Priest and Tutor, was uneventful. He was taken prisoner by the French and made a Galley slave ; but, when ordered to worship the image of the Virgin, he cast it into the river. He was narrow, of no great intellect, but unsurpassed in sincerity. His harshness to Queen Mary has been blamed, but it was not possible to be polite and save his country. Intolerant he was, in the sense that he was here to resist Falsehood. His weight with Queens and proud turbulent nobles proves he was no mean acrid, man. There was a vein of drollery in him, and cheery sociality ; he was no gloomy fanatic. The sum of his offences is that he strove to set Priests over Kings ; but surely all Prophets strive to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

MAN OF LETTERS : JOHNSON ; ROUSSEAU ; BURNS.—The Hero as Man of Letters is a product of the last hundred years. The Great Soul conveys his inspiration by printed books, and asks subsistence of the world in return. Living in a garret, mistaken for an idle nondescript to amuse idleness, awarded a few coins and applauses, he is yet our most important modern person. He is a Hero because his being is in the inward sphere of things which exists always under the Temporary and Trivial. Most men, living among superficialities and practicalities, ignore Fichte's "Divine Idea of the World" which lies behind all Appearance. It is the duty of the Man of Letters to discern the new dialect by which it manifests itself in every age. The most notable modern literary man is Goethe, out of whose books the world rises imaged once more as Godlike ; but too little of him is known, and we will speak instead of three lesser men who fought bravely though they did not conquer. They found the world a chaos, and had no beaten path to travel, and so the fault was not theirs.

The importance of man's speech on man is great, but the Book has now superseded the Pulpit, and the art of writing is the greatest wonder devised by man. Cities, armies, fleets perish, but books preserve the soul of the Past : thus Greece literally lives in her books. The Bible built St. Paul's Cathedral, and therefore books work miracles. Down to the wretchedest novel, they persuade men and regulate practice. Universities arose from the scarcity of books ; and although there is still peculiar virtue in speech, Printing has metamorphosed them, and the true University is a Collection of Books. More than all, the Church is changed,



and the writer of a good book is actual Primate of England. He who shows us new beauty in Nature or man's action has indeed taught us to worship. Literature should be a continuous revelation of the Godlike in the Terrestrial and Common. The lark-notes of Burns have something of it ; much more the sphere-harmony of Shakespeare. Writing or Printing has influenced Parliament ; it has created Democracy, as a speaker now addresses the whole nation. The most wonderful thing made by man is a Book ; it is the *purest* embodiment of Thought ; and all we see around us—London itself—is but the embodiment of Thought.

Such being the importance of Men of Letters, there will be need to organise the Literary Guild in the future, instead of the present Chaos. Not that endowments are needed, for the genuine literary man should be poor. The struggle upwards must continue ; the question is how to regulate it, so that Burns should not die broken-hearted as a Gauger. That it will come there is no doubt, as soon as men recognise the paramount importance of Literature. The Chinese have attempted to make their Men of Letters their Governors, and, though hardly successful, the attempt is precious. The man of intellect at the top of affairs is the aim of all constitutions. . . .

The fatal misery of our present Heroes was that they had to live in an age of *spiritual paralysis*. The Eighteenth was a sceptical century, intellectually and morally, and never was a life of Heroism more difficult. The living Tree Igdrasil has become the clanking World-Machine, and for Truth we have Plausibility. Scepticism is inevitable ; it is an end, not a beginning ; the destruction of old forms and preparation for new. To believe in nothing but Mechanism is to miss the secret of the Universe altogether, and think wrong about all things. Witchcraft that worshipped a living Devil was better than the " Doctrine of Motives." Belief is the healthy act of a man's mind, and doubt is the root of belief : the mind's mysterious working, as all vital acts are, on the object it is getting to believe. The sceptical eighteenth century abounded in Quacks, as no century has done since the days of Rome. Even Chatham had something of the Quack, since the *world's* suffrage must be gained. It may be that things are now altering ; for we do meet men who believe that the world is alive and instinct with Godhood, and the belief may spread to all. A sceptical eighteenth century is the exception, and a believing heroic world will once more be. Enough of the *world* ; it is best saved by each of us staying at home and leading his own life : his one chance between two Eternities. . . .

In such times lived our three Men of Letters : there was no intimation even of a French Revolution. Luther had an assured

goal, and Mahomet actual idols to burn, but from Johnson was taken even the light of his own soul. What might he not have done under kindlier circumstances ! And yet each should make his own time better. Johnson's struggle would always have been a severe one, for he suffered from disease and hypochondria. He endured want, but revolted at beggary : witness the shoes given him in charity at Oxford which he threw away. Reverent, loyally submissive, he stood by the old formulas—for the essence of *originality* is not to be *new*. Formulas are like paths, widened into highways by the many who follow the first *poet* or maker. But when the Shrine or Reality to which they led is gone, let us forsake the highway. Johnson has sincerity, the primary material of great men, but he is sincere with a noble unconsciousness. His Gospel was Moral Prudence and war with Cant ; the greatest possible at that time. His books are obsolete, but though his style is tumid, there is always *something within it*. Of Boswell we will say that he was a genuine Hero-worshipper, and his worship was well bestowed.

Rousseau was an intense, not a strong man. He had not the gift of Silence, nor could he consume his smoke till he had made it fire. A sadly contracted Hero, yet *in earnest*. Egoism was his fault, the root of all others : he was hungry for men's praises. He was driven into suspicion and self-isolation, his whole nature was poisoned. And yet he did fulfil the Prophet's function as best he could ; he was convinced that Life is *True*. His perversities are the staggerings of a man too weak to fulfil his errand. His books are unhealthy, *operatic*, rather than truly poetical. He became the Evangelist of the Revolution by his semi-delirious speculations on the miseries of civilised life.

The Hero Burns appeared strangely among eighteenth-century artificialities. The Original Man reaching down to the Eternal Deep was born in an Ayrshire hut. His brave father did not prosper, and his youth passed under every disadvantage. Even the rustic dialect in which he wrote was a disadvantage. There was a basis of mirth to his young nature, the result of a large fund of Hope. Perhaps he was the most gifted soul of his century ; his poetry was but one fragment of him, and he had all kinds of gifts. His speech, which always *had something in it*, delighted Duchesses, and, when he arrived at an inn, made waiters and ostlers get out of bed to hear him. Like Mirabeau he had true insight, raging passions, tender affections. He might have dominated Assemblies, but was put to gauge beer at a time when Thought was most needed. Hero-worship has got into a strange condition since Odin : and yet the world *has* to obey those who think and see. Of Burns's extraordinary reception at Edinburgh, far transcending common *Lionism*, we may say that he bore himself



admirably, convinced that the "rank is but the guinea-stamp." And yet the Lion-hunters in the end did destroy his peace of mind and kill him.

KING : CROMWELL ; NAPOLEON.—King, which means *Able-man*, is the summary of all earthly and spiritual dignity. To find the Ablest Man and exalt him to the supreme place is the business of all social procedure, and the result would be perfect government. We must be content to approximate to Ideals, but the result of too much neglect, and letting Unable men rule, is the French Revolution. There was something in the ancient "Divine Right"; for the world is no steam-engine, and rule and obedience is the most moral act between men. Divine Right or Diabolic Wrong is in all men's claims on one another. The theory that self-interest governs everything is natural to an unbelieving century. Luther's Reformation three hundred years ago was the beginning of these sad revolutionary times. The three days of July 1830 has taught the world that the French Revolution was a Fact, not an example of temporary national madness, as it had become fashionable to think. It was an Apocalypse to this artificial time that Semblance is not Reality. The cry "Liberty and Equality" seemed to threaten Hero-worship with extinction; as if the world, grown tired with forgeries, would trust nothing. The Hero, like all genuine men, is the enemy of Disorder; and Hero-worship vindicates itself in Cromwell and Napoleon, who stepped forth as Kings in the maddest, most chaotic ages.

The Civil War was Belief against Unbelief, Semblance against Reality. All substance clothes itself in form, therefore form is needed: but only the form which *grows*, not that which is consciously *put* round. Empty forms are an offence: as if you lost your only son, and a man offered to celebrate Funeral Games for him like the Greeks. Puritans, finding such forms insupportable, reacted against all forms. It is now acknowledged that we owe our liberty to the Puritans, such as Hampden, Pym and others. That Cromwell, rugged and *unformulistic*, should still be defamed, is natural to the eighteenth century. Yet these others are grown dull, while he remains human in that he grappled with the naked truth of things. It was not Taxation, but refusal to have the moral self annihilated, that produced the Civil War: as Falsehood, not hunger, produced the French Revolution.

The theory of Cromwell's falsity is incredible; for how can a great soul exist without a conscience? In youth he was oversensitive, melancholic; and though he once fell into dissipation, speedily repented. He married, became a farmer, renounced the world, and lived thus devoutly, his hopes fixed on Eternity, till past the age of forty. He did not suddenly become ambitious, but owed his success in Parliament and war to his greatness of



nature. To kill a King is a stern business, but, once at war with him, either he dies or you. Note his practical *eye*, his insight into fact, showing itself in his choice of soldiers, and creation of the unrivalled *Ironsides*. But the present ages cannot understand Heroes ; the vulpine intellect flings God's greatest gift away, and debates for two centuries whether Knox and Cromwell were men at all.

Cromwell was a chaotic man ; like Johnson, his misery came of his greatness ; his hypochondria was of his wild affections, his depth and tenderness. It accounts for the confusion of his speech—for his virtue was to do. Notable was his habit of prayer with his officers at a crisis : a band of Christian brothers against a black devouring world. The light which rose on them would seem the shining of Heaven's splendour ; and those who call it "Hypocrisy" have no right to speak, never having been alone with the *truth* of a thing. In his speeches he disregarded eloquence, but always *meant* something. He was called a liar because he had his *reticences*, shielding himself from impertinent enquiries, uttering but a *part* of his mind to each small section. To men whose activity depends on a limited conviction, he could not have explained his deeper insight. Of proved falsehood there is not one.

Many errors will fall away if we remember that Cromwell had not his whole life mapped out, including the Protectorship, from his farmer days. All was dark a short way ahead, as with each one of us. And we exaggerate the ambition of a great man ; it is the small poor man who wishes to shine above others ; but the great man, like Cromwell, satisfied with God's notice, stays at home and keeps silence. The noble silent men are the salt of the earth ; without them a country would be like a forest which had no roots. But there is a laudable kind of ambition : to develop yourself, to work what thing you have the faculty for, to fill the place for which you are fit.

Such a chance seemed to offer itself to Cromwell when a Parliament was summoned to redress the wrongs of God's Church, over which he had mourned for twelve years. He strove and fought and triumphed, and stood forth the strongest soul in England. It seemed as if Knox's Theocracy might be, since a practical man like Cromwell believed in it. Had England been unanimous for him she might have become a Christian land. Cromwell was no professor of "perfections," but the Hypocrite theory is untenable. The need of a *King*, a man who can decide, appears in Scotland, united for Puritanism, but without a leader, and continually defeated by Montrose with a rabble. . . .

The great accusation is that he dismissed the Rump and became Protector. But the Rump Members were formulists, Cromwell

and his army Reality. The Rump was about to enact free suffrages, and, as the Royalist party was numerically stronger, there was danger to the few who had prevailed by weight and force, not counting of heads. He summoned more Parliaments, who tried but failed to make the law of Christ that of England. There remained nothing but the Protectorship or Anarchy. His second and third Parliaments failed likewise, and he rebuked them for their pedantry when they had the chance of making Christ's law the law of the land. His speeches were chaotic, but a real *speech* does lie imprisoned in the rude, tortuous utterances. Only Despotism remained, a system of Military Dictators to coerce the Royalists : and no resignation possible except into the tomb. It was a heavy burden ; his old republican battle-mates would not be reconciled to him ; his mother feared for his life. What has this man gained ? Ignominy rather than fame. . . .

As Puritanism was the second, the French Revolution was the third act of Protestantism, or return from Semblance to Reality : for lower than Sansculottism men cannot go. Napoleon was less great, less *sincere* than Cromwell ; he stood on the high *stilts* of his enormous victories. He lived in noisy sceptical times, when there was no silent walking with God. In him, more than Mahomet, there was a mixture of the Quack, and "false as a bulletin" became a proverb. Yet he had a kind of sincerity, and did base himself on fact, as when he refuted the atheists by looking at the stars and saying, "Who made all that ?" At St. Helena he bade his discontented followers say nothing since they could do nothing. His faith was in Democracy, which he knew to be a Fact, but he hated Anarchy, and would bridle-in the Revolution and make it organic. Later on the Charlatan element got the upper hand ; he wished to found his "Dynasty," and connect himself with the old Feudalities which it had been the Revolution's object to destroy. He did not know true from false, and committed acts of injustice which paid themselves with compound interest. At St. Helena he was surprised that the world moved on without him. That France is great and he is France, was his programme—but the Reality did not correspond.

## CHAPTER XX

### “HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP”

IN his earlier essays, instructed by Goethe and the German metaphysicians, Carlyle anticipated with some confidence the return of an age of faith. The distinction between reason and understanding, the proved unreliability of the senses to transmit to the mind an exact copy of the external Reality, had removed the intellectual difficulties raised by Hume and Diderot : but if events belied him we must not underrate his prophetic power. He argued with justice that man has lost no one of his former faculties, that the soul has depths to which each of us is at liberty to descend, that the still small voice will become audible again to those who conserve Silence. But in his earlier and more academic years he ascribed disproportionate power to things of the intellect over an obstinate world settled into an evil routine. While he visited the peaks of Sinai, a perverse generation transgressed the law of Silence and established the worship of the Golden Calf. It was the expansion of commerce which, by degrading the individual, caused the moral and religious failure of the nineteenth century.

In the days to come Carlyle was to blast the world with the consuming fire of *Latter-day Pamphlets*, but this was his middle period, when his mind was divided between the hopes raised by his earlier life of meditation and growing acquaintance with the complexities of things that followed residence nearer to the centre. Writing of the Corn Law Rhymer he had said that like all thinking men at the present he was naturally attracted towards politics ; and the tinge of his own mind was becoming more wholly political. He had now accomplished *Chartism* ; *Past and Present* was soon to be ; and thenceforward social reform became the governing idea in his work. *Heroes* is rather a loop in the otherwise steadily



progressive river of thought, visiting old shores and the sites of forgotten cities, and refloating ancient galleys on the waters of modern thought. Its substance belonged to a mind as much at ease as possible for one like Carlyle's ; the form was modified by a later psychological experience. It hangs suspended like a planet in the infinite deep between opposing forces of gravity.

*Heroes* is the last of Carlyle's books where, like his early essays, the literary feeling may be said to predominate. Never literary in the narrow sense, he had once built on a foundation of literature his explanation of life, and he here partly recurs to a former habit of mind. Life to Carlyle meant the life of the human spirit ; to him this was the prime fact of the Universe ; it were better that a man should sin and repent, and so experience spiritual communion, rather than live in blameless mediocrity amid the applause of his fellow-creatures. As an incentive to spiritual life he valued literature ; and a book like *Heroes*, equally with the most noteworthy of his essays, offers a field for its exposition. Perhaps we could have wished Carlyle always to dwell in this spiritual eyrie, and set before the world the characters of history made rich and strange in the sunset glow of his imagination. There are certain ideas—that of pre-existence, for example, originating with Pythagoras and Plato and revived by Wordsworth—inacceptable to religion or science, but peculiarly suited to poetry. Like all poets, Carlyle was better versed in the laws of God than those of man, and we should consult his oracle rather for spiritual sustenance than as a guide in the practical affairs of life. That repentance is the divinest act of man—that meditation teaches the outer world has no existence—this is the true dialect of the soul ; but to say that we must base our common life less high is no disparagement to Carlyle : in support of which we might adduce the greatest of all examples, the Sermon on the Mount.

The central fact of Carlyle's early essays is the state of the individual soul. If we compare those on Voltaire and Dr. Johnson it will easily appear that the tone of the former is condemnatory. Voltaire stands out in his pages as a "Persifleur," as one who, like Diderot, dwelt always in "the thin rind of the conscious" ; and inadequate recognition is made of his services to justice and humanity. To Dr. Johnson, who practised meditation and adhered by an effort of will to the creed of his fathers,

he accords that beautiful kind of praise which makes faults weigh like dust in the balance. Dr. Johnson had faults which Carlyle might have been expected to censure strongly—such as indolence and over-appreciation of the pleasures of the table ; but it sufficed Carlyle that there remained apertures in his nature through which the light of the spirit shone forth undimmed. The “environment” lay heavy only on certain parts of the “true self.” And since this earth is not our abiding-place, so long as spiritual vigour be maintained, accidents to the case of flesh and blood in which the spirit manifests itself import but little. But between the early and later essays intervened the *French Revolution*, and from it Carlyle learned the lesson that this world has a reality of its own. The anguish of parting, the sudden rending of every tie with the love of home and the beauty of earth, the unexpected fall of doom upon the innocent—all this assailed him with the added terror that such things might come to pass again. We must also note the effect of removal to London and daily contact with the crowd upon a mind already exercised with the social problem. Small wonder that in the later essays there is some qualification of the ideal doctrine that not man’s work but the spirit in which he works is all important, considering the temporary nature of our earthly home and the nothingness of the greatest man’s work compared to Eternity. In these more stress is laid upon the actual contribution of each towards the cleansing of the Augean Stable.

In *Heroes* we see both tendencies at work, as we pass from mythological times when men lived as always under the eye of God, down to the modern revolutionary epoch. The matter of the book, as we said, had lain long in Carlyle’s mind ; it was raised to the surface by his needs of the hour, and shaped in accordance with his psychology. We get the two sides of the great man, the earthly and heavenly, the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. From Odin of prehistoric fame, who lived in an age of heroes, when all men believed, we progress down the stream of time to the mid-point where the two worlds meet in Knox, who wished to establish a Theocracy on earth, down to Napoleon, where, like Chatham, the great man cannot rule without being something of a Quack. The poet, as we have said, is better versed in the laws of God than those of man ; for the laws of God find an echo in his heart, while the world’s laws, with their increasing



complexities and chicaneries, as the pressure of man on man grows greater, leave him troubled and perplexed. To this we attribute Carlyle's later mental disasters, but in *Heroes*, although the invasion of the soul begins, nevertheless the individual soul is the centre at which he stands, working outwards, and celebrating its triumph over earth.

In the beginning of thought men's minds were fluid, and the great man like Odin was faced with little opposition ; besides, the gospel of Valour which he preached was a thing of ready acceptance. Mahomet had much to contend with and overthrow before he could rule ; but it is not until we come to Dante that the two worlds have parted asunder. Knox still thought it possible to set up the rule of God on earth ; but Dante's kingdom is not of this world. There must be choice between the two, and, as all men are born with worldly ambition, Dante first coveted civic honours in his native Florence ; till, balked by fate, he went forth an exile to meditate the *Divine Comedy*. But it needed the confiscation of his possessions and the denial of Mayoral dignity before his life became wholly spiritual ; and he died broken-hearted, as if the crack in the earthly pillar brought down the Temple of Life. He is therefore less great than Shakespeare, who fought and conquered : for Shakespeare, like Dante, had been in hell, but he survived the appalling world of his tragedies, and the romances which concluded his working life were a message of forgiveness. And yet Carlyle warns us often that the battle itself is victory ; for so long as a man resists the encroachments of material accidents he keeps his spirit alive.

We spoke of *Sartor* as the essence of Carlyle's teaching because it shows us the soul reduced to its primeval state, stripped not only of its earthly hulls but of Time and Space. *Heroes* may be called Carlyle's literary microcosm, because it embodies the thoughts that prevail in all his writings from *Sartor* to *Frederick*. We see the world's concerns—history, literature, politics—accumulating more and more upon the central ray of immortality. Odin appeared among his fellow-men as God ; Mahomet as the Prophet of God ; and thenceforward the line of communication grew less direct. When we come to Dante, spiritual and material life are already at variance ; and with modern conditions the spiritual department grows more contracted. Formulas take the place of



beliefs ; men accept the outer habits enjoined by the creed of their fathers, and transmute their activities to competition with one another. The Hero as Man of Letters finds himself in an alien world, where things of the spirit are treated as cures for languor, or amusement for those intent on wealth and power ; and from this standpoint he must set about his task of conversion. With the Hero as King we reach the age of Revolutions, where improvement comes from without. The Hero must excel in the arts of the world and conciliate men's suffrages if he would vanquish and reform it ; he may even be something of a Quack, like Chatham, who exaggerated his maladies and therefore his patriotism, or Napoleon, who falsified bulletins to appear invincible.

All great men are the same at heart, Carlyle contended, for their prime characteristic is sincerity : independence of hearsay, first-hand recognition of the mystery of life, wonder and awe at the Universe. But they are modified by circumstances ; and choice of a career which will best embody their genius is dependent upon the condition of the world into which they are born. Burns might have been a statesman, Napoleon a poet—for all knowledge or intellect is vision, and if you see deep enough, like Dante, you see musically. All things hold together by the law of harmony, and the soul itself is a harmony. Dante's dismissal from the stage of active life seems cruel, but it was the easiest path toward full development of his genius. All hope being cut off of re-entry into the affairs of men, there was left the huge unexplored spiritual continent.

The great man, like Prometheus, is in more direct communication with heaven than his fellows ; he replenishes the fire of his spirit from the golden urn of the Living Sun. He seeks to spread his inspired knowledge through the masses of inferior creatures, and he is happy if, like Odin, the world he lives in is a young one, where men's inherited habits have not become fixed in mechanical laws which need his whole energy to reverse. As centuries roll on this warfare between the spirit and the ever earthlier tendencies of mankind becomes more bitter. We spoke of the Reformation as the mid-point ; and Luther before the Diet of Worms is the typical instance of the Hero alone against a hostile and powerful world. Poor, friendless, low-born, he has nothing

but spiritual assurance to front the assembled Ministers of the Earth's pomp and dignity. Mahomet propagated his doctrines with the sword, but the Papal Jericho falls before Luther's intense conviction. From that time onward, as the power of the world increases, the spirit is denied light and air and has enormous material difficulties to contend with. The Hero's mantle falls on the Man of Letters, and in the sceptical eighteenth century we get a Johnson lodged in garrets and denied even the light of his own soul. We get a poor Rousseau struggling with poverty and vicious inherited tendencies, who must move mountains before he can dart his single ray of starlight upon a world in darkness and bondage to gross pleasure and brutalising toil.

The printed book is a fine instrument in the hands of the modern Man of Letters Hero, as it is the most direct embodiment of thought ; and all we see around us, whether made by Nature or Man, is embodied thought. No one was a greater contemner than Carlyle of the clay garments with which the spirit wreathes itself to undertake its earthly adventure ; but even some of the poorest things of earth can convey a message from heaven. The pots and kettles which Richter's mother scoured while he wrote his books, the knives used by Johnson and Boswell at the Mitre : these he admits to his interest because they have once formed part of a fragment of God-irradiated earth. This world is not our abiding-place, but the spirit can confer upon the meanest object the kiss of immortality. It is otherwise when things of earth are enjoyed for their own sake ; and Mahomet is praised for instituting the fast-month of Ramadhan, by which men prove that they can control their appetites ; and also, though he could not uproot the sensual Paradise from the Arabian imagination, for hinting that the highest joys are spiritual. Without touch of asceticism, Carlyle maintains that there is no harm in enjoying the good things of earth, but infinite harm in suffering moral enslavement from them. All roads of his teaching lead back to a common centre, that man's duty is to keep undimmed the aboriginal splendour of the soul.

The present book reverts to Carlyle's earlier method in so far as it attends to the soul rather than its earthly activities, and to those things of earth only which are part of heaven. Thus the Arabs living in deserts, under a starry canopy, are in unceasing



contemplation of the mystery of the Universe ; the clouds that revive the earth, the cattle that turn the grass into milk, appear to them like miracles. Of Dante's outer existence we are told little ; and Shakespeare was so complete and self-sufficing that, but for the prosecution, he might never have left his native Stratford to push his fortunes in London. To Napoleon is allotted less space than to any of the other Heroes ; and his victories are made to seem the least important thing in his career. Like stilts they exalt his earthly stature out of proportion to his spiritual, and so impose upon the public mind.

The grand moral decision once taken, the earth may be accepted as the Maker's gift ; but this same decision is Annihilation of Self. All strength comes from readiness to sacrifice the earthly self in warring for a principle : whether Valour with Odin, Islam with Mahomet, Catholicism with Dante. All weakness, hesitation, fear, mental shortsightedness, lack of faith, is due to preference for material conditions of life. But the decision once taken, and the risk of moral enslavement to things of sense abated, a new interest kindles in Carlyle towards all that pertains to his Hero. He dwells on Luther's love of music ; on Knox's vein of drollery, how he was cheery and social and had his pipe of Bourdeaux ; he loves even to think of Mahomet mending his own shoes, patching his own cloak. Carlyle disdained fiction because invented facts seemed to him superfluous in the presence of an enormous unexhausted store of actualities.

It is frequently said in his writings that a man reveals himself by what he admires, and we are tempted to ask which of the Heroes corresponded closest with Carlyle's pattern type. If we judged by the standard of success we would say Mahomet ; for to Mahomet was granted the rare fortune of realising his ideal. He converted the world to the faith which had been revealed to him, and made a poor shepherd-people into a nation of heroes, so that their conquests extended from Grenada to Delhi. But we must remember that Carlyle's chief concern is with the soul, and we therefore have no hesitation in answering—Shakespeare. Shakespeare, he says, is rightly related to all men, the true brother of all, greater for being unconscious, a very part of Nature ; the grandest thing we have yet done is this Stratford peasant.

But the most significant thing Carlyle says about Shakespeare



is that he was complete and self-sufficing enough to have remained silent all his life. And with every allowance for the tree "Igdrasil," and the theory that nothing good perishes, not even the unspoken thought—we are tempted to ask whether Carlyle is not leading us to the belief that man is most admirable as a disembodied spirit. Do we not, in the process of refining, forget the beneficent influence that the Earth may have upon the soul? May it not return to its pre-natal home enriched by its sojourn in the flesh and struggle with matter? The earth does contribute something to its growth, even through the pangs of Gethsemane; and in surveying Carlyle's *French Revolution* we remarked how his mortal self added a new and imperishable beauty.

The cloud of temperament that rests on the bright mirror of his thought next leads to the question of the all-importance to him of Heroes and Hero-Worship. We know from *Sartor* his rejection of a system of morality that did not bring with it divine credentials. Man can be no sufficient law-giver to man; the chaos of the French Revolution proves his inefficacy to steer without the stars and reform himself on a purely human basis. Rousseau's "heroism" was obstructed by the artificialities of his time; and Johnson's performance was a tithe of what it might have been in an age of faith. Carlyle looked on man as the clearest symbol of God on earth; and man's greatness consisted in the removal of earthly veils from his God-given soul. The deepest longing in Carlyle's heart was for belief in a Personal God; and the man who by thought or deed could prove his relationship to God advanced his assurance.

If man accepts the opinion of his fellows alone as a guide to conduct, he will infallibly err: witness the ruin of Burns, whose craving for sympathy, denied religious outlet, expended itself upon the world. How often does Carlyle affirm that not man's work on earth, but the spirit in which he works, is of moment; and yet the triple steel of faith must surround him who, like Milton or Cervantes, can toil on indifferent to success and failure. Personal sympathy and communion a man must have; and if the light of heaven is denied, he turns to his fellow-creatures. So much Carlyle would grant in these eclipsed ages, but he distinguishes between true and false Hero-worship, and he therefore condones the extravagances of "a poor ridiculous Boswell"

because he does venerate what is godlike in Johnson. Worship of God once removed, is Carlyle's Hero-worship reduced to its lowest terms : the homage accorded to a higher soul. No one more excelled in power of admiration and veneration than he ; and no one more despised the mere earthly world of men's opinion and the longing for high place and “ fame.”

Boswell believed in Johnson and therefore proved to Carlyle that his spirit was alive ; for all knowledge or belief is a *mystic* process. We may consider Boswell as the typical figure of an unbelieving century : himself burning with religious zeal, and expending it, now in true discipleship of Johnson, now in pitiful attempts to win the applause of the meanest individual who crossed his field of vision. Man is God's image, and when the Church, Kingship, and other “ realised ideals ” have fallen, man has only his fellow-man as companion in his hard pilgrimage. To enthrone man as God is to risk the loss of sincerity ; for God knows our inmost thoughts, man only what we please to tell him. Thus the craving for sympathy becomes vanity, and so we progress downward, through care for shows and appearances, to Mammon-worship and the orgy of materialism in which the nineteenth century concluded.

Plato's Socrates taught that recognition of beauty, beginning with fair forms, should rise to fair minds, and thence, through the beauty of laws and institutions and the sciences, upward to universal beauty.<sup>1</sup> And so Carlyle affirms that in revolutionary times Hero-worship is the adamant below which things will not fall, and the corner-stone whence reconstruction shall begin.<sup>2</sup> To Teufelsdröckh, on the threshold of love, all women were holy and heavenly, and nowhere did heaven reveal itself so immediately as in the young maiden.<sup>3</sup> Recognition of man as the last Temple left on earth where God can be worshipped without hypocrisy is the message of *Heroes*.

Like that of all the greatest men, Carlyle's lot was solitary through life ; except his own family none but Irving and Sterling reached near his heart ; and only Goethe was his intellectual superior. The correspondence with Goethe was the unique occasion when his mind found refuge in one greater than itself. But the past afforded what the present denied ; the great men of

<sup>1</sup> *Symposium*.

<sup>2</sup> “ Odin.”

<sup>3</sup> *Sartor*, ii. 5.

history lay in the chaos that awaits the imaginative light-beam. Out of his admiration, reverence, worship, rises a spiritualised earth, become the embodiment of the thoughts of Heroes.<sup>1</sup> Spirit once more guides matter, and a brief return of the ideal made imaginatively real precedes the political winter that was settling down upon his middle years.

But if man's unhappiness comes of his greatness,<sup>2</sup> if Carlyle's own great powers cut him off from equal communion with men, we must not omit the lighter side of his nature. It was but a partial truth that he disliked social distractions; and his preference for the aristocracy has been already noted. In fair externals and courtly manners and as much luxury as keeps hidden the sordid foundations of life, he read victory of a kind over materialism. For Carlyle's solitude was not of his own seeking; he yearned towards his fellows; the highest praise he gives a man is "brotherly": for all should be members of one family under God. We remember Mirabeau with that "terrible gift of familiarity" by which he seduced his gaolers, penetrating the dialect of the individual and the epoch to the common language of the soul. The denial of brotherhood, by deed rather than word in Carlyle's own century, was Atheism, and kindled in him that rage and hatred which is nearer to love than indifference.

The mood of *Heroes* is a happy and hopeful one; "organic filaments" compensate the wreck of "realised ideals"; and if the modern world is without God, we can deduce His existence from the fact of Heroes. For the Hero is no myth but a living presence on earth, the one comfort and assurance in degenerate ages when all inherited belief has crumbled down. And with Carlyle Hero-worship possessed the peculiar appeal of alleviating his craving for the Person, since the spiritual force was enshrined in a human being like himself. We must believe, not merely believe that we believe;<sup>3</sup> and the last inexpugnable Temple is the personal relation between men: whether it is disinterested admiration of a higher soul, or love between youth and maiden. But the emotion must be purely mystical, the worship must be only of that which is godlike in the Hero—unencumbered even with the fleshly garment of beauty, and still less with the ever thicker robes of worldly possessions in which the modern man

<sup>1</sup> "Odin."

<sup>2</sup> Sartor, ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> "Luther."



is enveloping his spirit. It is akin to what Plato called “reminiscence”—when something beautiful reminds the earth-bound soul of its experience of Absolute Beauty before it entered the body. With Carlyle it is moral beauty that makes man godlike—triumph over sense and renunciation of the world. Boswell, vain, sensual, not untouched by pride of race, redeemed himself by kneeling before poor, humbly-born Johnson. It may be or not that Hero-worship is the corner-stone of reconstruction, but suffice it that when the oracles are dumb and the shrines empty, poor forsaken man must be content to catch here and there a ray of immortal splendour from a brother soul.

But we must not let the term “moral beauty” mislead us ; for as we linger at the portal of Carlyle’s House of Fame we are reminded that all those into whose lineaments we have gazed were great men in the accepted sense—authors of great deeds or thoughts. There is not one Saint among them, and they include Napoleon—though a few paragraphs suffice to tell the story of the enslaver of Europe. But if we recur to Shakespeare, the favourite hero, it will be seen that Shakespeare’s faculty was superiority of intellect ; and intellect, in Carlyle’s opinion, comprehended man’s spiritual nature. Intellect without morality is impossible, for to know a thing you must first love it. God being not only good but wise, the greatest human intellect is the clearest revelation of Himself. God is Creator as well as Father, and it was therefore in the active rather than passive goodness of man—God’s symbol on earth—that Carlyle looked for proof of His existence.

If *Heroes*, as we said, is Carlyle’s literary microcosm, an epitome of all his work, it is because it covers so vast a tract of time—from mythological ages to modern democracy. Only in a world vacant of scientific forms, he tells us, like that of Odin, could man be worshipped as God ; and we may refer to his essay on Diderot to become aware how radically man is modified by his epoch. Dante’s Catholicism could not suffice Luther, and in our own day even the poet is superseded by the man of letters. Two things stand out in this progress of the centuries : the evolution of the human soul, and its identity under all disguise. We are inclined to think that Carlyle looked upon this evolution rather as materialisation—as burial of the soul’s primitive instincts,

its wonder and reverence, under names and formulas and hearsays : so that a Hero Napoleon must blast his way to the centre with artillery. But the second is the rock of adamant on which his system of thought is built : that there is that in a man's soul, when bright enough to shine through its mountains of encumbrance, which commands homage. And the two instances he is never tired of citing are the enthusiasm of the Parisians for their ape-like divinity Voltaire ; and the effect of Burns's conversation alike on high-born Duchesses and the waiters and ostlers of roadside inns.

Once more excepting Napoleon, it may be said that Carlyle's galaxy of great men all possess genius in its purest form, as distinguished from talent. They conquer by their insight into what is good rather than evil in human nature. We know the saying that great thoughts come from the heart—and it is a fitting complement to that of Carlyle's, that the beginning of thought is love, because knowledge without sympathy is impossible. This should dwell in our minds as we take leave of *Heroes* : a touchstone to apply to his doctrine of the identity of intellect and virtue in days to come, when the high winds rolled together the spiritual and material worlds, and he wrote on burning political problems, or of men like Frederick and others who played the part of scene-shifters in Europe.

## CHAPTER XXI

### WORK ON "CROMWELL"—DEATH OF MRS. WELSH—ACQUAINTANCE WITH BARINGS

(1841-5)

THAT Carlyle was now not only famous but popular, we infer from Mrs. Carlyle's description of herself as a "Lion's Wife," receiving applications from young ladies for autographs, passionate invitations to dine, etc. She mentions how the very look of the "dingy folios" into which he was settling for his book on Cromwell were like to give her locked-jaw.<sup>1</sup> Carlyle himself fears the extinction of his intellectual faculty by their "excess of stupidity."<sup>2</sup>

In March were published *Heroes* and a new edition of *Sartor*, for which he received £150 from Fraser.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, his health having suffered from influenza, he spent a fortnight in April with Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, at Fryston, his seat in Yorkshire. The luxury of Fryston by no means displeased him—especially the "sea of down" to which he compares his bed—but his philosophic mind never failed to realise the relativity of all luxury and its place in the universe.<sup>4</sup> He paid a brief visit to his mother at Scotsbrig before returning to London at the beginning of May.<sup>5</sup>

An interesting episode of the spring was the elder Mrs. Carlyle's visit to Mrs. Welsh at Templand; and Carlyle hints at a "pious aspiration" of Mrs. Welsh towards living together in permanence. He adds: "Right kind, generous, affectionate, in many points, right noble, was the Mother of my Jeannie, and much loved by her, though not quite easy to live with in detail."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i, 128, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i, 227.

<sup>3</sup> Letters J.W.C., i, 132.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i, 226.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i, 227-30.

<sup>6</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i, 90.



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(46)

In the summer Browning appears among his correspondents ; but, while recognising his rare gift, Carlyle doubts whether he is on the right way towards unfolding it, and suggests that his next work be written in prose.<sup>1</sup>

Early in July Carlyle again took flight for Scotland, his mind not yet settled into its working habit, and Cromwell-reading making indifferent progress. In a letter to Sterling he denies the rumour that he had left London altogether ; alleging, as a reason for preferring London, that in no other corner of the earth had he ever been able to get "any kind of reasonable social existence," that elsewhere he had been "a kind of exceptional anomalous anonymous product of Nature."<sup>2</sup> Froude hints at mental overstrain, and narrates how, when Mrs. Carlyle joined him and they stayed at Templand, he rose at 3 a.m. and drove to Dumfries to finish his night's rest ; and that the letter which he wrote to his wife to explain his departure concludes, "Adieu, my hapless, beloved Jeannie ! Sleep and be well, and let us meet not tragically."<sup>3</sup>

He spent the month of August with his wife at a little cottage at Newby, on the shore of the Solway Firth, two miles from Annan. "Utter solitude, donothingism and sea-bathing" was his antidote for London, which he confessed was driving him mad with its tumult, though he could not relinquish the "reasonable social existence" which it alone afforded. The distant mountain scenery, the winds and tides and everlasting murmur of the ocean, failed not, with their suggestion of eternity, to tranquillise a mind like his.<sup>4</sup> Visits to Miss Martineau and the Speddings in Cumberland occupied part of September, and the close of the month saw return to Chelsea.<sup>5</sup>

All the autumn he worked hard at Cromwell, keeping his door "hermetically sealed till 2 o'clock" ;<sup>6</sup> but with such ill success that in December he mentions having burnt all he had written.<sup>7</sup> At this time the offer of a Professorship in Edinburgh University recalled former aspirations, though the present Chair had no endowment. It was declined, and Mrs. Carlyle writes in characteristic strain : "No, no, we are done with Edinburgh. He

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 233-4.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 235-6.    <sup>3</sup> Froude, iii. 217.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 237-40.    Froude, iii. 219.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 93-4.    <sup>6</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 241.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., i. 242.

owes it no gratitude for any recognition he ever found there. 1841  
It is only now when London and the world have discovered his (45)  
talent that they are fain to admit it. As for me, I would as soon  
go back to Craigenputtock as to that poor, proud, 'highly respect-  
able' City."<sup>1</sup>

The first months of 1842 brought no solution of the Cromwell 1842  
problem; Carlyle ceasing not to lament "the stupidity of old (46)  
dead books," and the mountains of rubbish, centuries old, under  
which the real man lay buried.<sup>2</sup> Sterling continued to predominate  
among his friends, and one of Carlyle's letters to him contains  
the following sentence: "I am not worthy of you; yet I have  
you."<sup>3</sup> At this time Sterling submitted to him his newly written  
tragedy of *Strafford*; on which Carlyle returned an unfavourable  
verdict, though softened by regret, delicacy, humility. Sterling  
bore like a hero the words that must have stabbed his heart; and  
Carlyle, in replying, praised his perseverance; while Mrs. Carlyle  
wrote: "I would not give your last letter to C. for the best  
drama of Shakespeare."<sup>4</sup> A characteristic passage on Art occurs  
in Carlyle's second letter; his notion of it being "to get a  
thorough *intelligence* of the *fact* to be painted, represented, or in  
whatever way set forth."

Although in easy financial circumstances, Carlyle complained  
that the yield of his books had disappointed his expectations by  
several hundred pounds; that the Salesman took no trouble  
and swallowed three-fourths of the produce; and his task in  
the world seemed to be writing books for no payment. The  
latter statement must be accepted as relative, for he estimated his  
literary income at £200 a year. Fraser had died in October 1841,  
and Chapman and Hall now became his publishers.<sup>5</sup>

On March 1st news came that Mrs. Welsh had been seized  
with a stroke of apoplexy at Templand; and Mrs. Carlyle, beside  
herself with grief, started the same evening for Liverpool. Carlyle  
writes thus of her departure from Euston, whither he escorted  
her: "Never shall I forget her look as she sat in the railway  
carriage, seat next the window, still close by me, but totally silent;  
her beautiful eyes full of sorrowful affection, gloomy pain, and

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 244-5 note.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 247, 250.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 247.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 250-6. Letters J.W.C., i. 139-40.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 256-9. *Reminiscences*, i. 124-5.



1842  
(46) expectation, gazing steadily forward, as if questioning the huge darkness, while the train rolled away." Reaching Liverpool, she was told by her cousins that all was over, that her mother had died on February 25th.<sup>1</sup> They had parted for the last time in the preceding September, when Mrs. Welsh had attended her daughter to Dumfries to meet Carlyle and return to London. In the *Reminiscences*,<sup>2</sup> Carlyle describes how they watched her, from his sister's house, "tall and graceful, feather in bonnet," vanish into the High Street. He concludes: "What a thing is Life; bounded thus by Death!"

On receiving the news he wrote at once to his wife, and two days later followed her to Liverpool. "Our good mother, then, is away for ever," runs his letter. ". . . Weep, my darling, for it is altogether sad and stern, the consummation of sorrows, the greatest, as I hope, that awaits thee in this world. . . ." <sup>3</sup> Mrs. Carlyle was too ill for further travelling; and Carlyle proceeded alone to Templand, where he remained two months, dealing with the necessary details of business. Not bearing to be present at the household sale, he spent the day at Crawford Churchyard, twenty miles distant, where Mrs. Welsh lay buried. His first plan was to keep the house as a place of refuge, but it was abhorrent to Mrs. Carlyle. She had meanwhile returned to Chelsea, with her Liverpool cousin, Jeannie, to give rein to her many "remorses," as Carlyle calls them, for the "manifold little collisions with her fine high-minded, but often fanciful and fitful Mother"; <sup>4</sup> and to derive some comfort from continuing the allowances to her mother's "poor people." <sup>5</sup>

Under these tragic circumstances began a friendship, that was to endure while life lasted, with Mrs. Russell, wife of Dr. Russell of Templand, who had soothed Mrs. Welsh's death-bed; and to whom, in sending tokens of remembrance, she wrote, "The dying blessing of such a pure fervent heart as hers cannot have been pronounced on you in vain." <sup>6</sup>

Early in May Carlyle returned to Chelsea; and, looking back upon the sorrowful months, he afterwards regrets that his sympathy was "not perfect," and that on one occasion he showed

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 140-1.

<sup>2</sup> Froude, iii. 235.

<sup>3</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 141-7.

<sup>4</sup> I. 150-1.

<sup>5</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 123.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 148.



impatience.<sup>1</sup> The Craigenputtock income of about £200, which Mrs. Carlyle had surrendered to her mother, now became theirs ; and though they did not change their simple habits, the *pinch* of poverty became a gentle *pressure*.<sup>2</sup> "Oh Jeannie," he had previously written, "what a blessing for us now that we fronted poverty instead of her doing it."<sup>3</sup>

While at Templand Carlyle had some correspondence with Lockhart, a man whom he esteemed above the common, though their intercourse was slight.<sup>4</sup> Froude tells that on his return journey he visited Naseby field, in company with Dr. Arnold of Rugby.<sup>5</sup> He now settled to his task, while Mrs. Carlyle, who was taskless—a fact which Carlyle sympathetically bore in mind and strove to remedy—sat with her cousin in the low room extending through the whole breadth of the house. "There they sew, read, see company, and keep it out of my way. Poor Jane is still very sad, takes fits of crying, and is perhaps still more sorrowful when she does not cry."<sup>6</sup>

The birthday which she dreaded in July was gladdened by an unexpected present from her husband. After describing in a letter his horror of shopping, she says, "Well, he actually risked himself in a jeweller's shop, and bought me a very nice smelling-bottle." And she adds some illuminating remarks on his consideration in great matters and indifference to small, due to "his up-bringing, and the severe turn of mind he has from nature."<sup>7</sup> Carlyle never after omitted this attention for the rest of her life.

Early in August he joined Spring Rice in a short yachting cruise. From Ostend they took train to Bruges—where the pictures of Rubens laid less hold of Carlyle's imagination than the worshippers in the Cathedral—and from there to Ghent.<sup>8</sup> On August 10th Mrs. Carlyle left for Troston, St. Edmundsbury, Suffolk, where she spent some weeks as the guest of Mrs. Buller. Reginald Buller, the youngest of Carlyle's former pupils, was Rector of Troston ; and, among friends of old standing, something of Mrs. Carlyle's vivacity returned to her. Always responsive

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 122. Letters J.W.C., i. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 144.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 257.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, iii. 241.

<sup>5</sup> Froude, iii. 253-4.

<sup>7</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 150.

<sup>8</sup> Froude, iii. 259-72.

1842  
(46) to affection, in spite of superficial sarcasm, she describes how, on her arrival, "Mrs. Buller met me with open arms (literally), and called me 'dear, dear Mrs. Carlyle'; which, from a woman so little expansive, was highly flattering." She reports sleeplessness caused by nocturnal noises, and misdoubted Reginald's power to save souls.<sup>1</sup>

Early in September Carlyle followed his wife to Troston, and thence made a four days' riding-tour into Cromwell's country, visiting Ely, St. Ives, Huntingdon. The heart of Sterling must have been gladdened by a letter containing such a passage as this, inspired by Ely Cathedral: "To-night, as the heaving bellows blew, and the yellow sunshine streamed in through those high windows, and my footfalls and the poor country lad's were the only sounds from below, I looked aloft, and my eyes filled with very tears to look at all this. . . ." <sup>2</sup> He fell in with Jocelyn de Brakelonde's Chronicle, which, with the sight of the paupers in St. Ives Workhouse, proved the germ of *Past and Present*.<sup>3</sup>

The composition of this book occupied the autumn; *Cromwell* still proving intractable, and the fruitless labour thereon engendering self-accusations of "sinful, disgraceful sloth."<sup>4</sup> At the close of the year he received a visit from Tennyson, who impressed him as "a right hearty talker; and one of the powerfulest smokers I have ever worked along with in that department."<sup>5</sup>

1843  
(47) The labour of *Past and Present* extended into the year '43, but it was published by the end of March or beginning of April, and met with immediate success.<sup>6</sup> Sterling had first told Carlyle that his nature was political;<sup>7</sup> and now that he was himself liberated from material cares, his spirits were weighed down by the condition of the working classes. An event nearer home was the departure of Alick and his family for Canada on June 25th. "You are not to think," wrote Carlyle in the days preceding, "it is a *final* leave you are taking of any of us . . . the whole of them may have to go out to *you*. . . . There is positively no existence for an industrious tiller of the soil in this country in our day; and the view I have of the days that are coming often makes me shudder." As usual his thoughts revert to the mother,

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 152-82.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 269.

<sup>3</sup> Froude, iii. 277.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., iii. 279.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 279-80.

<sup>6</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 103.

<sup>7</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 282.



and he adds : "She is the saddest and the tenderest sight we have in this world."<sup>1</sup> The Carlyles were a clannish family ; what each had was the property of all ; and the £500 with which Alick landed in America was the joint gift of Carlyle and John.<sup>2</sup>

1843  
(47)

In July Carlyle paid a visit to a Welsh admirer, Mr. Redwood, who lived at Cowbridge, west of Cardiff : Mrs. Carlyle preferring to remain in London and oversee a vast house-cleaning revolution. Mr. Redwood was a lawyer, "dreadfully unenterprising," but with the virtue of leaving his guest alone and not exposing him to local lionisation. Carlyle led the simple life that he loved for a period—riding, bathing, and lying on the grass. He summed up his host as "a really excellent man," and was impressed by his venerable mother, "with her suet dumplings, and all her innocent household gods."<sup>3</sup>

A visit to the Bishop of St. David's succeeded ; and thence he journeyed to Liverpool, where he met John. The two returned to North Wales and climbed Snowdon, after which Carlyle set off for Annandale.<sup>4</sup> In August he writes to Edward FitzGerald about a prospective visit to Naseby : but according to Froude this had already taken place in the early summer of '42 with Dr. Arnold. He mentions having seen Gloucester and Worcester battlefields on his recent travels, "and made mighty little of them."<sup>5</sup>

Ample letters of the period from Mrs. Carlyle are extant, and it is clear that dealing single-handed with the painters was no martyrdom : though her nerves were tired by the screeching of pumice-stone over the door of the room in which she sat, and by a certain youth among the painters who sang snatches of song. She had her circle of friends—Mazzini, Sterling, Geraldine Jewsbury, and many others—and she reports their doings and conversation to Carlyle with unabated brilliancy : denouncing Lady Harriet Baring as an "arch coquette" ; or applying the touchstone of common sense to Mazzini's revolutionary fantasies, much as the year before she had reflected on the Rev. Reginald Buller's soul-saving power. The second week of August she made a journey to Ryde with her constant admirer, the elder

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 288-92.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., i. 293.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 296-8. Froude, iii. 306.

<sup>4</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 262.

<sup>5</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 299-300.



1843  
(47) Sterling ; but, having endured purgatory from coarsely appointed hotels and insect-infested beds, she was glad to return in a few days to Chelsea, and be welcomed by her once erring servant Helen with kisses and screams of joy. Unfortunately, insects of the same kind were found nearer home, in the bed of the said Helen, despite her vehement denials ; and Mrs. Carlyle's heroic efforts in their annihilation must be reckoned in a fair balancing of her qualities. Her delight in receiving letters from her husband seemed to have undergone no diminution since the days of Craigenputtock. "He is a jewel of a postman," she writes ; "whenever he has put a letter from you into the box, he both knocks and rings, that not a moment may be lost in taking possession of it."<sup>1</sup>

Still sore at heart, she had entreated Carlyle to go from Scotsbrig to Thornhill and visit the Russells and her mother's old servants. This he did, though she afterwards denounced the request as selfish, saying she would not go herself for a thousand guineas.<sup>2</sup> The preceding April Carlyle had sent a copy of *Past and Present* to Mrs. Russell ; and Mrs. Carlyle wrote : "To think that he should have finished a Book and no copy sent to Templand ! When I saw him writing *your* name instead, I could do nothing but cry."<sup>3</sup>

Before the end of August Carlyle visited Dunbar battlefield from Haddington, where he stayed with "the excellent old Misses Donaldson," of whom much will be heard later. He returned for a few days to Scotsbrig, and thence left for Edinburgh and Dundee, where he took steamer to London.<sup>4</sup> He expressed delight at the improvements, including a new work-room on a higher floor ; but on the fourth day a forgotten pianoforte tinkled in his ear, and a second revolution had to be undertaken. Mrs. Carlyle, but lately delivered from "a regular mess," had to see dirt, lime, whitewash, oil, paint, predominate again. Up went the carpets which she had nailed down with her own hands ; a partition was removed, a fire-place instituted ; and a new study, in the shape of a converted dressing-room, above all noise, lay before Carlyle. Even then, the "strangeness" of the situation hampered his power to work ; but, as Mrs. Carlyle wisely remarked, genius is no sinecure, and the true cause of the trouble

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 194-261.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 103.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 234, 246.

<sup>4</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 255, 257.

was the intractability of *Cromwell*.<sup>1</sup> It was mid December 1843 before the plan of the book, as it came to be, suggested itself to (47) Carlyle; and on the relinquishment of the formal biography, there was another burning of manuscript.<sup>2</sup>

In after-years Carlyle looked back upon *Cromwell* as the most 1844 painful of his books next to *Frederick*, and he realised all that his (48) wife had done to screen him from unnecessary pain, and preserve her hoping, cheerful humour, though she suffered much from cough in the winter season and headache at all times.<sup>3</sup> Four years of toil had shown him that no adequate biography of Cromwell could be written, but his Letters and Speeches might be edited. These were a "series of fixed rock-summits, in the infinite ocean of froth, confusion, lies and stupidity. . . ." <sup>4</sup> In March he reports that the book is getting under way; and though there were set-backs, described in metaphors of "Chaos" and "Golgotha," it was the beginning of better things.<sup>5</sup> His neighbours suppressed their piano sounds till 2 p.m., the term of his writing-day; and after that hour the effect of the music on him was a soothing reminder of their civility.<sup>6</sup>

Acquaintance with the Barings had developed in the last two years, and in the present year Carlyle and his wife began to visit them at their Addiscombe villa, and the Grange in Hampshire—then the property of Mr. Baring's father, Lord Ashburton. As the ground of Carlyle's friendship with Lady Harriet Baring has been repeatedly fought over in the Carlyle Armageddon, no writer of his life can shirk the issue. Let us, however, recall how, in the old orthodox days, Huxley complained that free travel in the kingdom of Thought would be hindered by a fence, and the warning, "No Admittance, By Order, Moses"; but contact proved it a mere aggregation of rotten brushwood! Well, no one at the present day can believe that Carlyle's friendship with Lady Harriet was of a romantic nature—or that the causes of Mrs. Carlyle's dislike of it in later years were other than her own nervous exhaustion. And in the foregoing pages enough has been already said of Carlyle's pleasure in conversation, refined surroundings, and the companionship of women.

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 264-8. New Letters T.C., i. 301-2.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 303.

<sup>3</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 188.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 304.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 308, 310, 313, 321.

<sup>6</sup> Froude, iii. 335.



1844  
(48) Mrs. Carlyle said of Lady Harriet that there was "something in her like a Heathen Goddess"; and it is agreed that she was not regularly beautiful.<sup>1</sup> But she had exalted social position, wealth, great powers of conversation, and an independence of judgment and freedom from cant which Carlyle honoured. His friendship with Mr. Baring was based on accordance of views.<sup>2</sup> A day-visit to Addiscombe had taken place the preceding year;<sup>3</sup> but apparently the first staying visit was that of Mrs. Carlyle alone in March or April 1844; and the impression she carried away was that the cost of superior splendour was inferior comfort.<sup>4</sup>

News that his mother was ailing brought Carlyle a shock in the spring. "Alas, we cannot have our brave old Mother always; it is the saddest thought I have in this world, the sternest to accustom myself to!"<sup>5</sup> This passage occurs in a letter to Alick, who was about to settle on land of his own in Canada: and before the end of the year good tidings came of his progress. Carlyle had written: "A piece of God's Earth committed to your own free charge; it is a real blessing for a man that lives by tilling of the soil."<sup>6</sup>

Now that he had settled into his book, Carlyle intended to work through the summer without leaving London. The task was uncongenial, as he records in his Journal, but conscience drove him on; and in the same shadowed page he writes: "The figure of Age, of grey-haired weakness, twilight, and the inevitable night, never came on me so forcibly as this year. . . . Thou art verily growing old, and thou hast never been young. . . ." <sup>7</sup>

About the third week of June Mrs. Carlyle went to Liverpool on a month's visit to her uncle; and she made an intervening visit to the Paulets, "extensive merchant people," friends of Geraldine Jewsbury's, in the neighbourhood. Writing to Carlyle, she regrets the indolence into which her cousins had sunk, and how the only earnest thing left in them was the love of dress. She concludes: "How grateful I ought to be to you, dear, for having rescued me out of the young-lady sphere!" And at times her uncle pained her by allusions in the wrong strain to her mother.

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 118-19.

<sup>2</sup> *Reminiscences*, i. 119.

<sup>3</sup> *New Letters T.C.*, i. 310.

<sup>4</sup> Froude, iii. 342.

<sup>5</sup> *Letters J.W.C.*, i. 276-7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 308-10.

<sup>7</sup> Froude, iii. 339.



There is no doubt that the Carlyles were happier with each other than elsewhere ; and a passage like the following proves that the marital squabbles, from which they were no more exempt than other members of the human race, left no bitterness behind.

"I am always wondering since I came here how I can, even in my angriest mood, talk about leaving you for good and all ; for to be sure, if I were to leave you to-day on that principle, I should need absolutely to go back to-morrow to see how you were taking it." The arrival of Geraldine Jewsbury before the middle of July, her wish to monopolise Mrs. Carlyle, her "Tiger-jealousy" at the defeat of her plans, and her outbursts of hysterics and impertinence at the expense of the Paulet and Welsh families : all this is told in Mrs. Carlyle's letters, and should be remembered by impartial students. For, according to Froude, Miss Jewsbury was Mrs. Carlyle's closest friend ; and he based his theories on the revelations of a woman so little competent to think in a disinterested manner. Mrs. Carlyle's birthday (forty-three) fell on July 14th, the week before her return to London ; and she received by post from Carlyle the present that had such tender associations. "I cried over it and laughed over it, and could not sufficiently admire the graceful idea," she wrote.<sup>1</sup>

Early in July Carlyle had visited the Barings at Addiscombe, and recorded an impression in a letter to his wife : "Real good breeding, as the people have it here, is one of the finest things now going in the world. The careful avoidance of all discussion, the swift hopping from topic to topic, does not agree with me ; but the graceful skill they do it with is beyond that of minuets."<sup>2</sup>

In August sad news came from Ventnor of Sterling's health : and he died on September 18th. The story of his decline has been fully told in the immortal biography ; but some sentences from Carlyle's letter to him of August 27th cannot be omitted : "My Friend, my brave Sterling ! A right valiant man ; very beautiful, very dear to me ; whose like I shall not see again in this world ! . . . We are journeying towards the Grand Silence ; what lies beyond it earthly man has never known, nor will know ; but all brave men have known that it was Godlike, that it was right Good—that the name of it was GOD. . . . My Wife is all

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 278-90. New Letters J.W.C., i. 136-55.

<sup>2</sup> Froude, iii. 343-4.

1844 in tears : no tear of mine, dear Sterling, shall, if I can help it,  
(48) deface a scene so sacred. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

About the middle of September Carlyle spent a week at the Grange with the Barings.<sup>2</sup> Enough has been said of his liking for persons of social distinction ; it remains to suggest why the feeling was reciprocated. Carlyle was typical of what is best in the Scottish character ; and he has told us that the fundamental thought of Presbyterian Scotland was man's direct responsibility to God. To fear God and be fearless of men, like Burns's father, is to be a complete man. Reverence, disinterestedness, independence give natural dignity to the character. On one side they exclude servility, and on the other the bad manners of the modern socialist who believes in nothing and recognises no authority.

During his absence Mrs. Carlyle plied him with her usual entertaining letters, describing the oddities of the many visitors who frequented her saloon : in no unkind spirit, and combining a zest for social life with the detachment of common sense and a superior nature.<sup>3</sup> Writing to Mrs. Russell in November, she held out hopes that even the Cromwell lane might have a turning, and that her husband would then revert to a consciousness of his daily life : adding that, however deeply a book engrossed him during its writing, he was the first to forget it when written.<sup>4</sup>

We must conclude the year with a sentence from one of Carlyle's typical letters to his mother, written on December 5th, the day after his birthday : " My ever-loved Mother, I salute you with my affection once more, and thank you for bringing me into this world, and for all your unwearied care over me there." <sup>5</sup>

1845 It was not till February that the form of *Cromwell* as we know  
(49) it, as a collection of Letters and Speeches with explanatory notes, was definitely fixed—and even then Carlyle hints that a separate biography might follow.<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Carlyle had suffered much from a cough in the past winter and the present spring, being confined four months to the house.<sup>7</sup> In April she records a visit from Jeffrey ; <sup>8</sup> and her incidental remark later in the year,

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 318-19.

<sup>2</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 292-6.

<sup>3</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 323.

<sup>7</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 292.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 297.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., i. 324.

<sup>8</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 300-1.



that his former mocking allusion to her "bits of convictions" lost him her correspondence, is interesting to note.<sup>1</sup> In June Carlyle purchased a horse and resumed his daily two-hour rides : writing to Alick, now settled in Brantford, Canada, how much he regretted the want of his advice in the transaction.<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Carlyle still shrank from Scotland, but about July 22nd she again visited her uncle in Liverpool.<sup>3</sup> Her cousins, as before, were enticed by no higher ideals than dress ; but she derived amusement from her uncle's rages at cards and her own refusal to attend church. On August 1st she removed to the Paulets at Seaforth, repaying with her brilliant conversation the kindnesses they heaped upon her.<sup>4</sup>

Carlyle finished *Cromwell* in the last days of August, and immediately after joined his wife at Seaforth. He had apparently vacillated before making up his mind to start on a particular day ; but Mrs. Carlyle's letter of remonstrance is far from deserving the epithet of Froude : indeed, its worst sentence is this : " I am quite angry, and that is the truth of it ; for if I had thought you were to dawdle so long, I would have been at home with you by this time." <sup>5</sup> Next day she described herself restored to her normal state of amiability, and expressed contrition for her " little movement of impatience."

After spending a week together, Mrs. Carlyle returned to London, and Carlyle went north to Scotsbrig. The spirit of home breathes through a letter which he wrote to Alick far off in Canada. The Mother was unchanged, he said, except that her hands shook a little more. " It is beautiful to see how in the gradual decay of all other strength, the strength of her heart and affection still survives. . . . We were talking last night of the death of Margaret—that unforgettable night when you and I rode down from Craigenputtock. . . . Let us be thankful for many blessings such as fall to the lot of few. Good Parents whom you *can* honour, it is the foundation of all good for a man." <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 322.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters T.C., i. 325.

<sup>3</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 310-32.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 162-74.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., i. 171-2. Froude writes (Letters J.W.C., i. 331) : " She had written him an angry letter about his changes of plan, which had disturbed her own arrangements."

<sup>6</sup> New Letters T.C., ii. 2-3.



1845  
(49)] Carlyle prolonged his stay into October, revising the last proofs of *Cromwell*, and reading in his leisure a book on Frederick the Great: the first time that momentous name occurs in his history.<sup>1</sup> From Chelsea Mrs. Carlyle sent forth her lively chronicle of daily passages: now she touched with light satire the unmethodical habits of John Carlyle, who was staying with her; now it was Mazzini's persistence in paying visits through tempestuous weather, and treading her floors with water oozing from his doe-skin boots. A chained-up dog, the property of a neighbouring washerman, had disturbed Carlyle at his work in the preceding summer by unlimited barking. Mrs. Carlyle undertook that the nuisance should be removed, and effected it by means of a witty note: so that the dog went about in the yard "like any other Christian dog," carrying out Carlyle's principle of silence.<sup>2</sup> She strikes a graver note in her description of old Sterling—much broken since the death of his wife and son, suffering from loss of memory, and tortured by apprehension of madness.<sup>3</sup> A call on Lady Harriet at Bath House produced an illuminating remark on the characters of both: "I dare say, in spite of Mrs. Buller's predictions, we shall get on very well together; although I can see that the Lady has a genius for *ruling*, whilst I have a genius for *not being ruled*!"<sup>4</sup>

It must have been about the middle of October when Carlyle returned to Chelsea; and *Cromwell* was advertised for publication on November 22nd.<sup>5</sup> The year concluded with a six weeks' visit to the Barings at Bay House, Alverstoke, on "the mild Hampshire coast," near Portsmouth. Carlyle sums up the existence as pleasant but *idle*, and adds: "One wonders how a human Day is made to eat its own head off in so complete a manner! Most beautiful, most elegant, princely; but in the long run it would be suicidal."<sup>6</sup> On December 30th, soon after their return, Mrs. Carlyle thus delineates her late hostess: "This Lady Harriet Baring . . . is the very cleverest woman, out of sight, that I ever saw in my life . . . moreover, she is full of energy and sincerity, and has, I am sure, an excellent heart; yet so perverted has she been by the training and life-long

<sup>1</sup> New Letters T.C., ii. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 334-52.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 353, 358. New Letters J.W.C., i. 177-8.

<sup>4</sup> New Letters J.W.C., i. 175-7. <sup>5</sup> New Letters T.C., ii. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., ii. 12.

humouring incident to her high position that I question if in her whole life she has done as much for her fellow-creatures as my mother in one year. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The abolition of the Corn Laws in December brought joy of an impersonal kind to Carlyle, and corrected his former slighting estimation of Peel.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letters J.W.C., i. 361-2.

<sup>2</sup> New Letters T.C., ii. 12.

## CHAPTER XXII

### "PAST AND PRESENT": ANALYSIS

I. 1. ENGLAND is in a strange condition, full of wealth but dying of inanition. Fifteen million cunning workers realise the fruit, and no one may touch it, for it is enchanted. Of these, two millions sit in Workhouses, their cunning right hand lamed, with the earth crying, Come and till me, come and reap me ! . . . In thrifty Scotland there is such misery as one may hope the sun never saw before. A Poor-law is but an anodyne, yet Scotland too must have a Poor-law. . . . We hear of parents who kill their children, as in some Ugolino Hunger Tower, to obtain the burial fees. The stern Hebrew imagination conceived no blacker gulf of wretchedness. . . . England's plethoric wealth has enriched no one : some men live in greater luxury yet are no happier. The Master-Worker is likewise enchanted, and the Master-Unworker still worse off in his game-preserves, with his Corn Law. No one is the better for England's wealth ; paralysis is spreading inward toward the heart.

2. Nature, like the Sphinx, propounds her riddle, " Knowest thou the meaning of this day ? What thou canst do To-day, wisely attempt to do." Those who do not answer she destroys. Nations too must rede the riddle of Destiny. Unhappy men and nations who part company with eternal inner Facts and follow Semblances. Judgment may be delayed, but the great soul of the world is *just*. All religions have recognised this, and to forget it is to have the whole Universe against you. Parliament is old and its Acts venerable, but if they correspond not with the writing on the " Adamant Tablet," they are nothing. And what is Law-logic compared to the Court of Courts, whither all causes are crowding ? The grand question is, Was the judgment just ? In this God's world there is nothing but justice ; and no bonfires, leading articles, or " success " can support an unjust thing. . . . But all this confusion is tending towards a centre of right, and only the heaviest will reach the centre. The fighter will prosper according to his right, and in the end right and might will be the same. . . . The inference is that the



Temporary is being exalted over the Eternal, and the Sphinx riddle left unanswered. . . . What is Justice? ask many, like Pilate. Embodied Justice is visible, but unembodied is invisible, except to the noble. Those who see it stand between a Nation and perdition.

3. Continental democrats called the Manchester insurrection lamblike because a few shots dispersed a million men. If so, it was because the Injustice to be attacked had no visible shape. Insurrection is a sad necessity and means much loss and waste. Peterloo, with its memory of work-worn men and women slashed with sabres, has left behind a treasury of rage. But these poor operatives have articulated the law of Fact and Justice, "What do you mean to do with us? Lead us towards work or not?" Fair wages for fair work is the everlasting right of man, and only in these times of Dilettantism and Mammonism does it sound impossible. It is difficult but not impossible, for Heaven's justice is behind all these entanglements. . . . What wages, it may be asked, did Milton and Cromwell get? . . . True apportioning of work and wages would mean God's Kingdom on Earth. . . . But, apart from perfection, Society holds together by *approximation*, and the Manchester operatives have found the present system insupportable. The world has retrograded in its talent for dividing wages, and must now face the problem. A horse is assured of food and lodging, why not a man? The word *impossible* is of awful omen.

4. We can suggest no Morrison's Pill as a remedy. There must be a parting with luxuries and return to nature, that the inner fountains of life may again irradiate existence. Besides obvious reforms, many things will then be doable, for justice will not be obscured by jargon. Meanwhile we are cureless, not based on Nature and Fact. How can Honesty come from a world of Knaves governed by Quacks? To begin with, let each descend into his inner man and attempt to find traces of a soul. One thing after another will then appear possible. It will be worth doing, to free the world from Devil-worship and make it a God's world. And remember that Quack and Dupe are convertible.

5. A man when miserable should blame himself for quitting Nature's Laws; and it is the same with Nations. We must find wiser men to govern us, the Reform Bill being a failure. This is God's message, that we must be truer to Nature's fact or we shall die. But how are we to get an Aristocracy of Talent which will truly govern, and not merely take the wages of governing? Let each of us acquire a true *eye* for talent. Bobus would not reverence the manliest man, if his coat were ragged. He admires not talent but the fame of talent: not even his own talent,

but what it brings him. . . . The worst sign of Unwisdom is when a Nation cannot get its wise to govern it. Unwisdom then overshadows all things and makes the life-tree a upas-tree. Government needs Collective wisdom, and the less wisdom there is the worse it will be collected, and the saying of the Gospel fulfilled.

6. Enlightened egoism is no sufficing rule for men. The bond of Society must be other than "Supply-and-demand," Cash-payment. Man has a soul which must be resuscitated from its asphyxia, and the process may be painful and even lead through Chaos. . . . The remedy is to do our Hero-worship better; for it is the essence of all worship and soul of all social business. But we must first be ourselves of heroic mind and put away our flunkeyism. Then we can demand the arrest of all knaves and dastards. Thou and I, reader, can make, each of us, one non-flunkey. Hero-kings and a world not unheroic is the port towards which the stern Supreme Powers are driving us. . . . This total change is sad news to a Public demanding a Morrison's Pill. Words are hard, but less hard than the events they foreshadow, and may save a soul here and there. For a Loadstar does appear through all cloud-tempests, towards which we are to turn our ship's prow. The present Editor does not pretend to instruct men to know Wisdom and Heroism, but such should be the object of all writing and editing. He will now endeavour to illustrate the Present from the Past; for Life is like Igdrasil, the same Life-tree in all times and places.

II. 1. The book of a certain Jocelin of Brakelond, a St. Edmundsbury Monk, seven centuries old, has come to light. He was a Norman Englishman, and lived in subaltern officiality for six years beside the Abbot. A kind of Boswell, ingenuous, shrewd, quick-witted, veracious—the basis of genius—with the heart of a child: his whole life being that of a child in the Monastery cradle. He wrote his Chronicle in Dog-Latin, and the work of editing has now been well done. The cheery smiling Jocelin is but a small Boswell, and an imperfect mirror of the past; yet he shows that England in 1200 was no dreamland but a solid corn-growing place. Men rose to labour and returned home weary; there were changes of joy and sorrow, rest and toil. King John once boarded a fortnight at the Convent; and Jocelin, writing only of what interests *him*, deaf to *us*, tells nothing, not even the coat he wore, only that he left behind thirteen-pence to say a mass. Yet even this is a Fact, distinct from all Fiction.

2. Bury St. Edmund is still a prosperous Suffolk town, and on its eastern edge are the monastic ruins. The town owed its existence to the Abbey, itself owner of wide lands and revenues: as we know from the pedantic details which make the past a grey



void. Yet these walls are a fact, and another world was when they first saw the sun. Men then had a *soul*, which they have now lost and must search for, or worse will befall. What is now an old ruin was once the arena of a life-wrestle : an islet of life surrounded by the illimitable ocean to which we have become blind and deaf. . . . To cross the chasm of seven centuries a Boswell is a welcome help—even a small Boswell who has veracity and simplicity. The old centuries melt from opaque to translucent, transparent here and there.

3. The battle of Fornham, the year before Jocelin became a novice : this too was a fact proved by the unearthed skeletons. . . . Three centuries before lived Landlord Edmund : and strangely enough his tenants did not burn his wheat-stacks, but loved, even worshipped him. His life, now a myth, was once a prose fact, and he had to subdue contradictions. He rose to favour by walking with God, and struggling to make the earth heavenly, rather than "encourage trade." The story says that he was tortured and put to death by the Danes, whom he persisted in opposing : and that these Danes were Ultra-Tories who would live without working. He belonged to the only true order of Nobility, that of Just men. Nothing lifts men from their mean imprisonments so much as admiration ; therefore Edmund's body was embalmed and his memory consecrated. Munificence provided a shrine, which grew to stately masonries and long-drawn arches. Regimented companies of men withdrew here to meditate ; a Monastery has sprung from St. Edmund's body. . . . In a thousand years perhaps all Lancashire and Yorkshire will be like a monument to Arkwright.

4. Ideals must seek bed and board, as they grow out of the Real and have their appointed periods, including death and disappearance. Abbot Hugo, says Jocelin, had grown old and blind, listened to flatterers, and let the Convent get into debt. He raised money for repairs from Jews, and had none to repay, so that in a few years £200 became £800. . . . We hear much about these things, but little of personal religion ; and this is a sign of health. There was no doubt or root of doubt, but religion formed an all-embracing heavenly canopy, like a life-element, not spoken of. Our Lord Abbot is fast losing his life-blood, and the King, hearing of this, sends down his Almoner. But the Monk's duty is obedience ; and no one dare complain lest he should be sentenced to solitary confinement and bread and water. Soon after, Abbot Hugo bethought him of pilgriming to Canterbury ; and a timely fall from his mule delivered him from Jew usurers by ending his life.

5. Strange does this monk-life appear through a vista of centuries, yet it was a fact. The perpetually illuminated shrine glowed



ruddy through the night, and there was the yearly round of preachings and festivals. Rich and poor were backward to pay "reaping silver"; of the latter, our collector has even to confiscate the house door: on which old women rush out on him with distaffs. Thanks to thee, Jocelin Boswell, we know that other things went on besides the Crusades. . . . England's Feudal Aristocracy is in the prime of life—judging, soldiering, adjusting, governing the people. Gurth, thrall of Cedric, lacks not parings of the pigs he tends. . . . North of the Humber William I had burnt the country into stern repose; wild fowl scream in those ancient silences; and a sulky Norse-bred population feel their history has ended. Side by side sleep the coal and iron strata; Manchester spins no cotton; Liverpool is no monstrous pitchy City and Sea haven of the world.

6. Our religion is no restless doubt or cant but an Unquestionability, inter-penetrating the whole of life. We are imperfect, but we realise that this Time-world is no reality; that it flickers like an air-image in the grand still mirror of Eternity. Of man's little life only the duties are great and go up to heaven and down to hell. Now man's duty to man is handing him certain coins. . . . We have not much occupation in our Monastery, and tend rather to gossip. . . . Let us note one Monk called Samson, grave, taciturn, erect as a pillar, age forty-seven, not a favourite. His face is massive, with a very eminent nose, almost bald, but copious ruddy beard. He had studied and taught in Paris, been sent to Rome on a mission, had suffered imprisonment on his return. But no severity could make him complain, or kindness soften him to thanks.

7. At last our prayers are to be granted and we are to have an Abbot. Many names are canvassed, and qualities dissected by gossip: only Brother Samson is silent. The Prior with twelve monks goes to the King at Waltham for the election. People reveal themselves in their choice of a man. Whom dost thou honour? There is the test of thy herohood or flunkeyhood.

8. On Samson's advice a Committee is formed, who write the names of three whom they think fittest on a paper and seal it. They do it with their eye on the Sacrosancta: and when men have souls such is their best electoral winnowing machine. . . . The thirteen set off across Newmarket towards Waltham, leaving those at home to gossip and dream of the Abbot that should be, and hear rumours from the townsfolk. . . . On February 22, 1182, the thirteen obtain access to King Henry II, surrounded by dignitaries, in a Hall now sunk in the deep distances of Night! The King bids them fix on three, and this being already done, the seals are broken, and, to the surprise of all, Samson's name is first. At the King's command,

more names are added, and then struck off, till two remain : and the demand is for Samson. The King consents, though, not knowing Samson, he looks somewhat sternly, and warns them not to manage badly. Then, impressed by Samson's demeanour, he calls him a likely man who will govern the Abbey well. . . . Thus without ballot-box has the most important feat been done of finding the right man to govern. . . .

9. Samson returns amid public rejoicings : from a poor mendicant made one of the dignitaries of the world. We can now take his measure, for the noble soul enters prosperity as his due element : the ignoble shows all his weaknesses enlarged. That the fit governor should be recognised in a poor man is a tribute to those barbarous ages. The Arabs kindled bonfires when a Poet showed himself among them : to us, amid our canting and hearsaying, Burns was vouchsafed from Nature's fire-heart, and we set him to gauge ale-barrels : while George III was King in a world nearing dissolution. . . . Samson found a dilapidated Convent, beset by Jew harpies. He had no experience in governing, but he soon learned the ways of business. For he hated unverity and had known how to obey, and suffering had taught him what many a Serene Highness lacks. First get your right man : and he will learn to do all things.

10. Jocelin Boswell now tells how Samson set about the true governing of men. His first duty was the reform of economics by increased industry and thrift. He had trouble with the unjust and lazy, but with his clear beaming eyesight he gradually made *kosmos* out of chaos. He has a mild grave face, a thoughtful sternness, a sorrowful pity ; but also a terrible flash of anger, which he is careful to suppress. In less than four years the debts were liquidated and the harpy Jews banished. Bibations too must end, and drunken dissolute Monks had best keep out of Samson's way.

11. He showed no extraordinary favour to his former friends, and was thus accused of ingratitude. He promoted only "fit men" ; he loved his kindred but found none fit to promote. He did not forget benefits, but paid them at his own cost, not at the public cost by advancing blockheads. Once he exempted from a fine a man who had lodged him in his need, and exacted it from another who had refused him : and this was an instance of justice. He was the most just of men, and without clear vision of the heart there can be none of the head. He had the gift of silence, containing much rage in his secret mind at the things he saw. He loved many to whom he showed no countenance of love ; he suffered faults and waited a fit time to speak of them ; he would have no eavesdropping ; he was accessible to all. Liars, drunkards and wordy persons he liked worst, and those who murmured at their meat and drink. Indifferent to such things,



he yet maintained due opulence of table. . . . His part in hunting was to sit in a forest-opening and watch the dogs run : the forests that clothed all England and have now rotted into peat.

12. Like all true governors his life was one of trouble. He must keep the accounts himself owing to the Cellarer's negligence. . . . The Monks once mutiny ; Samson leaves the Monastery, and wild rumours circulate ; then he returns, and all ends in reconciliation. He weeps when he sees they are conquered, and says he went away till his anger should cool. Daily he grows greyer, but his eyes remain clear-beaming. . . . Gleams of hilarity visit him ; he has his little triumphs, answering by pregnant word or act great noblemen or Pope's Legates, justice being on his side. . . . But it remains sore work, and he once said that with three pound ten of yearly revenue to support himself in the schools he would not have become Monk or Abbot. . . . Easier perhaps for him, but a world overgrown with Solecisms would have lost. . . . And noble literature is no light task. . . .

13. He had much public business beside, and once, when Cœur-de-Lion was away and Lackland would usurp, he took up arms in person. . . . In Parliament he avowed himself ready to seek King Richard ; and indeed he did. But he refused to despoil St. Edmund's shrine to pay the King's ransom. He said that those who dared might do it : but none came forward.

14. At Reading Monastery Abbot Samson heard the story of Henry Earl of Essex. A haughty high man, he revered not the Heavenly in man, and defrauded St. Edmund's shrine. In King Henry's Parthian-like retreat in the Welsh war, his evil genius moved him to shriek out the King was slain and fling down his standard : for which Earl Robert de Montfort called him a coward. Solemn duel was the consequence, where Henry, disconcerted by a vision of St. Edmund, was vanquished and left for dead. But succoured by the Monks of Reading, he assumed their Habit and lived a life of penitence among them. . . . Thus does Conscience, like light through coloured glass, paint strange pictures, and affirm the "sense of the Infinite nature of Duty" to be the central part of us. The "coloured glass" varies with centuries, and in money-making, game-preserving ages gets terribly opaque. But it will once more become translucent ; for to forget Justice and Reverence is to have the Universe against you : like Henry of Essex, whose soul was *lamed*, and he could not even fight.

15. Excommunication is a great recipe with Abbot Samson. He treated so a party of young Nobles who, lodging in the Convent, became uproarious and deprived the Monks of their afternoon nap. A practical man, he outwitted the Bishop of Ely, who



wished to cut timber from his woods. . . . He withstood even Cœur-de-Lion on a point of law, admitting the King's power to abolish the whole Abbey, but fearing an unjust precedent. Richard swore tornado oaths, but finally owned the Priest was right—for he too "loved a man." . . . He lacked not worldly wisdom, for he must needs live *in* the world, and his basis was religion. He would have joined in the Crusades, but King Henry II could not spare him from England; and he grieved bitterly at the loss of the Holy Sepulchre. His heart was simple as a child's, deep and earnest as a man's; and all the earth was a mystic Temple to him, its business a kind of worship. It was Heaven's splendour, Hell's darkness, and the great law of Duty making royal Richard small as peasant Samson. His religion was unconscious; his worship like daily bread which he ate at intervals and spoke not of. How different from self-torturing Methodism, which is but a new phasis of *Egoism*. Better believe thou wilt be damned. Then first is the devouring Universe subdued under thee, and thou art placed above Hope and Fear. . . .

16. Samson did much rebuilding, and, among other things, the great Altar that had been damaged by fire. The culminating moment of his life was a glimpse of the Martyr's Body. Jocelin with unusual solemnity describes the disinterment. Twelve appointed brethren unfixed the Shrine at midnight and opened the Loculus; and the Abbot with infinite reverence touched and spoke to the Body of his Patron. . . . A strange scene of seven centuries back. Hero-worship is the innermost fact of man's existence; if it becomes a Dilettantism, and only Mammonism survives, then will come the iron law of Necessity to astound Dilettantism with French Revolutions, etc. . . . The Loculus is reverently replaced, and we awake to matins: and the Monks wept who had not seen these things. For the Body of Man is the most reverend phenomenon under the sun. . . . After this, Abbot Samson had much journeying to do, to France and elsewhere to confer with King Richard: at which point the narrative ends and impenetrable Time-Curtains rush down. . . .

17. Formulas are real, and useful as skin and muscular tissue while alive, but they die and become thick and ugly. I go from Stoke to worship at Stowe, and next time retread my footprints. Others follow, and wear my path into a highway: but when Stowe disappears, why travel that way? Habit and Imitation are perennial laws; men act in Formulas; thy English Nationality is a second-skin, through which thy mother-quality has to show. Infants may be kneaded and baked into any social form; Business Man, Labourer, Dandy. . . . Men are skinned, thatched, covered with Formulas. . . . If only, as in the days of Samson,

the heart-pulse could be discernible through them ! . . . How hardly has Samson been rescued from Oblivion ! It has swallowed many others of such, whose dust makes up the soil our Life or Tree Igdrasil grows on. Who taught thee to speak ? The coldest word was once a glowing metaphor ; its invention the work of a poet. . . . The first man who bowed the knee at the wonder of the Universe taught us to worship ! It was the beginning of all Prayers and Litanies—even of Puseyisms. . . . In the same way, Venerable Justice, or Wisdom attended by Pedantry, has sprung out of Wild Justice or Club Law. . . . This world is all forgotten work achieved by brave men : the summary of what has accorded with God's truth in the generations. And all who have said or done a wise thing have contributed. The quantity of forgotten work should strike "Fame" into silence. Abbot Samson was not nothing because no one spoke of him. Fame cannot recollect articulately two hundred years back, and when we consider her distortions and uncertainties, the chief comfort is that she forgets us all. . . .

III. 1. But now, it is said, we have forgotten God and believe only in Profit and Loss. Man has lost his soul and begins to feel the want of it. This is the centre of the disease, not to be remedied by Reform Bills, French Revolutions, etc. A Godless world is against Fact, therefore why should any humbug astonish us—such as Mammonism and full Workhouses ? . . . There is the Pope, for instance, who treats religion as a scenic phantasmagory. His system is not without good, as the heroism of the Jesuits in the late Italian cholera proves. And at least he has frankness : he knows his stage-trappings cover an abyss of Atheism, Jacobinism, etc. . . . Another Phantasm nearer home is Aristocracy, with no work to do, and clamorous for higher wages such as Corn Laws, increase of rents. . . . And so we proceed downwards through every stratum of unreality to the lowest of all : those who sit enchanted in St. Ives Workhouses. Advertisement is superseding good work ; the tradesman, instead of making a sound article, would *persuade* us that he has done so. But Nature's Laws are eternal ; no one can depart from them without damaging himself ; and if a whole Nation thus departs, it is journeying towards devouring gulfs, no matter how prosperous it appears. Life is still possible, because Faithfulness, Veracity, Valour remain. Exceed your certain quantity of Unveracity and you advance towards land's end—towards ocean deeps and roaring abysses : unless the Law of Gravitation has forgotten to act !

2. Heaven and Hell are no fable but a fact, symbolising an Infinite of Practical Importance in man's life. If the voice of the Infinite never sounded in thy heart, the cause was thy Animalism,



not thy Liberalism. Hell changes its meaning with the ages, and in modern England it means terror of "Not succeeding." Such a Hell is natural to a Gospel of Mammonism with its corresponding Heaven. (Yet Mammonism is the one Reality, and earnest work to make money is better than idleness.) Our life is not mutual helpfulness but mutual hostility; and, *Cash-payment* being the only bond, the rich mill-owner can plead that he paid fairly his starving workers: as if there were no way but Cain's of killing one's brother. But thus it has been for two hundred years since the blessed Restoration! For all evils proceed from Atheism, including Valetism, the reverse of Heroism. . . . A strange story is that of the poor Irish widow, rejected by all Charities, who took the typhus and infected seventeen others: thus proving her sisterhood. Government of the poor by the rich has been given over to Supply-and-demand. . . .

3. Mammonism at least works, but Dilettantism goes idle, and is therefore still more mournful. A game-preserving, corn-lawing Aristocracy that goes gracefully idle is a new phenomenon in the world. . . . Men speak what they do not think, and insincere speech leads to insincere action; for action hangs *dissolved* in speech. . . . Remember the story of the Dwellers by the Dead Sea changed to apes, because they forgot the inner facts of Nature, and so lost the souls they made no use of.

4. All work is noble, and all dignity painful. The highest religion is the "Worship of Sorrow." Man's wretchedness comes from his pretension to be "happy." Soul has become synonymous with Stomach, and we plead for our "interests." What signifies happiness when To-morrows become Yesterdays so quickly? And there is sanative virtue in troubles. . . . The one unhappiness of a man should be that he cannot work: for work is all that endures.

5. The English are a silent people, and this is well, for the freest utterance is not the best, and the freest of all is the Simian. Man's strength lies written in the work he does; it is the trial of himself against Nature, and he can only succeed by following her laws. The man of Practice will often confute the man of Theory, however adroit and furnished with arrow-arguments; for the Speakable is but a film, while the Doable reaches to the World's centre. . . . The English are stupidest in speech, wisest in action: a dumb nation, melancholy the basis of their character. Others think them stupid; Nature alone knows their bulk and strength. Their unsung Epic is written on the earth in cotton trades, railways, Indian Empires. . . . The Romans and Russians are silent also; but a mighty Empire is a Conquest over Chaos, and deeds are greater than words. John Bull's spoken sense is nothing; but his unspoken sense, his power to work,



to vanquish disorder, is unparalleled. . . . He is a Conservative, mistrusting novelty, and thinking his Customs final and of divine origin. But in the noble silent English People there lies a Berserkir rage ; and persistence in unjust Customs, however old, may kindle it. Let only Truth and Justice be conserved, and, if an injustice is old, let us see that it grows no older. The Corn Laws, for instance, are laying up treasuries of bitter indignation in English hearts. . . .

6. The Settlement of 1660 was one of despair ; it was to govern without God. Puritanism seemed to have failed, and henceforth the task of Government was limited to preserving outward order and raising money. The Church of Hurd and Warburton was a mere reminiscence ; the Anti-Church of Hume and Paine is now getting discredited. In these two hundred years poets sang from the throat outward ; England's spoken word was not true. It is her Practical Material Work that survives. She has turned desert shrubs into cotton-trees that clothe bare backs, bored mountains, opened inexhaustible fuel stores. . . . And instead of honouring the Sons of Toil we confine them by the million in Poor-Law Bastilles ; and the Dilettanti condemn them as "dangerous." Labour is the truest emblem of God on Earth, and when the giant has found his *soul* he will be King.

7. But the Governing Classes accuse the workers of "Over-Production," so that there is a glut of all things. Was it not they who made the laws under which this has come about ? It is not that too many shirts are made, but they are ill apportioned, because Human Laws are not emblems of God's Laws. Two million shirtless men lodge in Workhouse Bastilles, and five million more in Ugolino Hunger-cellars : and the Governors cry, "Raise *our* rents !" "We," they say, "produce only sporting trophies, and consume mountains of things, and allow your "filthy mills" to be built on our land." By this they justify their Corn-law, and threaten to grow no more wheat : as if the land were theirs in the sense that they had created it out of water. . . . To this Idle Aristocracy we say, "Go home and find work : thy choice between Existence and Annihilation. The parchments may be old, but the Granite Rocks are older, and this world is no place in which to go gracefully idle."

8. Land is indeed the right basis of Aristocracy. It is the *Mother* of us all, from our first awakening to our last sleep. Mystic, deep as the world's centre, are the roots we strike into our native soil. To talk of selling land is like selling Homer's *Iliad* for a few coins. It belongs to God and those of His Children who have worked well on it. But the soil with or without ploughing is the gift of God. Nowadays people lose sight of Fact ; and so the much-consuming Aristocracy claim to be

Gods who have made the land. They did not make it, and the possession of it obliges them to guide and govern England, but without *Laissez-faire* and Corn-law. At least abolish Corn-law, and if you do no good, cease from mischief. The Working Aristocracy—Mill-owners, etc.—steeped in Mammonism, needs entire reform; but an Unworking Aristocracy, living sumptuously on the marrow of the earth, must either find work or go. The shrewd Working Aristocracy will reform itself: let the Idle remember the example of its French brethren, who not only exacted rent but wished to escape taxes; and the result was the Meudon tanneries. . . . Work is victory over want, danger, hardship: and a man who has all his battling done by others should not call himself *noble*. Nobleness lies in suffering for others, in assuming the post of danger, and paying with one's life. . . . Parchments are venerable, but if they accord not with the Adamant Tablets, the Universe will reject them and take terrible revenge.

9. Let the Working Aristocracy now consider how to become rational instead of asinine. They allege Continental competition, as though our existence depended on selling cotton a farthing an ell cheaper. Let us rather consider how to divide cotton more justly. This Gospel of Mammon, of Hell being failure to make money, is the shabbiest ever preached. Let England work her best and hope the Gods will allow her to live on this basis. Man is more than a Patent-Digester; and no world ever held together long by the laws of self-interest—of *Laissez-faire*, Supply-and-demand. . . . Abolish Corn-laws, and a period of commercial prosperity will follow; but *Laissez-faire* will lead to over-population, and the same conditions will return. There are deeper laws than Supply-and-demand, and to keep or break them is to have Nature with or against you. For what noble work has there ever been demand? What wages were promised to the Apostle Paul? . . . If it is true that Self-sacrifice, etc., belonged to the stupid old times, and man now only lives to eat, then such a world is not worth saving from annihilation.

10. Cash-payment as sole relation of man to man cannot endure long; it is the raving of a moribund Society, of one from which the Ideal has faded out and left naked egoism. . . . All human things must have an Ideal or Soul, which will new-form the ugliest Body. Fighting is an ugly operation, yet from it sprang a "glorious Chivalry." A Chevalier conducts war otherwise than a Chactaw Indian; for his belief in Justice converts a place of massacre into a Field of Honour. Napoleon is flung out at last to St. Helena, for his enemies are Mankind and the Maker of Men. . . . Our friend Plugson, with his three thousand spinners, has gained a victory over cotton, but it is of the Chactaw



sort. William the Conqueror did not disband his followers, like Plugson does when he has made his money. It is but half a victory, and though money is miraculous, it has brought endless confusions, down even to extinction of the moral sense. It is the law of Bucaniers and not of God, this of money as sole bond between men. Mammonism and Dilettantism can no longer be left to themselves, but there must be "Organisation of Labour."

11. Work is sacred, and there is always hope in a man who works, for he is in communication with Nature. Know thy work and do it; to know thyself is impossible. The meanest labour composes the soul, and makes Doubt, Sorrow, Despair, all passions, shrink into their caves. . . . Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. It is like a clear stream through a mud-swamp, turning it into a fruitful meadow. The only true knowledge comes from working, for all else is hypothesis of knowledge. Patience, Courage, and all virtues come from wrestling with the dim brute Powers of Fact. Wren had to raise St. Paul's from confusion and opposition. Every noble work is at first "impossible," its possibilities discoverable only by faith. . . . Columbus, with mutinous souls around, disgrace behind, the unknown before, buffeted by wild water-mountains and huge sweeping winds: in him is a depth of Silence deeper than the ten-mile deep sea; he must be greater than the tumultuous world that bears him on to new Americas.

12. "Work is Worship." In thy innermost heart lies a Spirit of active Method, urging thee to attack thy enemy Disorder. God with His *unspoken* voice, more awful than Sinai thunders, bids thee work. All true Work is sacred, even hand labour: from sweat of the brow to sweat of the brain and heart. If this, the noblest thing under God's sky, is not worship, the more pity for worship. Complain not of toil; it makes thee a denizen of the Universe, not an alien: and Heaven is severe but not unkind. Those who recline on cushions and brag of idleness are original figures in Creation, peculiar to Mayfair and this last half century. The best of us trifle much time away, but to brag of idleness and abuse the workers is indeed to rush down on iron spikes. . . . As for Wages, the worker needs enough to keep him alive; but do not let us talk about Reward. The brave man must give his life away, not sell it: for, being infinite, he could never do so satisfactorily in a finite world. . . . Work is Worship; it is making a No-thing become a Thing. But it requires taking counsel with the Unseen and Silent. Fear not pain and death, love not ease. Follow thy star, forgetful of the world and its wages and criticisms. You must walk hand in hand with Madness, for the higher the work the closer is it to



Insanity : and all work is a making of Madness sane. It is worthless unless done as in a Great Taskmaster's eye. . . . Industry is still under bondage to Mammon, but it cannot continue ; for Labour is an imprisoned God, and even Plugson would rather have a chivalrous victory. Even the vilest Master-Worker, though he speaks unwisely, cannot act so, for he is the practical organiser of a thousand men. Let the Dilettanti abjure their Corn-laws and shot-belts and teach him by noble example and noble wageless effort in Parliament and Parish that Mammonism is not the essence of God's Universe.

13. Life was never a May-game, but in no time has the lot of the dumb millions been so unbearable as now. They live miserably, work sore and gain nothing—in fact, die slowly all their lives. No wonder such things as French Revolutions and Chartisms occur. Brotherhood of Man was often forgotten, but never expressly denied till the reign of Mammon. . . . Gurth, born thrall of Cedric, was happy compared to many a modern Lancashire man. He was at least related to his fellow-mortals ; whereas the “ Liberty ” of our workers is often Liberty to starve. We restrict a madman's liberty, we do not allow him to walk over precipices. True liberty is finding out the work one is fitted for—or even being compelled to do so. There is a genuine Aristocracy designed by Nature to rule over baser men. William the Conqueror was framed of oak and iron, and in his reign a child might have carried a purse of gold from end to end of England. This man would not have favoured Captains of Idleness with their Corn-laws, at the expense of Captains of Industry. When a world is in danger Nature brings in her Aristocracies ; and the descendants of these are cast out, when they degenerate, by French Revolutions, etc. Nowadays Democracy is advancing irresistibly, and, as it means despair of finding Heroes to govern, it is akin to Atheism. . . . The liberty of not being oppressed by your fellow-man is insignificant. You are not emancipated from yourself or your own brutal appetites. It would have been not tyranny but “ surgery ” to make a true man of the Dilettante, or restrain the excesses of the Mammon-worshipper. Before every man lies a *best path*, and all that helps him to it is Liberty, even blows. To give a man a vote and call him free is absurd. Such liberty is purchased by social isolation—or liberty to starve on one hand, and have no earnest duty on the other. Democracy has done well to shake off Mock-Superiors, but the problem is to find Real-Superiors. It is the work of centuries, but England must learn to discriminate her true Heroes or cease to exist. For the soul is being killed, and if a man loses his soul let him exchange these brute-worlds for death.

14. Cromwell, who believed in a God, proved himself our ablest Governor in the last five centuries. He ascribed his possession of the Government of England to "Births of Providence." Contrast him with Sir Jabesh Windbag, believing not in God but Public Opinion, like a Columbus sailing nowhere : whereas Cromwell knew where his Americas lay. For after his "five years" he anticipated Judgment ; and no "Paragraphs" could help him then. Let us pity Windbag, who appeals to Posterity, which has its own windbags and will not even hear of him.

15. One cannot promise a "New Religion" for some time. To exhort men to believe in God that Chartism may abate, is as if you thought Star-Systems were made to guide herring-vessels. Belief in God makes all other things seem small. . . . True Religion is the Inner Light or Moral Conscience of the soul ; the use of all Religion is to keep that Light alive and shining ; and to remind us of the *infinite* difference between a Good man and a Bad. Reformers fancy Religion is like a Morrison's Pill : you gulp it down and then go about your business as usual. It is Stupidity that kills Religion. We forget that man is man, the missionary of Unseen Powers, in modern as well as ancient times ; that sooty Manchester is built on the infinite Abysses, like the oldest Salem or Prophetic City. The great Soul of the World is just ; the law of gravitation is not surer than this ; and he who believes it has a religion, an everlasting Loadstar beside which all rituals seem trifling. Sinai thunders cannot make me religious ; for reverence, not fear, leads me. Revelation ? My own God-created soul is a revelation. Under all modern cants and obscurations religion still is. The cruel portent of the French Revolution, when Hell for a season reigned on earth, was the voice of God. But for it one would not know what to make of this wretched world. . . . Thou hast but one chance in this world, my brother, between two Eternities. Trouble not about thy "future fate." Odin, and a greater than he, taught that those who lust for pleasure and tremble at pain are Dastards. Struggle to get back thy *soul* ; know that religion is reawakening of thy own Self from within. Work is Worship and Prayer ; its cathedral the Dome of Immensity ; its litany all the heroic acts of all men. To the primeval man the Universe was all a Temple. The Emperor of China permits all religious forms ; himself content to visit yearly his parents' Tomb, and, between the silence of the Grave and the divine Skies, get some glimpse into Eternity. The only Potentate to attempt Practical Hero-Worship, he searches for the wisest to govern. . . . In Literature lies our hope of a new world, for, in spite of all, it is "the Thought of Thinking Souls."



IV. 1. Disbelief in the virtue that was in the Past : this is the result of a godless century. Our epoch will be known in the future as "the Period of Ignorance." . . . Revolution should now have taught Europe that it requires a real Aristocracy and Priesthood. Man needs to be taught and governed, and these two powers are found at work throughout the world. The Wisest and Bravest are properly one class ; and in Europe they have become Actualities. Everywhere you find King's Palace and Nobleman's Mansion : more touching still, in every hamlet, a Church. The Speaking Man has wandered from the point and fights extinct Satans rather than the modern ones of Gin, Corn-law, etc. ; but he does try to save souls, so who is worthier than he ? . . . Our old Kings governed as well as fought ; and they selected their Bravest and established them on pieces of territory to govern under them. There was harshness in dealing with Dastards, but no human creature went about connected with nobody. The Feudal Aristocracy, in return for the land, did the Soldiering, Police, and Judging of the country. A "Splendour of God" did dwell in those rude ages ; Practical Hero-Worship, that made it impossible for a Phantasm in mere Cloth Tailorage to reach high place. . . . The covetous Duke of Burgundy plotted to rob Archbishop Anselm on his way to Rome, but, dismayed by the clear eye of the weak old man in whom dwelt something of the Most High God, knelt down and begged his blessing. . . . Advancing now to the Industrial Ages, we will not attempt to prophesy much. The Life-tree Igdrasil, in its new developments, grows from the old root. The "Splendour of God" must visit Industry also ; and there shall again be a King in Israel. This is of the Future because it is of the Eternal. How to reconcile Democracy and Sovereignty is the problem, for there must be cunninger bonds than the "brass collar" which constrained Gurth. Let us begin reform instead of debating Corn-law. Where are these men to find a supportable life ?

2. Elections, they say, cannot proceed without Bribery. This is farewell to morality, if our venerable Parliament gets itself elected thus. If it starts with a lie in its mouth, let it beware of Chartisms. It all proves that Mammonism is the one Veracity, and men's only belief that "Money brings money's worth." Parliament should either punish Bribery or legalise it. . . . Pandarus Dogdraught, the offal of Creation, is admitted to Society and men give him their votes, because we have lost the distinction between worth and unworth, and live in an age of flunkeyism. . . . What is it to the poor man whether a member of the Destructive or Conservative party be sent to Parliament ? Let us search for another type of man, and get our Knaves and Dastards "arrested."



3. Suppose the Corn-laws abolished, and another twenty years guaranteed, what shall we do to combat *Laissez-faire* and individual Mammonism? . . . If there could but come into our unwieldy system a Prime Minister who believed the heavenly omens, he would even now awaken the heart of England. . . . How strange it is that in these days the Fighting Institution still survives—that men can be found to kill others when they are bidden! Lawyers, clergymen, can do nothing for me; but he of the red coat, if he gets orders, will duly kill me. His profession alone has come down safe through the centuries. These firm-set men were a broken population, nearing the treadmill, before the persuasive sergeant took them in hand. What possibilities of organisation does not this thought open! Government could not exist without the soldier, so he is here: but what might not an army do equipt against Starvation and Disorder! Organisations other than the red-coat one loom in the dim future. Legislative interference—such as Factory Inspectors—has begun, and must therefore continue and enlarge. Sanitary laws should be possible as in Rome. Sooty Manufacturing Towns should be compelled to let in the blessed sunlight, and burn their coal-smoke. Let those who complain of "vested interest" or loss of trade be reminded of health gained by children. Let us have a right Education Bill to irradiate the Chaotic and awaken thought and articulate utterance in the millions. How dare any man deny God's Light and bid the Devil's Darkness continue? Next comes an effective system of Emigration to Western Lands, where men may raise corn and quicken our trade by purchasing our manufactured articles in return for it. . . . The English Legislature is conservative, reluctant to sever the Future from the Past; but new epochs do occur, and such is the present. Never was such an original year as this of '43. Say not "Impossible" in the presence of Fate.

4. Government is the symbol of its People, and the germs of improvement must lie among the classes affected. Light will come, Mammon will cease to be our deity, and competition will then abate. We shall have steady, modest industry, and a Society with something of heroic in it. . . . Are the Captains of Industry, the future Captains of the World, of other clay than the old Captains of Slaughter? Are they doomed for ever to be no Chivalry but gold-plated Canaille? No: for in every heart, however deeply buried, slumbers a spark of the Godlike. England must either connect itself with a God again, or die. . . . Money is nothing without nobleness; love cannot be bought for money, and without love men cannot endure to be together. The present chaos proves that no Working World, any more than a Fighting World, can be led on without a noble Chivalry of Work. We

have had one French Revolution : must there be a second ? How would soldiers fight if they could be discharged on the evening of the battle ? Workers must be secured in other bonds than the day's wages : like the followers of a feudal Baron, who loved and were prepared to die for him. Isolation is the sum-total of wretchedness to man. . . . Awake, noble Workers, from your enchantment. Abrogate bucanier laws, and reduce to order your world-hosts all in mutiny. The task is hard, but no noble task is easy : and for this was life given to man. Difficult ? Yes, but you have shivered mountains asunder, and made of the sea a sleek highway.

5. Organisation to be fruitful must be based on the Permanent rather than the Temporary. Perseverance distinguishes the strong soul from the weak, the civilised man from the savage. The Nomad boasts of his liberty ; the civilised man builds stone castles and makes life-long marriage-contracts. Month-long contracts are bad even with servants. Let the Anti-Slavery Convention turn its eyes to our "Free Labourers" at home. . . . We know of a Quaker employing a thousand men, who has endeavoured to attach them to him by providing play-grounds and other amenities : all of which has turned out an excellent investment, and may prove a universal foundation. . . . Let Permanence be in all things, so that we do not quarrel with the first difficulties in our paths. . . . Blessed is he that continueth where he is. . . . His heart roots itself and draws nourishment from the deep fountains of Universal Being. . . . A man's wealth is what he loves and is loved by. . . . The herdsman is friends with his cow and dog and the familiar mountains. . . . Cannot the Master Worker grant his Workers a permanent *interest* in his enterprise ? Despotism must continue, and let it be *just*. . . .

6. A man with money freely given him might prove a strong Worker ; but usually he and his flunkies simply eat it in an ornamental manner. Why should the Aristocrat, in whom is much good from a fruitful Past, be an encumbrance in the Present, and perish from the Future ? Can he not regain his soul and find work in redeeming the boors that plough his lands ? . . . It is a shallow delusion that man can live isolated, and have no relations with others but cash-payment. We are all living nerves in the same body ; and the highest man is bound to the lowest. . . . Hero-worship is the one godlike thing. No man, however glorified by the Tailor, can resist his real superior—a soul higher than his own.

7. If Slaughter, besouled with Nobleness, became a Chivalry, why not Work ? The Chivalry Fighters desired victory, but considered it defeat unless won in a certain spirit : and defeat



could be made victory. Had they counted the scalps alone, they would have remained Chactaws. Shall Industrial Fighters and Workers be alone different among men : seeking only Mammon ; blind to gratitude and loyalty ; preferring mutiny and hatred ? If so, they too must vanish by the law of Heaven. . . . For there still are noble souls that have graduated in Heaven's University and stepped out superior to money. Like Byron, they are miserable in these days and refuse fealty to the world. This man is above earthly rewards, and fears no penalties. His life is no May-game, but a stern Pilgrimage, escorted by Terrors and Splendours. He walks among men, and loves them as they cannot love him, but his soul dwells in solitude. . . . Such a man is above the world like a god ; and it would go ill with the world but that his power is according to his Justice, Valour, Pity. . . . Genius, potential in all men, is clear in him. To know him thou must be his equal, for think not he is here to amuse thee with scrannel-piping. . . .

8. Experience does teach : and Work cannot continue as at present, amid Strikes and Chartisms. The Industrial Captain, finding he has gained no honour, will regret his Chactaw methods, and that he did not fight as a Christian and win blessings. Others will emulate our Quaker friend and found upon the everlasting rocks. . . . A respectable ever-increasing minority will strive for something higher than money. . . . Mammon's brutish empire is cracking : and these good tidings, strangely enough, come from Yankee-land. . . . Let us all set our hands to the task of helping, dismiss the word "Impossible," and make our lives heroic. . . . Aristocracies, forgetful of partridges, will find work. . . . Workers will subdue mutiny and despair. . . . The only greatness is to make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller. . . . The future promises an all-conquering Host of Workers : let him who is not of it hide himself. . . .



## CHAPTER XXIII

### “PAST AND PRESENT”

IN the solitude of Craigenputtock, favourable to meditative calm and untouched by the sharp occurrences of social or business life, Carlyle had unveiled his soul. Freed from the changing fashions of epoch or century, freed even from Time and Space, he gazed upon its inner essence and knew it to be divine. But then the question arose of how to resume his mortal vestments and accomplish his destiny on earth. And it is small wonder if a soul, enriched by such an experience, should have moved with some awkwardness on an earthly plane. As if the minnow, to borrow his own simile,<sup>1</sup> did have an intimation of the ocean tides that regulated its little creek, and therefore reduced its former estimate of the said creek's all-importance.

Strange as it may appear, it is the predominance of Carlyle's spiritual fervour that makes its application to earthly issues unsafe. The world's thick atmosphere broke up the light-beams he directed upon it ; his doctrine of God's rule on earth found no acceptance. He has been accused of intolerance and harshness, and his most ardent disciple cannot wholly clear him from the charge. But he can explain these faults as the result of thwarted love, and restore Carlyle to us as the most tender-natured of men.

In approaching Carlyle's political writings we need greater discrimination in dealing with his psychology. For the poet is not at home in politics, as the examples of Milton, Dante, Swift, even Voltaire, and many others, testify. In the morning of the world he can compete with men, but not in old civilisations when once God-related institutions have narrowed into formulas : when a King, for instance, is no longer regarded as God's vicergerent but as a compromise between contending parties. His

<sup>1</sup> *Sartor*, iii. 8.

spiritual vitality is great, but his knowledge is small of the artificial relations, based on insincerity, which men have built up among themselves. It were better that he shunned the world, or made up his mind that he could serve it by renouncing it ; better that he lived apart like Wordsworth, and tuned his heavenly instrument in the presence of Nature. But his quickened social sense forbids him ; he knows that while he lives at ease his fellow-creatures are stretched on the rack of toil and poverty, and brother-like he answers the call to action.

Carlyle had detected the inherent weakness of Voltaire's anti-Christian attacks ; they were directed against the " Inspiration of the Scriptures " ; and, granted a deeper foundation than books to Christianity, they would lose their sting. Christianity, as Carlyle then said, is " written in the purest nature of man." It is the religion of love, and the poet is the truest Christian because he loves most ; to him the Brotherhood of Man is a reality. In his heart he recognises no envious social or family distinctions ; the whole world is his kindred ; he loves the humblest man who crosses his path. Like " poor ridiculous Boswell," he may desire the applause of the meanest ; for vanity, or abnormal craving for sympathy, is perverted love and worship in an age without God. We know too well in what coin the world repays this boundless love and trust, especially in modern " formulistic " days. Carlyle himself said that the lives of literary men made the saddest reading outside the *Newgate Calendar*. But, to take some of the greatest, did not Dante die an exile and broken-hearted ? Did not Milton feel the rage, despair, rebellion, which he expressed through Satan ? What were the closing years of Byron and Swift ? And in each of these cases the root of the matter was love turned to bitterness from rejection by the world. " We poets," sang Wordsworth

We poets in our youth begin in gladness,  
But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness,

The poet is an exile in a world of formulas ; for his soul converses with the Soul of the Universe, and he is unwary in the methods of men. Associated men, oblivious of Heaven and Hell, invent an organisation of forms, like the artificial language of Esperanto, which derives not from the origins ; and they call

mastery of these knowledge of "life" or of "the world." The poet entering these precincts, with his eyes in the clouds, misreads the writing and stumbles among hypocrisies and insincerities.

We have shown how in his earlier writings Carlyle was most concerned with the individual; how he looked upon man as incarnated will, and the earth as his arena; and consequently the predominating interest was spiritual. We repeat that the terrible drama of the French Revolution was the second phase of his development—where, in a sky of portents, some angry god or demon hung out the scales, one of which held the accumulated sins of the world, and the other the preciousness of human life. And yet the French Revolution, despite its horror, was but a dream, from which it was possible to awake; whereas his present political phase, his concern for the state of the working classes in the year 1842, was an ever-insistent reality.

It was inevitable that the claims of politics should absorb Carlyle's middle years; and that, as his own economical struggle was now ended and his position assured, he should bethink him of his fellows. The high tides of poetry flow in youth and age—in the dreams of the one and memories of the second; but in middle life the world of the spirit yields to that of sense. The poet suddenly discovers that the lot of the majority is pain and toil; he rushes headlong to the task of regenerating the world, and too often effects his own destruction. He is happy if, like Milton, though blind and forsaken, he can reset in immortal cadences the story of his turbulent past. Dante's heart broke when his song ended; and life in death was the portion of Swift. Carlyle too was to turn his back on politics and spend his last years of full vigour in touching with a Utopian hue the truths of history. . . . But for the present we must think of him as concentrating upon the conditions of life of his less fortunate fellow-creatures; and must bear in mind that the impelling force was love.

Carlyle's point of view, until disturbed by the French Revolution, had been transcendental; this world to him was a mere shadow of one infinitely more real. But the Revolution made clear to him the strength of the ties by which men attach themselves to each other and to the earth, their common home. The rending of these ties produced the wild Memnon's music that sounds through his pages. And now that there was some abatement of



his transcendentalism, now that his eyes grew accustomed to looking downward upon men, a host of other realities, proper to this lower world, became apparent. If sudden death was frightful, so was lingering death following hopeless life. Against the overflowing prisons and the clanking axe of the guillotine, we must set the millions living enchanted in Poor Law Bastilles or Ugolino Hunger Cellars, and the parents who kill their children to gain the burial fees.<sup>1</sup>

But the law of Compensation is unerring, and the penalty for releasing the soul from worldly bond and giving it free scope to travel, is that, on its return, it walks somewhat awkwardly on earth. It is dazzled by the exchange of boundless horizons for short distances ; and in the crowded market-place it jostles against men and their conventions. It has lost its scale of earthly values, or rather it applies to things of earth a heavenly measuring-rod ; and thus it offends men and risks their misjudgment and misunderstanding. Such was the fate of Cromwell, from which Carlyle rescued him ; such was to be his own fate, in the identification of his doctrines with those which he most abhorred. Perhaps it had been better if, like Bacon, with some tincture of worldly wisdom, he had not told mankind all he knew.

Carlyle's fault, if so it may be called, was in applying spiritual laws to the material world. For the Prophet or Seer is above all things an optimist, and maintains that the soul itself cannot be injured or tarnished. It is the environment, we must risk repeating, which always lies heavy on the ethereal force of the true self. The law of the spiritual world is love ; soul worships soul in a hierarchy ascending to God. That of the material world is brute force and competition : beginning with the struggle between plants for light and air, and of beasts that prey on one another, through the internecine feuds of savage tribes, and the wars of conquest between nations, to the veiled hostility of modern Commercialism, where "shiftiness,"<sup>2</sup> not valour, is the quality that ensures survival. Hence the eternal miracle of Christianity, that imposed its ideal, however imperfectly realised in two thousand years, on a world constituted after an alien fashion. And because the poet is the true Christian, and the most spiritually developed of men, he grows more and more an exile in the modern world,

<sup>1</sup> *Past and Present*, i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Chartism*, 5.

which, from its predominant commercial character, has suffered a temporary set-back towards barbarism. Only let the prime cause of his failure in handling earthly material be remembered to his credit—that he is a great lover.

That man is a spirit, however deeply he has buried his immortal ray under mountains of earthly encumbrances, is the ground-tone of Carlyle's teaching. What was Mirabeau's "terrible gift of familiarity" but the power to reveal his soul in the most trivial conversation, and therefore compel recognition of brotherhood in those who came out against him as enemies? It seemed to Carlyle mere perversity in the human millions to preoccupy themselves with material interests and delay the dynasty of Love that should succeed by right divine upon the earth. And he argued thus because, with his enlarged spiritual nature and experience, he underrated the stubbornness of things of the earth earthy. One doubts whether even he realised the intricacy of the tangle into which the affairs of a Godless world had become misarranged. There is something of surprise in his discovery that men will not follow the right path even when it is made clear.

And the circumstances of Carlyle's life provide a further ground for his optimism. He had solved the problem of living in no unsatisfactory fashion, and his troubles were rather from within. A whole volume has been written to prove his abundant good fortune in earthly matters; and it reflects on his lack of gratitude to friends such as Irving, Jeffrey, Miss Martineau, who facilitated his rise.<sup>1</sup> Instead of ingratitude, we would rather call it imperfect knowledge of the world—imperfect comprehension of the resisting power of material things. He was singularly fortunate in his parents and family, and his wife; he never was in danger of starvation, nor had to abate one jot of his ambition, which was to earn a livelihood by expressing the highest that was in him. The lives of few men of letters can show such episodes as the opening of the *Edinburgh Review* to his articles, or the Buller tutorship with the social advantages in intellectual London circles that resulted. So far the burnt manuscript had been the one material calamity of his life. Carlyle's trouble was dyspepsia; and its reaction on his moral nature was as puissant as Dr. Johnson's hypochondria. It excluded satisfaction with the present, and

<sup>1</sup> *The Making of Carlyle*, by R. S. Craig, 1908.

caused the fear, uneasiness, anxiety, which clad the future for him in sable.

Carlyle, like Rousseau, never continued long in uncongenial occupations : as witness the ease with which he shuffled off the coil of schoolmastering, divinity, law. He tolerated for himself no life that impeded the soarings of the spirit, and was untouched by the dulling effect of years of routine. His equipment for the political struggle was enormous spiritual development and strictly conditioned earthly experience.

It is not hinted that Carlyle's life was happy ; the labour needed to produce his books would refute any such surmise. But a distinction must hold between inner and outer troubles ; and the world had not been unkind to the individual Carlyle. Hence he was apt to blame others for allowing the world to be too much with them ; he minimised their difficulties in subduing their material environment ; and the vast spiritual preponderance of his nature inspired a slighting attitude toward tangible things. That the gain was greater than the loss, especially in his writings, we will not dispute. It has already been said how, in considering men like Johnson and Boswell, he let their faults escape and concentrated upon their virtues. Similarly he denied that Mahomet was an impostor, or that Cromwell's religion was hypocrisy. He held Frederick the Great guiltless of vices from which, in the words of Macaulay, "History averts her eyes." He has reminded us that David, who sinned often but repented, was the man after God's heart.<sup>1</sup>

But this unworldliness, the trait of all high-minded men, is a bar in modern times to political efficiency, when not theory but practice, not rules but exceptions, claim attention. In the spiritual world all is good, and the law of love operates strongly from the centre to the poles. In the material world, left to itself, all is bad ; and only as it responds to the missionary labour of the spirit does it admit the good. Carlyle's misfortune was to live in a degenerate age, when matter was conquering spirit, when the old religions had spent their vitality, and when Hero-worship—the absolute obligation of doing homage to a higher soul—was the only practical argument for God's existence. We have said that he was so constituted as to

<sup>1</sup> *Heroes* : "Mahomet."



minimise the difficulties of terrestrial life, but this is far from implying that he misdoubted the realities of earthly suffering, or would have offered conventional comfort to the submerged millions. The cry of pain, heard in *Chartism*, sounds clearer and with increased volume through *Past and Present*. Standing between youth and age, at that epoch when the outer world means most to man, and even the poet looks to it for inspiration, he contemplated with poetic sensibility the horrors of the modern industrial State.

And yet the awkwardness of the great spirit in the insufficient body does remain—the danger to which is exposed the vessel of large draught engaged among the shallows. We have said that Carlyle realised the giant agony of the world but not the resisting power of habit and man-made institutions: let it not be thought, however, that he believed in sudden remedies, or looked to see society regenerated at the waving of a magician's wand. His own satire on "Morrison's Pill" in *Past and Present* would confute such an assertion. Carlyle made ample allowance for the toughness of the cordage that was constraining the soul of man; but the point of departure between himself and practical politics was Time. The vast planetary wheelings of his spirit disdained the petty flights of the politician strictly subject to the law of gravity. He had said in *Chartism* that Might and Right are the same in the long run; that the wise man is the strong man, and all talent moral; and that nothing can exist without truth or worth.<sup>1</sup> In *Past and Present*<sup>2</sup> he asserts with deep impressiveness that the Great Soul of the world is just. Our answer is that these are the first principles of the spiritual world; that he failed to realise the smallness of the triumph so far achieved by spirit over matter; or the æons of time needed for such vast returns, during which millions would live and die with despair in their hearts. The unjust conquests of Napoleon did not endure; but how many wives and mothers were left weeping before the arch-sinner was cast out to suffer moral crucifixion on the rock of St. Helena! Writing of Time in *Sartor*,<sup>3</sup> he tells how Orpheus built Thebes to the sound of his lyre; but the still higher Orpheuses who civilised man built the towns we live in by the divine music of wisdom: and a thing is equally

<sup>1</sup> *Chartism*, 5, 6.

<sup>2</sup> I. 2.

<sup>3</sup> III. 8.

wonderful if it happens in two hours or two million. This is spiritual rather than practical truth, and the time is not yet when Philosophers can be Kings. To say that Carlyle was mistaken would be impertinent, for we cannot measure our spiritual experience with his; let us rather acclaim the trophies he has brought back from his unearthly voyages, and see hope for the future in his noble optimism. The fault is with his critics, who have failed to define the boundary between the two worlds, and subjected his doctrines to literal interpretation. He has thus been credited with anticipating the hideous views of modern Prussianism: that might is right in the world of sense.

Let us now recover in outline the main ideas of the book before us. In the first part England is represented as full of wealth but dying of inanition; owing to the absence of moral feeling and the establishment of cash-payment as the sole human bond. It is a world contrary to Fact and Justice, where the rich are sunk in luxury, and to the poor are denied fair wages for fair work. There must be better government, but first we must find our souls and learn to admire the right man.

Part II takes us back to the twelfth century, and contrasts the England of then and now. The soul was the centre of existence in the days of Abbot Samson; the fit governor was recognised in the poor man; and the world prospered under Hero-worship. Religion was no self-torturing Methodism, but an all-embracing canopy, a life-element taken for granted.

Part III restores us to the Industrial ages and the reign of Mammon. Hell has become terror of not succeeding, and Heaven the attainment of large fortunes. The Brotherhood of Man was often forgotten, but never denied until now. On one side we get the Master Worker who thinks his duty done when he has paid his operatives the day's wages; on the other, the unemployed millions crowded into slums and workhouses. Apart from these are the Master Unworkers, or so-called "Aristocrats," who go gracefully idle, and live on the marrow of the earth.

But all life is one, as the symbol of the tree Igdrasil proves; the present has grown out of the past, and so the diseases of our time are not incurable. Suggested remedies are the subject of the fourth part; and, as battle in true knightly fashion superseded cannibal methods, so it is prophesied that the "Splendour of God"

will visit Industry, and the whole world knit itself into a confederation of workers, each bound to each—and the man who has no place in it had better hide himself.

The poet in politics should be like Joan of Arc in warfare : to kindle the souls of the multitude but leave strategy and tactics to expert leaders. We desire less that he should contribute materially to ease the groaning and clanking of the world-machine than inspire with such a purpose those skilled in the ways of men. We know that Carlyle had eager readers among the best of the working classes ; but to what extent he influenced the “ Master Worker ” is uncertain. His prophecy that the shrewd “ Working Aristocracy ” will reform itself strikes us as at least dubious ;<sup>1</sup> and, despite his passionate laments for Mammon-worship, and cash-payment as sole bond between men, it is doubtful whether even he realised how far the iron had entered into the soul of the Industrial or Commercial magnate, and still more into his wife’s. Perhaps neither he nor his followers, Ruskin and William Morris, detected that the true root of the commercial upas-tree which poisoned the nineteenth century was the family ; whereas we who stand on the vantage-ground of distance have seen the full fruit of the impenetrability to ideas of the commercial classes, and the materialism which continued unabashed to the period of the Great War. In a nation like the British, that lacks subtlety and therefore the power to reform itself consciously, these faults would specially predominate ; and it is interesting to note that Carlyle looked for hope to “ Yankee-land.”<sup>2</sup> There are grounds for such hope at the present day : as we see from the elect of the great American capitalists, who, surfeited with money and money’s worth, at length begin to look beyond, and ensure for their workers not only good wages, housing and conditions of work, but even leisure and culture.<sup>3</sup>

But the fact remains that Carlyle’s criticism was that of the poet and lover of his kind, the true Christian and brother of all men. The unkindness of competition pierced his soul, and also its negation of the moral law ; for since England was gorged with wealth, why should some men be denied their share and

<sup>1</sup> III. 8.

<sup>2</sup> IV. 8.

<sup>3</sup> See Lord Northcliffe’s interview with Mr. Henry Ford. *Times*, October 22, 1917.



languish in workhouses? And since cotton shirts were produced by the million, why should some backs be unclothed? Since all is of God, why should any man be excluded from participation in the Father's bounty? . . . We do not imply that Carlyle held communistic theories; but this was the spiritual enlargement of his common-sense view, that man has a right to fair wages for fair work.

Mammon-worship causes loss of the soul, and from loss of the soul comes denial of human brotherhood: it is that which sends blasts of despair to the poetic heart. All men are enemies, and there is a return to the cruelty of primitive nature, with the resources of material civilisation to make the battle fiercer. Master and servant are bound by no ties but cash-payment; friend admires friend for his superfluous possessions rather than his Godlike soul; distinctions of class grow more envenomed, because they depend on money and are man-made, not God-made. All is perishing that once made this earth, with its communion of souls, a symbol of heaven—as in the twelfth century when a peasant Samson was chosen as ruler of men. "Isolation," wrote Carlyle, "is the sum-total of wretchedness to man. To be cut off, to be left solitary: to have a world alien, not your world; all a hostile camp for you; not a home at all, of hearts and faces who are yours, whose you are! It is the frightfulest enchantment; too truly a work of the Evil One. To have neither superior, nor inferior, nor equal, united man-like to you. Without father, without child, without brother. Man knows no sadder destiny."<sup>1</sup>

And the personal, almost morbid nature of Carlyle's grief establishes its identity with the poet's beyond question. To him in his Chelsea home, with increasing returns from his books and the assured love of his kindred in the old home-land, there came visitations of compunction—as if by enjoying so much of Earth's blessings he was depriving others—as if, while one man on earth remained sorrowful, it was his duty to be sorrowful also. So far does the principle of brotherhood extend through the finest natures.

But the broad remedy which he suggests for the present discontents forces a recurrence to our simile of the awkwardness

<sup>1</sup> *Past and Present*, iv. 4.

of the great spirit on earth. In work lies his remedy, universal and compulsory work ; and he insists on this as much for the sake of the individual as the community. The labourer, he has many times told us, is in touch with nature and must try his theories there : and certainly a carpenter who must recognise the splitting tendency of wood, to take a simple instance, is in touch with nature, as the man of fashion, the shape of whose coat is governed by an artificial whim, is not. No doubt, also, the Philistine at work is a less sorry spectacle than the Philistine at play ; but, except the artist's, no work is an end in itself ; and, as Aristotle said that peace is greater than war because men make war to gain peace,<sup>1</sup> so the wise man works in order to gain the opportunity of gracious play. And the perfumed Seigneur, who goes gracefully idle but preserves his old-world courtesy, commands admiration even in these modern times of sorrow, because he is a Symbol of a higher state when men shall have vanquished the horror of competition : and no one knew the value of Symbols more than Carlyle.<sup>2</sup>

Carlyle's doctrine of Work provokes the same criticism as his too generous allowance of Time. For just as the modern city-builder must use other tools than the music of wisdom long-drawn through two million hours, so do practical politics and the immediate needs of men reject the remedy of other-worldliness. And the doctrine of Work is, after all, based on the assumption “that this Time-world is no reality, that it flickers like an air-image in the grand still mirror of Eternity” : <sup>3</sup> a thought predominant in his writings but here receiving its most exquisite expression. At the present day we can truly echo St. Paul's saying that if our hopes are bounded by this life only, we are of all created things most wretched ; and we strive to dissociate ourselves from what Carlyle once called the “gross heathen belief of the Radical” in the sufficiency of material good things. But between this and the view of life on earth entirely as a passage to another, there is a middle course. No one who has experienced a vivid human attachment, or felt the spell of a beautifully situated home woven more closely year after year, or conversed with the great artists of all time through their poems and pictures, can deny that man, even while on earth, has his part in the infinite. Nature,

<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, vii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Sartor*, iii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Past and Present*, ii. 6.



said Carlyle's teacher, is the "*living garment of God*"; and as that which lives grows and increases, so does the soul, by growing during its fleshly sojourn, prove that this world is no empty show.

What we dare to call Carlyle's errors sprang from the difficulty of applying his vast spiritual conceptions to this limited world. Work as a palliative, as an escape from the consciousness of this coil of life, is no advancement of social reform. And the same want of skill in disposing of his share in the two worlds, of Time and Eternity, proved his own undoing. The "remorse" which assailed him in later years was his penalty for many an occasion of harmless joy in the present consciously abandoned: though it must never be forgotten that dyspepsia, by wrecking his nerves and affecting his moral nature, bred in him that "fear" and anxiety which estranged him from the present and caused idealisation of the past.

And yet an error which goes far deeper, and which first shows itself in this book, for which reason we allude to it now, though its full discussion will be postponed, is when Carlyle abandoned his position of other-worldliness; when, drawn closer still to the turmoil of politics, he doffed his seer's habit and bade men follow the quest of Efficiency on earth. Here again the reason was his own developed spirituality; for it appeared inconceivable to him that the use of God-given faculties could degrade. Work to him meant the operation of the soul: and idleness the atrophy of the soul. His "*Heroes*," with one exception, were men of the purest order of genius, whose great thoughts came from the heart; he himself, like Goethe, had found spiritual solace in work; and for this reason he preached the identity of Intellect and Virtue, and affirmed the beginning of all thought to be love. He ignored that side of man's nature which the unrelieved pursuit of Efficiency develops, and he did not live to see its culmination in the modern Prussian and the modern multi-millionaire.

But the prevailing tone of *Past and Present* is hopeful rather than despairing, although the abuses and misery and destitution of the world are set forth with no niggard hand. The presence of one righteous man, such as the Quaker,<sup>1</sup> gives ground for hope that all Master Workers will in time connect themselves by human ties with their operatives, and cash-payment will cease to be the



sole bond between men. That the desired reforms should be, seemed to Carlyle in the course of human nature ; while the opposites that now obtained proved the abnormal condition of the world. But his hope was subjective, and the brightness that he saw radiated from his own soul.

Of the style of this book we may say that the skeleton of modern dearth and wretchedness is draped in the coat of many colours. The reader's mind, forcibly contracted to a narrow and dismal space, is suddenly offered enlargement into the fairest scenes of nature. As we said of the *Francia* essay that Carlyle explored with avidity Nature's mighty doings in the South American continent, and turned with regret from an unexhausted store, so now, though preoccupied with far other subjects, does he re-discover beauty at every turn. Beauty, like a forsaken mistress, lurks in ambush and starts forth to fling her mantle of rainbow similitudes over the hard realities that strew the way. The student who has once read himself into Carlyle has no complaint to make of harshness, abruptness, or lack of “art.” Carlyle's conception of “art” was to get a thorough understanding of his subject ; for, as he said of Dante,<sup>1</sup> all things cohere by the law of harmony, the soul itself being a harmony—and to see deep is to see musically. To the ear held close to his sentences there will come strains of music as fine as those of formal and perfected poetry ; for Carlyle's power of meditation carried him into those regions where life and art are one ; and art to him was like religion to Abbot Samson—an all-pervading element to be enjoyed without conscious endeavour or self-torturing doubt.

<sup>1</sup> *Heross.*

## CHAPTER XXIV

### "OLIVER CROMWELL'S LETTERS AND SPEECHES" I : ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION.—1. WE have wandered far from the ideas of the seventeenth century, which was what was perhaps the noblest heroism ever transacted on this earth. It was the last glimpse of the Godlike vanishing from England, and its spiritual purport has now become inconceivable to the modern mind. Its heroes lie unintelligible to us under continents of shot rubbish ; and of the Christian doctrines then alive in all hearts only the cant remains to us. Nations that possess but songs and monuments have a truer memory of their heroisms : compare Homer's *Iliad* and our Peerage. The English, brave but unsurpassed in stupidity of speech, have touched their divine heroism with the mace of death. . . . Still, there is no perfect history ; without oblivion there were no remembrance ; and the art is to distinguish what is still alive and what moulders safe underground. . . . Puritanism has become inarticulate ; for Human Speech falls silent unless it harmonise with the "Eternal Melodies." It is incredible to us that Heroes once existed who knew it is good to fight on God's side and bad on the Devil's.

2. Cromwell was the soul of the Puritan Revolt : a man of truths, contrary to popular fancy. In his Letters and Speeches collected here we read his character and performance. These are the words he found suitablest to represent the Things themselves. . . . We may dismiss his former biographers, Noble, Heath, Kimber, etc. Little is known of his biography ; the only dim glimpse of the actual man is from his Letters and Speeches.

3. He was born at Huntingdon April 25, 1599, and passed his young years on the edge of the firm green land, looking over into the black marshes with their alder-trees and willow-trees. His family ranked as substantial gentry, connected with such in counties round three generations back.

4. The chief events of his life are these : 1603-4. The Theological Convention at Hampton Court, attended by the flower

of England. The King was learned in Theology : and it then truly meant knowledge of God and the divine Laws and inner Harmonies of the Universe. For the first time Puritanism and Ceremonialism faced each other.—1604 (January). The Puritans made moderate demands, which the King scouted, with the approval of the Bishops.—1605 (November). Gunpowder Plot, of which Oliver must have heard. . . . History of Europe then meant struggle of Protestantism against Catholicism ; or, in England, Puritanism against Ceremonialism.

1616 (23rd April). Oliver admitted to Sydney Sussex College, Cambridge. On that day Shakespeare died ; and so one world-great thing ended, and the second—the armed appeal of Puritanism—began. . . . The quality and result of his instruction is obscure. . . .—1617. Laud complained that he found no religion in Scotland : i.e. no altars, surplices, etc. . . . Oliver left Cambridge for London to read law. Heath's stories of his wild life are unproved, and solicit oblivion.—1618. First visits to the Bouchiers.—1620. Marriage to Elizabeth Bouchier, 22nd August. Return to Huntingdon, and mother and wife live together. Next ten years passed in farming and attending quarter sessions.—1623 (October). Great rejoicings when Prince Charles returned without the Infanta ; for Popery flourished in Spain more than Rome.

Oliver suffered from hypochondria, like all great souls in search of celestial guiding-stars. Our sorrow is the inverted image of our nobleness. But his conversion and deliverance from Death was to be. The “Sense of difference between Right and Wrong” bodied itself forth into a Heaven and Hell for him. This is the grand feature of the Puritan Ages and makes them fruitful and heroic.

1624. The “Feoffees,” or funds for Preachers, to which Oliver subscribed : they were afterwards suppressed by Laud. . . . Oliver's closer association with Puritans, like the majority of England's serious Thought and Manhood.—1627-8. Represents Huntingdon in Charles's third Parliament, which was of a Puritanic cast. Petition of Right. . . . Remonstrance against Buckingham, when some of the toughest men ever made wept. . . .—1629. Quarrels between King and Parliament about Religion and Tonnage and Poundage. Oliver's first speech, 11th February. He said someone had preached flat Popery and his bishop had commended him. . . . 2nd March, Speaker held down while Protests passed against Arminianism, Papistry, Tonnage and Poundage. The King dissolved Parliament, and there was none after for eleven years. The King with his chief priests was going one way ; England by eternal laws another.



1631. Oliver removes to St. Ives and extends his farming. He looked for salvation in a higher world ; enlarged earthly destiny seemed a small matter.—1633. The King, accompanied by Laud, passes through Huntingdon on his way to Scotland to be crowned. . . . Laud roots out Feoffees and Lecturers and brings them to Star Chamber. . . .—1634. The grand problem is how to raise money.

5. Oliver's Speeches and Letters are well worth reclaiming from confusion, for they promise the presentment of the noble figure of the Man himself. The words of Heroes are ever-fruitful, and these are the words he thought fittest to set down. As heaped embers, black by day, are red in utter darkness, as combined small twilights produce a kind of general feeble twilight, so do his Letters make the Past credible. They have no literary aim but contain a true picture ; and only a small soul can be expressed in eloquent speaking. The reader will come to see that the seventeenth century was no mere rubbish continent, but an actual flesh-and-blood Fact ; with colour in its cheeks, with awful august thoughts in its heart, and at last with steel sword in its hand. . . . Let us not think the Puritans were superstitious and crack-brained, ruled by the cunning. Cant and official jargon were rarer then than now ; and even Laud meant what he said. A practical world based on belief in God : such a thing was seen before but not since. The Puritans desired God's law on earth. . . . Forget modern methods of reform ; do not say, "It was then all one as now." . . . Knaves and cowards always abound, but in unheroic ages they attain high place, in heroic they are coerced and imprisoned.

PART I. LETTER I. St. Ives was a row of houses facing the river, that was black as Acheron. At the north-west extremity stood the church, with sharp high spire piercing far up from amid the willow-trees. In this clammy, clayey, and boggy country Oliver sojourned five years as Farmer and Grazier. . . . Writing to Mr. Story in London he affirms that the really charitable and pious are less those who build hospitals than provide spiritual food. Let him not, then, withdraw the pay from Dr. Wells, the lecturer in our country. . . .

Story was probably a Huntingdonshire man who had prospered in London and subscribed to Feoffees. These still existed, in spite of Laud, though less openly. The lectureship, however, did "come to the ground." . . . Oliver now had six children ; his uncle dying, he became chief heir. . . . John Hampden at this time (1736) refused to pay Shipmoney. . . .

LETTER II. This was from Ely, where he remained until the Long Parliament, occupying a house, still standing, near the huge Tithe-barn. In June '37 Prynne and others had been

pilloried for declaiming against Laud. In July was the scene in St. Giles's, Edinburgh, to be followed by the Covenant. November saw the Shipmoney trial, and in April '38 sentence was passed against Hampden. . . . In Oliver's country a project arose to drain the Fens and embank twenty miles of the Ouse. He supported it against the King, when to oppose the royal will was perilous, and earned great popularity. . . .

His cousins, the Mashams, lived at Otes, and one had married St. John, the Shipmoney barrister. To her he writes, October '38 : " Honour to God for what he has done for my soul. I live in Meshec (Prolonging) and Kedar (Blackness). No poor creature hath more cause to put himself forth in the cause of his God than I. . . Blessed be His name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine ! You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light ; I was a chief, the chief of sinners. . . . Yet God had mercy on me. . . . "

What glimpses of long-gone summers and long-gone human beings do we get from this visit ! . . . Mrs. St. John came down to breakfast every morning, and Sir William Masham said grave grace, and they spake polite devout things to one another : and they are all vanished and silent ! . . . One of Oliver's biographers used this letter to prove his dissolute life. . . . Reader, if thou hast never-cast thyself at the foot-stool of God's throne, then the Highest was never in thee ! . . .

LETTER III. Glasgow Assembly produced war between the King and Scotland. To raise an army the King summoned a Parliament in 1640, in which Oliver sat for Cambridge ; but it lived only a few weeks. An unwilling kind of army was then raised by subscription : but the people hailed the invading Scots as saviours. Peace was made with the Scots in October, and in November the Long Parliament met. Oliver's note to Mr. Willingham (Feb. '40) is the only authentic record of him in the first twenty-three months of the Long Parliament. It asks for reasons of Scots to enforce Uniformity in Religion. The whole world was now getting on fire with episcopal or anti-episcopal emotion. Laud and Strafford were committed to the Tower.

PART II. Between February 1641 and January 1643 the quarrel between King and Parliament came to a head. Too late the King would negotiate with Puritan leaders : then he plotted to deliver Strafford and dismiss Parliament. Parliament in alarm desired military force put into such hands as would be safe for them ; but the King would not yield. The Commons signed a Protestation of unanimity in defence of Law, Loyalty, Gospel, and invited the whole nation to sign. . . . On May 10th the King consented to Strafford's death ; and, to obtain loans from the City, that Parliament should not be dissolved without its own consent.



Further disturbances followed, in the form of the Irish rebellion that became a massacre, and the revival of the Episcopal business. The King's ride to St. Stephen's (Jan. '42) with armed force to arrest Pym, Hampden and others on charge of inviting Scottish invasion, led to a national outcry. King and Parliament now began to make rival preparations. . . . Oliver works at raising volunteers in Cambridge, and sends arms there, though it is high treason. He seizes the Magazine and hinders carrying of University plate. It is the same in all shires, directed by zealous members sent down by Parliament. In these confused months England is tearing herself into hostile halves. . . . Oliver and his son take up arms: the staid, pacific, solid farmer of forty-three girds himself with warlike iron. He is present at indecisive Edgehill (23 Oct. '41), and says that to cope with men of honour they must have men of religion. . . .

LETTER IV. 23 Jan. '42. To Mr. Barnard, of opposite politics and religion, justifying the sending of troops to his house.

Oliver now became Colonel, and was looking after disaffected persons.

LETTER V. In Feb. '42 great forces were assembling at Cambridge. There was trouble between gown and garrison, as surplices had some sway there, though less than at Oxford. The letter is to the Deputy Lieutenant of Suffolk asking for money to pay the troops. He was making efforts to form the "Seven Associated Counties," called the "Association." This year the war was chiefly in Yorkshire and south-west; and Prince Rupert is heard of.

LETTER VI. A request for a month's pay for soldiers, and hint of an advance which may put an end to the work.

This design, of Hampden's, to attack Rupert and storm-in upon Oxford, came to nothing.

LETTER VII. To Sir John Burgoyne asking for help against "Camdeners," the plundering followers of Lord Camden.

Oliver's work in the next year was to subdue Lincolnshire entirely to the Parliamentary cause.

LETTER VIII. April '43. To his friend Robert Barnard, who was disaffected but denied it.

There were difficulties in delivering Lincolnshire; and the Queen landed with Dutch ammunition purchased by English Crown Jewels.

LETTER IX. 3 May '43. To the Committee at Lincoln announcing Lord Grey has failed of rendezvous at Stamford, for fear of exposing Leicester.—"Better Leicester were not, than our forces should not immediately take the field to accomplish the common ends. If no man shall help you, yet will not I be wanting to do my duty, with God's help."

He succeeds in making a general rendezvous at Grantham.



LETTER X. 13 May '43. To an official person telling of a victory. "The enemy did not attack our force of twelve troops poor and broken, so we charged and routed them by God's providence."

Newark was not taken, and resisted to the end of the war. The King made Oxford his headquarters for three years.

LETTER XI. 28 May '43. To the Mayor of Colchester. "Fairfax's victory at Wakefield is a great mercy of God to us. But you must strengthen us to make us subsist. Fairfax is outnumbered by Newcastle. Send men—and money for the soldiers, as there are signs of mutiny. . . . Lay not too much upon the back of a poor gentleman who desires without much noise to lay down his life, and bleed the last drop to serve the cause and you. . . . Forget not your prayers. . . ."

Hampden is mortally wounded. Oliver takes Stamford : but Gainsborough is besieged.

LETTER XII. 31 July '43. To Sir W. Spring and others. "You have deserved encouragement from your forwardness to promote this great Cause. Truly God follows us with encouragement, and nothing is to be feared but our own sin and sloth. . . . We have won a notable victory at Gainsborough, twelve miles from the town. We charged the main body horse to horse, disputed it for a pretty time, and at last routed them. General Cavendish was driven into a quagmire and slain, and the town relieved. Lord Newcastle has attacked with fresh troops : we want 2,000 foot to encounter his army and raise the siege."

This was the first action that made Oliver universally talked of.

LETTER XIII. 2 August '43. To the "Young Men and Maids" who subscribed twelve-score pounds, and muskets. "A Troop of Horse is to be preferred, especially if your men be honest and godly. I thank God for stirring up the youth to cast in their mite. . . . Buy pistols and saddles, and I will provide four-score horses. . . ." . . .

Gainsborough and Lincoln are lost.

LETTER XIV. 6 August '43. To the Commissioners at Cambridge. "Your affairs stand sadly. Out instantly all you can ! . . . Almost all our Foot have quitted Stamford ; there is nothing to interrupt an Enemy but our Horse, that is considerable. . . ."

Oliver speeds towards Stamford as the place of danger

LETTER XV. 8 August '43. To the Commissioners. "By good providence our Foot retreated to Spalding. We must keep so strong a place as Holland from the enemy. Hasten your levies. I have scarce money to clothe my troops. You make me seem needlessly importunate in writing thus often. Make

them able to live and subsist that are willing to spend their blood for you. . . ."

Except in the Eastern Association the affairs of Parliament decline, and her Generals are beaten. Only at Newbury, on the way to relieve Gloucester, Essex for the Parliament rather prevails.

LETTER XVI. Oliver, as Governor of Ely, is lieutenant to the Earl of Manchester. Perhaps now he completed his thousand Ironsides. They lost all fear but that of God.

Cambridge, Sept. '43 To Sir W. Spring, etc. "You have scarce any Infantry. Hasten your Horses. . . . If you choose godly honest men to be Captains of Horse, honest men will follow them. . . . The King is strong in west. . . . I had rather have a plain russet-coated Captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that which you call 'a Gentleman' and is nothing else. I honour a *Gentleman* that is so indeed."

LETTER XVII. This letter gives the first specific glimpse of the Ironsides.

11 Sept. '43. To Oliver St. John. He complains that he is neglected in money. "I have a lovely company; you would respect them did you know them. . . . Most of the £3,000 allotted me was gone before I had it. . . . I have little money of my own to help my soldiers. . . ." He has already spent between £1,100 and £1,200 in the cause. . . . Lyme Regis was taken and Newbury fought; but here in the Association things were questionable. . . . 25th Sept. two hundred and twenty Commons Members sign "Solemn League and Covenant": the condition of assistance from Scots, who now prepare a third invasion. Of the awfulness of this Vow, we, in these days of Custom-house oaths, can form no notion.

LETTER XVIII. Fairfax, besieged in Hull, succeeds in shipping off the Horse, as more useful elsewhere.

26 Sept. '43. To Sir W. Spring, etc., asking for help in men. Captain Margery has been blamed for taking horses. Let him answer to his conscience if he has taken them except from Malignants. If he is innocent, the bitterness should have been spared. . . . "Some complain of plain men being made captains. Why do not those of honour and birth appear? . . . Exception has been taken to a horse sent me. If he is not a Malignant I will return it. I would not for ten thousand horses make private use of it. Let him set his own price."

At Winceby Fight, which cleared Lincolnshire, Oliver was near death: his horse killed, and he knocked down again. But a home-given charge put the enemy to disorder.



LETTER XIX. An Act of Parliament was passed to put down Surplices, etc. : to be enforced by soldiers if necessary. In Ely Cathedral Mr. Hitch persisted in his Choir-service. . . .

10 Jan. '44. To Mr. Hitch, requiring him to forbear lest the soldiers should interfere and cause disorder.

As no notice was taken, Oliver entered the Cathedral, and, his first summons being disregarded, uttered his memorable "Leave off your fooling, and come down, Sir. . . ." On Jan. 19th 21,000 Scots entered England by Berwick and laid siege to York.

LETTER XX. 10 March '44. To Major-General Crawford, on behalf of Lieut.-Col. Packer, an Anabaptist. "The State, in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions. . . . I advised you formerly to bear with men of different minds from yourself. . . ."

Oliver was suspected of lenity to sectaries, etc., provided they "feared God. . . ." The western towns of Lincolnshire were taken; and Cromwell, Manchester and Fairfax crossed the Humber and joined with the Scots in the siege of York.

LETTER XXI. MARSTON MOOR. At the end of June Rupert marched to the relief of York, which he effected, and might have retired safely, but he insisted on opposing the Parliamentary army. It was the bloodiest battle of the war and ruined the King's affairs in the north. . . .

5 July '44. To Col. Valentine Walton. He announces the victory and gives all the glory to God. ". . . God made them as stubble to our swords. . . . God hath taken away your eldest Son. . . . You know my own trials this way; but the Lord supported me with this : that the Lord took him into the happiness we all pant for and live for. . . ."

LETTER XXII. 1 Sept. '44. To Committee for Isle of Ely "You have released some 'committed' men. In future do not entrench upon me so much as to release them. . . ."

LETTER XXIII. 6 Sept. '44. To Walton. He alludes to false tongues, that call him "factious," because he opposes rapine. ". . . Pardon me that I am thus troublesome. I write but seldom : it gives me a little ease to pour my mind, in the midst of calumnies, into the bosom of a friend. . . ."

SPEECHES. Cromwell and the thorough-going party suspected Essex and Manchester of indifferent zeal in prosecuting the war. They were men of limited notions, large estates and anxieties, and were afraid of beating the King too well.

I. 25 Nov. '44. Oliver accuses them of neglecting opportunities and giving the enemy advantages. . . . Manchester in replying alludes to the report of Oliver saying if he met the King in battle he would fire at him as at another. . . .



II. 9 Dec. '44. The problem is to get Essex and Manchester softly ousted. . . . Oliver says the nation is bleeding to death and must be saved by more vigorous prosecution of the war. People are saying it is to the interest of Members of both Houses to continue the war. Beware of a dishonourable peace. Do not complain too much of Commanders' oversights ; in military affairs such things must be. . . .

III. The Self-denying Ordinance : a great ease to tender consciences. Religious men might now serve without taking the Covenant as a first preliminary. . . . Parliament had its New-Model Army, and soon saw a new epoch.

LETTER XXIV. Salisbury, 9 April '45. To Sir Thomas Fairfax, asking for assistance, to save retreat, lest Parliament should lose friends in these parts.

LETTER XXV. Rupert at Worcester awaited the King and a convoy of artillery. Cromwell attacked and routed the convoy at Islip Bridge, and also took Bletchington House. . . .

25 April '45. To Committee of Both Kingdoms. He describes the fight, and attributes all to the mercy of God. . . . "Though I have had greater mercies, yet none clearer. . . ." Having few dragoons he had hesitated to storm Bletchington House ; yet he got it. ". . . I hope you will pardon me if I say God is not enough owned. . . ."

LETTER XXVI. 29 April '45. A summons to the Governor of Farringdon garrison to surrender.

LETTER XXVII. To the same. "If God give you into my hands, I will not spare a man of you, if you put me to a storm. . . ."

The attack, however, failed for want of infantry.

LETTER XXVIII. 4 June '45. To Sir T. Fairfax, concerning fortifications of Isle of Ely, etc. . . .

The King in the Midlands has stormed Leicester. Oliver and the Committee at Cambridge fear for the Eastern Association, and write a joint letter (6 June '45) asking for troops to be sent to Newmarket.

LETTER XXIX. NASEBY. An old hamlet on a hill-top, on the north-west border of Northampton, nearly in the heart of England. Cottages, etc., in square, leading off south into two long streets. Around it are not properly hills, but broad, blunt, clayey masses, swelling towards and from each other. . . . It was Charles's last battle ; he dashed against the New-Model Army and was shivered to ruin. Rupert on the right carried all before him, and galloped off to plunder. Cromwell, victorious on the other wing, did not plunder. Rupert, finding the infantry a ruin, prepares to charge again, but his cavalry breaks asunder. The two armies had faced each other from parallel

hills, with a wide table of upland between them, where the battle took place. . . . The King's carriage and cabinet were taken, and royal autographs which gave a most melancholy view of his veracity. . . .

14 June '45. To Lenthall, the Speaker. In a fight of three hours the King was routed ; he lost all his guns and 5,000 men. "This is none other but the hand of God. . . . Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty ; I beseech you, in the name of God, not to discourage them. . . ."

The "honest men" are those who have not taken the Covenant, for whom, as usual, Oliver pleads. The King loses Leicester, and can no longer raise a force. The New-Model Army marches south-west carrying all before it.

LETTER XXX. The Royalist gentry and clergy organised "Clubmen" in the south-west. They persuaded the country people, who were mostly neutral, to take up arms as a defence against plunder by *both* armies. A disturbance of this kind took place near Shaftesbury. . . .

4 August '45. To Sir T. Fairfax. He had assured the people there would be no plunder. . . . Of the 2,000 who had resisted on Hambledon Hill, "we have taken about 300 ; many of which are poor silly creatures, whom if you please to let me send home, they promise to be very dutiful for time to come, and will 'be hanged before they come out again.' . . ."

LETTER XXXI. STORM OF BRISTOL. 14 Sept. '45. To Wm. Lenthall, Speaker. They had decided to march to Bristol, and not turn their backs on the enemy, who might march into the heart of the Kingdom. . . . The Generals take up their posts ; the enemy's sallies are feeble, despite the numbers within ; yet there is an unwillingness to storm. . . . At last it is resolved to do so. . . . "There hath been seldom the like cheerfulness to any work like to this, after it was once resolved upon. . . . Col. Pickering, who stormed at Lawford's Gate, where was a double work, well filled with men and cannon, presently entered ; and with great resolution beat the enemy from their works and possessed their cannon." Bridges were laid down for Horse to enter. . . . The hardest task fell to Col. Rainsborough. "His resolution was such that, notwithstanding the inaccessibleness and difficulty, he would not give it over." The fort was entered, and the men put to the sword. This was the most important position, where the losses were heaviest. The success on Col. Welden's side was not so great. . . . The enemy then fired the town ; while we "feared to see so famous a city burnt to ashes before our faces." A treaty of surrender was agreed on, and the Prince marched out for Oxford. Our loss was light. "All this is none other than the work of God. He

must be a very Atheist that doth not acknowledge it. . . ." Our gallant men do not covet praise. "It's their joy that they are instruments of God's glory and their country's good. . . . Faith and prayer obtained this City for you . . . of . . . all England over, who have wrestled with God for a blessing in this very thing. . . . All that believe have the real unity. . . . In things of the mind we look for no compulsion. . . ."

If modern readers think this "cant," they are mistaken. Rupert rode out of Bristol amid seas of angry human faces glooming unutterable things upon him. For he had been necessitated to much plunder; commanding "the elixir of the Blackguardism of the Three Kingdoms" with very insufficient funds.

LETTER XXXII. The Army continued its victorious course south, Oliver being specially renowned by his sieges. . . .

6 Oct. '45. To Fairfax. He describes the taking of Winchester Castle. "God is not weary in doing you good. . . . His favour to you is as visible, when He comes by His power upon the hearts of your enemies, making them quit places of strength to you, as when He gives courage to your soldiers to attempt hard things. . . ."

The captive enemies complain of plunder: on which Oliver has six accused soldiers tried, and one shot by lot.

LETTER XXXIII. Basing House was a great eye-sorrow to London's trade with the west. It had stood many sieges, and on the Parliament side there was a passion to have it taken. . . .

14 Oct. '45. To Lenthall. He describes the storm, and deeds of leaders, as at Bristol. The place surrenders. Oliver suggests that the place should be "slighted," and a strong quarter made at Newbury, to be "a security and a frontier" to all these parts. . . . He intends to march west, and desires recruits of Foot, and money to pay the Army. . . . "God exceedingly abounds in His goodness to us. . . ."

There is said to have been much slaying and plunder at Basing; and fire did the rest. . . . Oliver had spent much time with God in prayer the night before the storm, and he seldom fought without the help of a Scripture text.

LETTER XXXIV. Oliver is thanked by the Commons, and ordered to attack Dennington Castle.

16 Oct. '45. To Fairfax. "I shall be at Langford House to-night, if God please. I hope the work will not be long."

LETTER XXXV. 17 Oct. '45. To Lenthall. Surrender of Langford described. . . . Dalbier (Dutch) taught Oliver the mechanical part of soldiering and helped him to drill the Ironsides. . . .

On April 27, 1646, the King rode out of Oxford in disguise towards Newark and the Scots army. . . . On June 20th



Oxford surrendered to Fairfax. . . . About this time Henry Ireton married Cromwell's daughter, Bridget. . . . The first Civil War was now over.

PART III. LETTER XXXVI. It was difficult to conquer the King and impossible to treat with him. The Scots consented to fight for him if he took the Covenant and sanctioned Presbyterian worship : but he would not. . . .

27 July '46. To Thos. Knyvett. Oliver asks his favour on behalf of his poor neighbours of Hapton, who had Sectarian, Independent notions. He has no claim on Knyvett, but is conscious to himself "of a readiness to serve any gentleman in all possible civilities. . . ." He pities the people "in respect of their honesties, and the trouble I hear they are likely to suffer for their consciences. . . . This is a quarrelsome age ; and the anger seems to me to be the worse where the ground is difference of opinion. . . ."

LETTER XXXVII. 31 July '46. To Fairfax : on behalf of Adjutant Fleming. . . .

On July 24th the Scots presented their "Propositions," to which the King answered a haughty, No.

LETTER XXXVIII. 10 August '46. To Fairfax. The Commissioners sent to the King at Newcastle have returned. The Scots appear inclined to restore our towns. "The King gave a very general answer. Things are not well in Scotland ; would they were in England ! We are full of faction and worse. . . . Sir, I hope you have not cast me off. Truly I may say, none more affectionately honours nor loves you. You and yours are in my daily prayers. . . ."

LETTER XXXIX. 26 August '46. To John Rushworth, Secretary to Fairfax, on behalf of Major Lilburn. "I know a reasonable employment will content him. . . ."

This is Henry Lilburn, brother of Freeborn John, who was always deep in quarrels.

LETTER XL. 6 Oct. '46. To Fairfax. The Staffordshire Committee had petitioned (unsuccessfully) for £2,000 out of Royalist fines, to pay off their forces.

LETTER XLI. 25 Oct. '46. To his daughter, Bridget Ireton. "Your sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind ; bewailing it : she seeks after . . . what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker is to be of the best sect next to a finder ; and such an one shall every faithful humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder ! . . . Let not Husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. . . ."

LETTER XLII. By Dec. 21st the Scots had agreed to march away and leave the King to our disposal. Dec. 19th, Londoners

had petitioned for peace with King, and against expense of Army. It was the first note of controversy between the City and Army, between Presbyterians and Independents. . . .

21 Dec. '46. To Fairfax. The Petition strikes at the Army and shows the prevailing temper. "But this is our comfort, God is in Heaven, and He doeth what pleaseth Him. . . ."

LETTER XLIII. The Presbyterian Platform is at length passed, after some soul's travail. That part of the English mind which loves order in the clipt Dutch-dragon fashion was satisfied. But the deeper part was inclined to grow in the forest-tree way ; and the coming years saw Quakerisms, etc. . . .

11 March '47. To Fairfax. . . . He describes the malice and bitterness against the Army. . . . "The naked simplicity of Christ, with that wisdom He is pleased to give, and patience, will overcome all this. . . ."

LETTER XLIV. The Commons order that the Army shall not be quartered within twenty-five miles of London. Oliver writes to Fairfax (19 March '47) approving this precaution.

An interval of months separates the next letter, which is unfortunate at such a crisis. Parliament split into Presbyterians and Independents, represented by City and Army. The two parties joined in deadly wrestle, and Parliament was flung on its back. . . . The quarrel lacked a reliable history ; and in one generation earnest Puritanism became mythical. . . . By noble sincerity, not master-strokes of duplicity, did Cromwell steer across this Chaos, by meaning the same thing before God and man. A real impulse of heavenly Faith was at work in this Controversy.

The question of disbanding the Army, of sending part of it to Ireland, of paying up arrears, became acute. The Presbyterian party in Parliament, mostly Colonels of *Old Model* under Essex, did not love the new victorious army. . . . Commissioners were appointed on both sides, that met at Royston (10 June '47), and the soldiers raised cries of "Justice !" . . . The next letter is probably by Cromwell, but in his worst style, and in haste not merely of the pen : yet like the oak-root, strong and unwedgeable. . . .

10 June '47. To the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, etc. He demands satisfaction of the soldiers' claims, and reparation on those who have sought the army's destruction. . . . Let there be a Settlement according to the Vote and Declaration of Parliament. . . . The people everywhere dread the army being disbanded before the Settlement. . . . "When once the State has made a Settlement, we have nothing to say but to submit or suffer. . . . For the obtaining of these things we are drawing near your City. . . . Neither we nor our soldiers shall give you the least offence. . . ."

The army, now at St. Albans, accused eleven Presbyterian members as authors of these troubles. They retire, while the army, coiled round London, now advanced, now receded. . . . Towards the end of July the Presbyterian party seemed cowed ; but London, mostly Presbyterian, though torn by factions, rallied. On July 26th there was an irruption of Apprentices into the House, demanding the return of the eleven, etc. . . . Great disturbance and uncertainty followed, ending in Presbyterian submission. . . .

LETTER XLV. Williams, Archbishop of York, had fortified Conway Castle at his own expense. It was taken by Sir John Owen, and, to get Owen expelled, he consented to hold it for Parliament. . . .

1 Sept. '47. To Williams. “We shall endeavour to settle the affairs of North Wales in such way as will most conduce to the public good, without thought of any humour, which has been too much practised on the occasion of our Troubles.”

LETTER XLVI. Lord Ormond in Ireland, doing his utmost for the King, surrendered Dublin to Parliament rather than the rebels. Col. Jones gains a great victory over the rebels.

14 Sept. '47. To Col. Jones. We should “ascribe the glories of all to Him. . . .” Some persons may misinterpret our actions, “yet we doubt not but God will clear our integrity and innocency from any other ends we aim at but His glory and the Public Good.”

LETTER XLVII. 13 Oct. '47. To Fairfax, concerning Capt. Middleton's trial : of which no record is left us now. . . . Oliver is busy attending Parliament, answering “Yea” in the debates whether the Presbyterian Government should be limited. . . . The limit of time is at length fixed to the end of next Session.

LETTER XLVIII. 22 Oct. '47. To Fairfax. The disaffected Garrison of Hull will not serve under its present Governor, and desires Col. Overton. . . . Oliver humbly suggests that Overton be sent down.

LETTER XLIX. Negotiations have failed with the King ; and a “Levelling Party” has arisen in the army demanding punishment of “Chief Delinquent.” Within the King's cloak they discern a man accountable to God.

11 Nov. '47. To Lenthall : to announce the King's escape from Hampton Court.

LETTER L. Nov. '47. To Col. Whalley : warning him there may be an attempt on the King's life. . . .

Nov. 15th the King is at Carisbrook Castle, Isle of Wight. . . . Oliver has to suppress a mutiny among the Levellers ; and he orders one to be shot.



LETTER LI. 23 Dec. '47. To the Master of Trinity, Cambridge : on behalf of Dudley Wyatt, who had been ejected by mistake.

LETTER LII. 3 Jan. '48. To Col. Robert Hammond, Governor of Isle of Wight. "I never in my life saw more deep sense, and less will to show it unchristianly, than in that which thou didst write to us when we were at Windsor and thou in the midst of thy temptation. . . . How good has God been to dispose all to mercy. . . ."

The "temptation" was : Shall he obey the King, or be true to his trust and the Parliament ?

LETTER LIII. Richard Cromwell was an idle fellow who disliked soldiering, and wished to marry and retire to Arcadian felicity. Richard Norton was an old friend of Oliver's, and neighbour to Mayor, the bride's father . . .

25 Feb. '47. To Norton. Another father had made "a great proposition" of his daughter, but Oliver preferred Mayor. ". . . I see difficulties, and not that assurance of godliness, though indeed of fairness. . . . The consideration of piety in the Parents, and such hopes of the Gentlewoman in that respect, make the business to me a great mercy. . . ."

On March 7th an Ordinance was passed to settle on Cromwell £2,500 a year of Land out of the Marquis of Worcester's Estate.

LETTER LIV. 7 March '47. To Fairfax. "It hath pleased God to raise me out of a dangerous sickness. . . . I received in myself the sentence of death, that I might learn to trust in Him that raiseth from the dead. . . . It's a blessed thing to die daily. . . . To be kept in your remembrance is very great satisfaction to me ; for I can say in the simplicity of my heart, I put a high and true value upon your love. . . ."

On March 31st Cromwell offers £1,000 a year out of his Settlement towards the Irish war, and discharges the State from arrears of pay due to him.

LETTER LV. 28 March '48. To Col. Richard Norton. "I have met with Mr. Mayor. . . . I perceive the gentleman is very wise and honest. . . . Some things of common fame did a little stick : I gladly heard his doubts, and gave such answer as was next at hand, I believe to some satisfaction. . . ."

LETTER LVI. 3 April '48. To Norton. Things did a little "stick" between Oliver and Mayor. Oliver had offered £500 a year in land, and another £500 a year for one life. . . . "In point of jointure I shall give satisfaction. . . ." But hearing that in a former match Mr. Mayor did offer "to settle the Manor wherein he lived, and to give £2,000 in money, I did insist upon that. . . . The money I shall need for my two little Wenches ; and thereby I shall free my Son from being

charged with them. Mr. Mayor parts with nothing at present but that money ; except the board (of the young pair), which I should not be unwilling to give them, to enjoy the comfort of their society. . . . I know thou art an idle fellow : but prithee neglect me not now ; delay may be very inconvenient to me : I much rely upon you. . . ."

LETTER LVII. 6 April '48 To Col. Robert Hammond : warning him of plots for the King's escape.

LETTER LVIII. 18 April '48. To Col. Kenrick. "This is the Gentleman I mentioned to you," etc.

PRAYER-MEETING. Scotland favoured the King ; her army hung over England like a flaming comet. Early in '48 many difficulties assailed the small governing party in England : a King not to be bargained with, the centre of intrigues ; a great Royalist party hardly subdued ; a great dissatisfied Presbyterian party, headed by London and its wealth ; mutineer Levellers. . . . Cromwell made some vain attempts at reconciliation. . . . A Royalist-Presbyterian rising had to be quelled by cavalry. . . . Then the Army Leaders met at Windsor—the longest heads and strongest hearts in England. Adjutant Allen describes the day spent in prayer, and how the Lord led them, "To look back and consider what time it was when . . . we could last say . . . the presence of the Lord *was* among us. . . ." They blamed themselves for "carnal conferences" with the King, and came to see their duty. "None was able hardly to speak a word to each other for bitter weeping. . . ." God helped them to a clear agreement, "to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for that blood he had shed. . . ."

The reader may think this Madness, but Madness lies close to the highest wisdom.

PART IV. LETTER LIX. In May '48 there were signs of a new Civil War. Royalist tumults took place, especially in Wales, where the gentry were all for the King, and the people followed. . . . Oliver besieged Pembroke, but lacked artillery.

14 June '48. To Lenthall. The garrison, in want of provision, are like to mutiny. We have scraped up a few guns. Our ladders are too short to storm. . . . "We shall have it in fourteen days by starving. . . ."

LETTER LX. 17 June '48. To Major Thos. Saunders : bidding him seize two suspected men, who had secreted arms, etc. . . . "We are, it may be, a little too much solicitous in this business. . . . Such a temper causeth us to overact business."

LETTER LXI. Oliver is still before Pembroke ; while Fairfax and Lilburn quell disturbances in Kent, Essex and Lancashire.



28 June '48. To Fairfax. The enemy resist desperately, but are in straits, and the end will be in a few days. . . . He prays that all may discern the mind of God and the nature of their duty. . . . "The Lord multiply His grace upon you, and bless you, and keep your heart upright; then, though you be not conformable to the men of this world nor to their wisdom, yet you shall be precious in the eyes of God. . . ."

In July Duke Hamilton with a Scotch army was ready to step across to England. Scotland was distracted; its Parliamentary majority wishing "to deliver its King from Sectaries. . . ." Oliver at last succeeds at Pembroke.

LETTER LXII. 11 July '48. To Lenthall: describing surrender. "The Persons Excepted are such as have formerly served you in a very good Cause; but, being now apostatised, I did rather make election of them than of those who had always been for the King; judging their iniquity double; because they have sinned against so much light, and against so many evidences of Divine Providence going along with a prospering and just Cause. . . ."

A revolt breaks out in the Fleet, and all seems to depend on Oliver and Hamilton.

PRESTON. Oliver, with smaller but compact force, cuts Hamilton in two and drives him north *and* south. . . . Hamilton marches through Lancashire, retarded by rainy weather, and his march is loose, van and rear twenty to thirty miles apart. . . . On August 16th the Duke is at Preston, and the first battle is fought.

LETTER LXIII. 17 Aug. '48. To Committee of Lancashire. "It pleased God to enable us to give them a defeat; which I hope we shall improve, by God's assistance, to their utter ruin. . . ."

An account follows of enemy losses in men and material.

LETTER LXIV. 20 Aug. '48. To Lenthall. The battle and disposition of forces described; how the enemy were charged to the town and the streets cleared by the valour of the foot. Certain leaders are commended, "they often coming to push of pike and to close firing, and always making the Enemy to recoil. . . ." The enemy at last were driven in disorder over the bridge towards Lancaster, losing in slain and prisoners and arms and ammunition. . . . A gallant Colonel was killed while pressing the pursuit too hotly. . . . "He hath left some behind him to inherit a Father's honour; and a sad widow. . . ." The enemy made a stand at Winwick, but were finally defeated, and were granted terms of surrender, with quarter and civil usage. . . . "I could hardly tell how to say less, there being so much of God in it; and I am not willing to say more lest three should seem to be any of men. . . ."

The numbers were 8,600 on Cromwell's side, against 21,000;



LETTER LXV. 20 Aug. '48. To Committee at York. The Enemy Foot is all taken and nearly all their Horse. We might take them all, but that our Horse is wearied. "They are the miserablest party that ever was."

LETTER LXVI. 23 Aug. '48. To Committee at York. The Duke is going towards Pontefract; let all be done to impede his march, and so terminate the business in Scotland.

On August 25th the Duke is taken at Uttoxeter, and dies on the scaffold. . . . Colchester surrenders, and two gallant officers are shot. But do they deserve nothing who, contrary to Law and Treaty, have again involved the Nation in blood? . . . The back of the second Civil War was broken at Preston: and it rapidly dies everywhere. In Scotland the Kirk party almost thank the conquerors. Oliver goes to Edinburgh to compose the strange state of affairs.

LETTER LXVII. 1 Sept. '48. To Oliver St. John. Much praise is given to God. . . . "We shall serve our generations. Our rest we expect elsewhere: that will be durable. Care we not for to-morrow, nor for anything. . . ." He tells the story of the dying man who prophesied the defeat of the Scots because a handful of cut grass withered. . . .

LETTER LXVIII. 2 Sept. '48. To Lord Wharton. "When we think of our God, what are we? Oh, His mercy to the whole society of saints—despised, jeered saints! . . . I think, through these outward mercies, as we call them, Faith, Patience, Love, Hope, are exercised and perfected—yea Christ formed, and grows to a perfect man within us. . . ."

On Sept. 8th Oliver at Durham proclaims it will be a good service to apprehend stragglers from the Scottish army, and justifiable to slay those that resist.

LETTER LXIX. 11 Sept. '48. To Fairfax: on behalf of the widow of Lieut.-Col. Cowell, "much lamenting her loss and the sad condition she and her children were left in. He was an honest worthy man. He spent himself in your and the Kingdom's service. . . . Upon his death-bed he commended this desire to me, That I should befriend his to the Parliament or to your Excellency."

LETTER LXX. 15 Sept. '48. To the Governor of Berwick. Surrender demanded. "The witness that God hath borne against your army in their invasion of those who desired to sit in peace by you, doth at once manifest His dislike of the injury done to a Nation that meant you no harm. . . ."

A dilatory answer was returned.

LETTER LXXI. 16 Sept. '48. To the Lord Argyle and others. He sends messengers to the well-affected Lords to acquaint them with his reasons for advancing to Scotland.

LETTER LXXII. 16 Sept. '48. To Committee of Estates for Scotland. Hamilton invaded England contrary to the Covenant. At Preston God bore witness to your unrighteousness. "How dangerous a thing is it to wage an unjust war; much more, to appeal to God the Righteous Judge therein!" Restore Berwick and Carlisle, or we must appeal to God.

LETTER LXXIII. 18 Sept. '48. To Lord Loudon, Chancellor of Scotland. We rejoice to see power in the hands of those who "are taught of God to seek His honour, and the comfort of His people. . . ." God permitted the strife to show the need of Unity; we therefore hope this may be the "foundation of Union of the People of God in love and amity." We shall endeavour to do our part, and if we fail, "let this profession rise up in judgment against us, as having been made in hypocrisy. . . ." We rejoice with more trembling than to dare to do such a wicked thing. . . ." When the Enemy yields "we shall forthwith depart out of your Kingdom; and in the meantime be even more tender towards the Kingdom of Scotland in the point of charge than if we were in our own Kingdom. . . ."

The answer was of intricate longwindedness, tolerable neither to gods nor men. . . . Oliver proclaims death to those who plunder.

LETTER LXXIV. 21 Sept. '48. To Committee of Estates at Edinburgh. "To our very great grief of heart" some plunder did take place by men of the Northern Horse, "who have not been under our discipline. . . ." They have been sent back to England to exemplify "our great detestation of the fact. . . ." Two officers were suspended for conniving.

LETTER LXXV. 2 Oct. '48. To Lenthall. An account of operations and negotiations in Scotland, and surrender of Berwick.

LETTER LXXVI. 2 Oct. '48. To Fairfax. He encloses duplicate of above letter, and begs him to instruct Sir A. Haselrig at Newcastle to care for Berwick, lest the Garrison be left destitute and the place lost.

Negotiations with the King at Newport, Isle of Wight, lasted forty days. It was the last hope of Presbyterian Royalism, and the last treaty with the King. Like the others, it came to nothing; as he made not the smallest attempt to abide by it. Oliver was at Edinburgh.

LETTER LXXVII. 5 Oct. '48. To Committee of Estates for Scotland. He praises them for restoring Berwick and Carlisle. . . . England foresaw these designs of the Malignants, but forbore to send troops to protect the two towns, out of "tenderness . . . not to give the least suspicion of a breach with the Kingdom of Scotland. . . ." God destroyed the invaders, but an ill-



affected spirit remains. What is left of the invading army must be prosecuted. . . . The Malignants are raising new forces, and Scotland has not suppressed all she might. Let none of these be suffered in any public place or trust.

LETTER LXXVIII. 8 Oct. '48. To Lenthall. He recommends Col. R. Montgomery, as one of the most active against the late Invaders.

LETTER LXXIX. 9 Oct. '48. To Lenthall. He describes meeting with the Committee of Estates in Edinburgh; and, as the Agreement did not entirely answer his instructions—"to disenable them from being in power to raise new troubles to England"—he demanded as in Letter LXXVII. . . . The affairs of Scotland are now thriving as to the interest of honest men; and she will be a better neighbour than under the great pretenders to the Covenant and Religion and Treaties. . . . "God, who is not to be mocked or deceived, and is very jealous when His name and Religion are made use of to carry on impious designs, hath taken vengeance of such profanity."

LETTER LXXX. 9 Nov. '48. To Morris, Governor of Pontefract: summoning him to surrender.

He refuses, and holds out some time, surrender being a serious matter.

LETTER LXXXI. 15 Nov. '48. To Committee of Lords and Commons. Pontefract is victualled for a year, and the men expect no mercy and will fight to the last. It has thick walls, strong towers, and is built on a rock. . . . We want money, troops, powder, guns. . . . The troops want clothes before they can lie in the field at this season. . . .

Pontefract only surrenders next March. The Newport Treaty makes no progress. Clamour rises in the army for justice on Delinquents, and on the chief Delinquent, who has again caused bloodshed.

LETTER LXXXII. 20 Nov. '48. To Robert Jenner and John Ashe. He accuses them of mildness to Col. Owen, a Welsh Delinquent, one of those who had assisted the Scots. . . . The fault was greater in these latter days than at the beginning, "because it is the repetition of the same offence against all the witnesses that God has borne, by making and abetting a Second War. . . . For a little more money all offences shall be pardoned! . . . I may seem severe, but your course is disregard of the manifest witnessings of God. . . ."

This was a sour morsel for Jenner and Ashe. . . .

At this time we have Maidston's character of Cromwell: "Temper exceeding fiery, yet the flame of it kept down for most part or soon allayed; and naturally compassionate toward objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure. Though



God had made him a heart wherein was left little room for any fear but what was due to God Himself, yet did he exceed in tenderness towards sufferers."

LETTER LXXXIII. 20 Nov. '48. To Fairfax. He recommends the Soldiers' petition for impartial justice on Offenders. "I know God teaches you. . . ."

Nov. 20th the Army presents its humble unanimous "Remonstrance": a serious Document, tending to the dread Unknown. It is debated whether it shall be considered.

LETTER LXXXIV. 28 Nov. '48. To Thomas St. Nicholas. The Hull garrison lacks money to buy bread and threatens mutiny. The townspeople will give nothing on trust.

LETTER LXXXV. 25 Nov. '48. To Col. R. Hammond. "I am such a one as thou didst formerly know, having a body of sin and death; but I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, there is no condemnation, though much infirmity; and I wait for the redemption. . . . Call not your burden sad or heavy. If your Father laid it upon you, He intended neither . . . such things . . . being for the exercise of faith and patience, whereby in the end we shall be made perfect. . . . Was there not a little of this when Robert Hammond . . . desired retirement from the Army, and thought of quiet in the Isle of Wight? Did not God find him out there? . . ." Let him seek to know the mind of God "and then tell me, Whether there be not some glorious and high meaning in all this?" . . . No wonder he is dissatisfied with friends' actings. "If a man take not his own burden well, he shall hardly others'. . ." Now concerning Authorities and Powers. "All agree that there are cases in which it is lawful to resist. . . . The query is, Whether ours be such a case? . . . By this treaty, may not all the fruits of the war be lost? Against all agreements with those who risked their lives! Is not this Army a lawful power called by God to fight against the King? . . . Let us beware lest fleshly reasoning see more safety in making use of this principle [passive obedience] than in acting! . . . We trust the same Lord who hath framed our minds in our actings is with us in this also. . . . Dear Robin, beware of men, look up to the Lord. . . . Tempting of God ordinarily is either by acting presumptuously in carnal confidence, or in unbelief through diffidence. . . . Ask we our hearts, Whether we think that . . . these dispensations, the like to which many generations cannot afford, should end in so corrupt reasonings of good men; and should so hit the designings of bad? . . ."

On Nov. 27th Hammond was ordered to Windsor: a young Colonel with dubitations being out of place in the Isle. The King is at Hurst Castle, Newport. . . . The crisis grows in

London ; Parliamentary majority is against Army Remonstrance. . . . The Army spends a day in prayer at Windsor, and marches to London (2 Dec.), giving offence nowhere. The mood is earnest as Death and Judgment. They will see God's justice done, though blood be shed. The Surgeon, the Priest, the Judge, the atrocious murderer, alike shed blood ; but only the owl's eye discerns no difference except for the dresses they wear. . . . Dec. 4th to 5th the House debates, and decides by 129 to 83 the King's concessions are a ground of settlement. Dec. 6th Col. Pride's foot guard the House, and intercept forty-one members. Oliver comes to town, and a hundred others are taken or scared away. The Minority is now the Majority.

LETTER LXXXVI. 18 Dec. '48. To the Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He solicits the late Dr Duck's Chambers in Doctors' Commons for Dr. Dorislaus, who had served the Parliament.

Dr. Dorislaus was afterwards employed as Advocate in the King's Trial.

DEATH-WARRANT. 29 Jan. '49. Those who tried him sat there as in the Presence of the Maker of all men, as executing the judgments of Heaven above, and had not the fear of any man or thing on the Earth below. No modern reader can conceive the unspeakability of the death-sentence. Only long reading in the old dead Pamphlets discloses its magnitude. It was the most daring action of any body of men in history, and struck a damp like death through the heart of all Flunkeyism. . . . The like will not be needed for another thousand years—not till a new Hero-worship has arisen, perfected itself, and degenerated into Flunkeyism and Cloth-worship.

## CHAPTER XXV

### “OLIVER CROMWELL’S LETTERS AND SPEECHES” II: ANALYSIS

**PART V. LETTER LXXXVII.** An executive of forty-one was established, of which Oliver was a member; and on May 19th the Commonwealth was proclaimed, making Parliament the Supreme Authority of the Nation.

He is also occupied with family affairs, and the question of his eldest son’s marriage.

1 Feb. ’49. To Mr. Robinson. “Upon your testimony of the Gentlewoman’s worth, and the common report of the piety of the Family, I shall be willing to entertain the renewing of the motion, upon such conditions as may be to mutual satisfaction. . . .”

**LETTER LXXXVIII.** 12 Feb. ’49. To Richard Mayor—of whose willingness he has heard. “. . . My desires are, if Providence so dispose, very full and free to the thing—if, upon an interview, there prove also a freedom in the young persons thereunto. . . .”

On Feb. 19th the Council of State first met.

**LETTER LXXXIX.** 26 Feb. ’49. To the same: as in previous letter.

**LETTER XC.** 8 March ’49. To the same. “. . . I doubt not but I have sent the offer of such things as will give mutual satisfaction to us both. My attendance upon public affairs will not give me leave to come down unto you myself. . . .”

On March 9th Duke Hamilton was executed, and other chief Delinquents punished.

**LETTER XCI.** 14 March ’49. To Dr. Love, Cambridge: on behalf of Mrs. Nutting’s son. “The old interest I have had makes me presume upon your favour. I desire nothing but what is just; leaving that to your judgment. . . .”

**LETTER XCII.** 14 March ’49. To Richard Mayor. “I received your Paper, etc. . . . I desire your leave to return my dissatisfaction therewith.” He desires the match. “But I may not be so much wanting to myself nor family as not to have



some equality of consideration towards it. . . . I have two young daughters to bestow. . . . According to your offer I have nothing for them. . . . If my son die, what consideration is there to me? And yet a jointure parted with on my side. If she die, there is on your side little money parted with. . . . If I concur to deny myself in point of present moneys . . . I may and do expect the Manor of Hursley to be settled without any charge upon it, after your decease, saving your Lady's jointure. . . ." He is willing to deny himself cheerfully so far because of the report of the daughter's goodness. . . . "But if I should not insist as above, I should in a greater measure than were meet deny both my own reason and the advice of my friends. . . ."

On March 15th Oliver is made Commander for Ireland.

LETTER XCIII. 25 March '49. To Mayor. He makes concessions in land, but keeps to requirements about Hursley Manor. "If this satisfy, I desire a speedy resolution."

LETTER XCIV. 30 March '49. To Mayor. "You propose another way (as to compensation) which seems to me truly inconvenient. . . . The Lord dispose this great Business (great between you and me) for good. . . ."

LETTER XCV. 6 April '49. To Mayor. As he may soon leave for Ireland he will endeavour to hasten his share of the business. . . . "My son had a great desire to come down and wait upon your daughter. I perceive he minds that more than to attend to business here. . . ."

Efforts being made to raise money for the Army, the City consents to lend.

LETTER XCVI. 15 April '49. To Mayor. There had been further misunderstandings about settling the Estate. . . . "Although I should not like change of agreements, yet to show how much I desire the perfecting of this Business . . . I shall submit thereunto. . . ."

On May 1st the marriage took place.

THE LEVELLERS. Now and then the deep republican feeling in the Army broke out. In the Levellers, with their digging and planting at Cobham, and their idea of collectively enjoying the fruits of the earth, lay the germ of Quakerism. When ordered to Ireland, Whalley's regiment mutinied; for which Trooper Lockyer was shot: a brave young man of twenty-three, and religious. Lilburn also was committed to the Tower for publishing his Agreement of the People. The flame of mutiny spread through the Army in other parts of the country: justice was demanded on the murderers of Lockyer. . . . Oliver pursued the mutineers from Salisbury to Burford and stamped out the Levelling principle. Some Leveller Corporals were shot; and Sansculottism must lie submerged for two hundred years. Dryasdust may tear his

hair over intolerance, but let him reflect what Conviction means in an earnest age: not spouting in Exeter Hall, but rapid silent practice on the face of the earth.

Oliver returns to London, and on July 10th. starts for Ireland in great state.

LETTER XCVII. 9 July '49. To Sir James Harrington: on behalf of Irish Earl of Thomond, who had joined Royalist cause and lost money. He and his family are reduced to straits, and his desires are modest. He seeks less his own advantage than to preserve his son-in-law's family from ruin. If he obtains favour, he may "endeavour the peace and quiet of this Commonwealth."

LETTER XCVIII. 10 July '49. To Lenthall: on behalf of his fellow-member for Cambridge, John Lowry, who had suffered much for the public, including decay of his estate.

The letter was written in the thick press of business on the day Oliver left for Ireland.

LETTER XCIX. Mayor would use his great connection to obtain promotion for one "Major Long"; but the important man mildly signifies he does not promote on this score.

19 July '49. To Mayor. I received your letter . . . and do in answer thereunto according to my best understanding, with a due consideration to those gentlemen who have abid the brunt of the service. . . ." " . . . I wish he (my son) may be serious; the times require it. . . . Sir, discompose not your thoughts on estate for what you are to pay me. . . . You will find me to you as your own heart."

On August 2nd Oliver proceeded to Dublin, the siege of which had been raised after Michael Jones's victory.

LETTER C. 13 Aug. '49. To Mayor. He rejoices over the victory, "so great and seasonable that indeed we are like them that dreamed. . . ." " . . . I have committed my son to you; pray give him advice. I envy him not his contents; but I fear he should be swallowed up in them. I would have him mind and understand business. . . . I desire you not to discommodate yourself because of the money due to me. . . ."

LETTER CI. 13 Aug. '49. To his daughter-in-law, Dorothy. " . . . I stick not to say I do entirely love you. . . . I desire you both to make it above all things your business to seek the Lord. . . . As for the pleasures of this life and outward business, let that be upon the bye. . . . The Lord is very near. . . . This late great mercy of Ireland is a great manifestation thereof."

These gentle domesticities are in contrast with the iron grimness of the letters that follow. On Aug. 15th he reached Dublin, and proclaimed that he had come to establish Truth and Peace.



LETTER CII. 22 Aug. '49. To Lenthall : on behalf of Ayscough, who had suffered in his private fortune from absence on public duties.

Oliver was now modelling the Army, clearing it of bad and dissolute men. He forbade pillage and cruelty, and promised a free market to those wishing to trade with the Army.

IRISH WAR. Ireland had been distracted since the massacre of '41, presenting no picture but a huge blot. Now all warring parties, except Dublin and Derry, united against the regicides. Oliver descended on the country like the hammer of Thor. The Irish claim was for religious liberty, but they had prosecuted it by eight years of violence. Savage hordes of men had overrun the country, driving plundered cattle before them for subsistence, rushing down from ambuscadoes and mountain-passes, taking shelter from cavalry in bogs. Lawless men were these, false in speech and thought, disloyal to Fact. Conceive Ireland wasted, torn in pieces, and very dim to us, till in the torrent of Heaven's lightning descending liquid on it, we have clear and terrible view of its affairs for a time. Oliver has been much execrated ; and those who think a land overrun by Sanguinary Quacks can be healed by rose-water, will find his surgery terrible. In his days men believed in the Judgment of God ; they strove to make laws just ; and held the difference between Good and Evil to be infinite. It was unlike our present Rousseau Sentimentalism and universal Pardon and Benevolence. Cromwell was conscious of being a Soldier of God the Just, doing God's Judgments on the Enemies of God. His word represents a thing ! The garrison of Tredah disbelieved him when he offered terms : he put them to death. . . . Softness without rigour to rest upon is sloth ; and without justice real pity is not possible.

LETTER CIII. 12 Sept. '49. To Chief Officer, Dundalk. “ If you, being warned thereby (Tredah), shall surrender your Garrison to the use of the Parliament . . . you may thereby prevent effusion of blood. . . . ”

LETTER CIV. 16 Sept. '49. To John Bradshaw. “ . . . Being thus entered, we refused them quarter ; having, the day before, summoned the town. I believe we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants. . . . Truly I believe this bitterness will save much effusion of blood, through the goodness of God. . . . ”

LETTER CV. 17 Sept. '49. To Lenthall. He describes the operations against Tredah ; how our men had to retire the first time, but forced their way in the second. “ Being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the Town : and, I think, that night they put to the sword about 2,000 men. . . . ” Some took refuge in a church,



and refused a summons to yield to mercy. "Whereupon I ordered the steeple . . . to be fired. . . . I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood ; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future. . . . That which caused your men to storm so courageously, it was the spirit of God. . . . Therefore it is good that God alone have all the glory . . . I believe all their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously but two. . . ."

We can testify that Cromwell was right in saying this saved much effusion of blood. It cut through the heart of the Irish war, and after Wexford no other storm or slaughter was needed.

LETTER CVI. 27 Sept. '49. To Lenthall. He describes the taking of Carlingford by Venables.

LETTER CVII. 14 Oct. '49. To Lenthall. He encloses copies of letters that passed between himself and the Commander of Wexford. When the attack began the Governor's "stomach came down," but he offered terms of "abominableness and impudency." Oliver replied : Life and Liberty to soldiers, life to officers, but they must be prisoners ; no harm to inhabitants ; no plunder. . . . However, when the Castle was yielded, fighting broke out in the town, and about 2,000 of the enemy were killed. He writes that they had "intended better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the town might be of more use to you and your army, yet God would not have it so ; but by an unexpected providence . . . brought a just judgment upon them . . . now with their bloods to answer the cruelties which they had exercised upon the lives of divers poor Protestants. . . ." Much booty was taken, including a great deal of shipping. . . . "It were to be wished that an honest people would come and plant here." The trading advantages included herring and other fishing. . . . "We pray God may have all the glory. Indeed your instruments are poor and weak, and can do nothing but through believing—and that is the gift of God also."

LETTER CVIII. 17 Oct. '49. To the Commander of Ross. Summons to surrender. "Since my coming into Ireland I have this witness for myself, That I have endeavoured to avoid effusion of blood. . . . This being my principle, that the people and places where I come may not suffer, except through their own wilfulness."

On the 19th batteries began to play, and the Governor offered to treat.

LETTER CIX. 19 Oct. '49. To the same : with renewal of conditions.

The batteries make a great breach in the wall.

LETTER CX. 19 Oct. '49. To the same. "To what I formerly offered I shall make good. . . . As for that which you mention concerning liberty of conscience, I meddle not with any man's conscience. But if . . . you mean a liberty to exercise the Mass, I judge it best to use plain dealing, and to let you know, Where the Parliament of England have power, *that* will not be allowed of. . . ."

The town is yielded.

LETTER CXI. 19 Oct. '49. To the same : with last instructions, as to hostages, etc.

LETTER CXII. 25 Oct. '49. To Lenthall : giving official account of Ross.

LETTER CXIII. 13 Nov. '49. To Mayor. "I am not often at leisure . . . to salute my friends. . . . You and your family are often in my prayers. . . . As for Dick, I do not much expect it from him, knowing his idleness. . . . The Lord is wonderful in these things ; it's His hand alone does them ! Oh that all the praise might be ascribed to Him ! . . . I desire you to call upon my son to mind the things of God more and more. . . ."

LETTER CXIV. 14 Nov. '49. To Thos. Scott : on behalf of Jones and Lord Broghill. "All his (the latter's) suit is for £200 to bring his wife over. . . . The business of Munster will empty your Treasury : therefore you have need to hasten our money allotted us ; lest you put us to stand with our fingers in our mouths. . . ."

LETTER CXV. 14 Nov. '49. To Lenthall. He reports that Cork, Youghall, and other places "of hard names" have declared for Parliament. Recruits, money, and clothes are needed ; and there is much sickness among the soldiers. "I hope . . . to see Ireland no burden to England, but a profitable part of its Commonwealth. And certainly the extending your help in this way, at this time, is the most profitable means speedily to effect it. And if I did not think it your best thrift, I would not trouble you at all with it. . . ."

LETTER CXVI. Nov. '49. To the same. Carrick, Waterford, and other places are taken ; and the enemy vainly counter-assault Carrick. Further progress is made in Munster. . . . "Is it an arm of flesh that hath done these things ? . . . It is the Lord only. . . . God gets into the hearts of men, and persuades them to come under you. . . . I tell you, a considerable part of your army is fitter for an hospital than the field : if the Enemy did not know it, I should have held it impolitic to have writ this. They know it ; yet they know not what to do. . . ."

LETTER CXVII. 19 Dec. '49. To the same. The death had occurred of Lieut.-General Michael Jones. "You see how God mingles out the cup unto us. . . . Yet we live in His sight ;



and shall work the time that is appointed us, and shall rest after that in peace. . . ." He announces another success near Waterford without loss of a man.

Parliament meanwhile decides to invite Oliver to return, as there was a prospect of the King going to Scotland; and the Scots were raising new forces. But as the peril was not yet imminent, he preferred to settle Ireland.

Lord Wharton was a zealous Puritan and Patriot, but troubled with dubitations—uncertain whether such high actings as judgment on your King, abolition of your House of Lords, are owned by the Eternal Powers.

LETTER CXVIII. 1 Jan. '50. To Wharton. The "jealousy of unfeigned love" is his excuse for writing. . . . "It's easy to object to the glorious Actings of God, if we look too much upon Instruments. . . . Be not offended at the manner of God's working; perhaps no other way was left. . . ." It were well if we could put aside considerations of safety and profit which bribe the mind. "Oh, this flattering world! . . . How hard thing it is to *reason* ourselves up to the Lord's service, though it be honourable; how easy to put ourselves out there, where the flesh has so many advantages."

The "Supreme Council of Kilkenny" is now but a featureless gaunt shadow, though at the time it had some glow of real Irish patriotism, but disparted from Fact. The meeting was in an Abbey at Clonmacnoise, on some bare gravelly hills, among the dreary swamps of the Shannon. The published manifesto provoked from Oliver one of his remarkablest State Papers. It accused England of intending extirpation of the Irish and their religion by slaughter and banishment. It is notable that nothing is said of the "200 women" massacred at Wexford. Here is his answer:

DECLARATION. He condemns their idea of Union between Clergy and Laity. Members of Churches are styled "Brethren." "It was your pride that begat this expression. And it is for filthy lucre's sake that you keep it up: that by making the People believe that they are not so holy as yourselves, they might for their penny purchase some sanctity from you. . . ." You broke the Union between England and Ireland by your unheard-of massacre. . . . Are you contending for the Doctrines of Faith? We should keep ourselves in the love of God, not destroy men because they will not be of our Faith. . . . You talk about the People: but you cozen, fleece and misguide your flock. Only by slaughter did you resume your Mass, and you wish the People to shed their blood to maintain it. . . . I shall not suffer the Mass. . . . The People may have their own thoughts on Religion so long as they walk honestly and peaceably. . . . They are a poor ignorant "Laity," and their absence would not cause the Catholic



Religion to collapse. You reckon yourselves only its pillars : a "no-concluding argument." Here is the dilemma : Call your Religion true, men *have* changed from it without being massacred : admit it to be false, will you say they need massacring ? . . . Have I massacred one man not in arms ? . . . I will take no man's life but by fair trial. Only those were banished who might well have been put to death. . . . You made war to justify your massacre and exhausted our Treasury. We were right to raise money "by escheating the lands of those who had a hand in the Rebellion. . . ." The Army has come over to prosecute a righteous cause. "And if ever men were engaged in a righteous cause in the world, this will scarce be a second to it. . . ." "We come to break the power of a company of lawless rebels, who, having cast off the authority of England, live as enemies to Human Society. . . ." (Jan. 1650.)

LETTER CXIX. 15 Feb. '50. To Lenthall. He tells how the campaign opened, after rest in winter quarters, with the reduction of Kilkenny and other castles. At Castletown the soldiers were spared and six officers shot. Tipperary was delivered on honourable terms, "which I was the willingler to give because I had little above 200 foot, and neither ladders nor guns, nor anything else to force them. . . ." They were now "almost in the heart and bowels of the Enemy ; ready to attempt what God shall next direct. . . ." He wishes to abate expense, but speedy victory would be the best thrift. "The money we raise upon the Counties maintains the Garrison forces ; and hardly that. . . . We are willing to be out of our trade of war ; and shall hasten, by God's assistance and grace, to the end of our work, as the labourer doth to be at his rest."

LETTER CXX. 24 Feb. '50. To the Governor of Cahir Castle. Summons to surrender.

LETTER CXXI. 5 March '50. To John Bradshaw, President of Council of State. Cahir has surrendered, and has been followed by other captures.

LETTER CXXII. 22 March '50. To Governor of Kilkenny. Summons to surrender. "And as God hath begun to judge you with His sore plagues, so will He follow you until He hath destroyed you, if you repent not. . . . You may have terms such as may save you in your lives, liberties and estates, according to what may be fitting for me to grant and you to receive. If you choose for the worst, blame yourselves. . . ."

The terms being refused, batteries are prepared.

LETTER CXXIII. 25 March '50. To the same. Allusion is made to a previous letter now lost.

The Governor offers rather high conditions. A breach is made by the batteries, and a storming party drawn out.

LETTER CXXIV. 26 March '50. To the same. "... I cannot imagine whence those high demands of yours arise. ... I shall not so much as treat with you on those propositions. ... I tell you my business is to reduce you *from* arms ... to put an end to the war ... wishing ... this people may live as happily as they did before the bloody Massacre, and better too. ..."

LETTER CXXV. 26 March '50. To the same. "Since you are minded to involve it so much with that of soldiers, I am glad to understand you."

The storming party is repelled, but Col. Ewer captures the Irish Town, on which the Mayor asks for cessation of arms.

LETTER CXXVI. 26 March '50. To the Mayor. He pities those whom God has brought to a right mood of submission. ... "I shall be ready, without capitulation, to do more and better for you ... than upon the high demands of your Governor. ... " If the Governor said nothing of the offers, "he hath the more to answer for to God and man. ... " He will still fulfil these, despite advantages. To save the town from pillage he has promised that the Soldiery shall receive a gratuity from the inhabitants; and it will be death for any man to plunder.

The Governor's lion-voice abates, and he suggests a treaty of surrender.

LETTER CXXVII. 26 March '50. To the Governor: consenting to treat.

LETTER CXXVIII. 27 March '50. To the same. He agrees to a Treaty for four hours, but not to a Cessation, as the time appointed is past.

The city is surrendered, and a ransom of £2,000 paid.

LETTER CXXIX. 1 April '50. To the Dublin Commissioners: concerning the disposal of Cork House.

LETTER CXXX. 2 April '50. To Lenthall. Certain officers have been taken and shot for joining the Enemy after having served with Parliament. ... He describes the taking of Castlehaven and other places. At Kilkenny the attack on the breach "was not performed with usual courage nor success." It was taken, as we have seen, and "we look at it as a gracious mercy that we have the place for you upon these terms. ... " "Our hardships are not a few. ... If moneys be not supplied, we shall not be able to carry on your work. ... " If they be sent speedily, England will soon be at the end of this charge. ... "Our horse have not had one month's pay of five. ... " Recruits also are needed, as the taking and keeping of these places swallows up our Foot. ... As to Oliver's coming to England, so far conveyed privately, "I thought it would have been too much



forwardness in me to have left my charge here, until the said letter came (signed by Speaker). . . . I did humbly conceive it much consisting with my duty, humbly to beg a positive signification what your will is ; professing . . . that I am most ready to obey your commands herein with all alacrity ; rejoicing only to be about that work which I am called to by those whom God hath set over me. . . .”

LETTER CXXXI. 2 April '50. To Richard Mayor. “The Lord is pleased still to vouchsafe us His presence, and to prosper His own work in our hands. . . . Truly our work is neither from our own brains nor from our courage and strength : but we follow the Lord, who goeth before. . . . I desire your prayers ; your Family is often in mine. . . .”

LETTER CXXXII. 2 April '50. “I take your letters kindly : I like expressions when they come plainly from the heart, and are not strained nor affected. . . . I am persuaded it's the Lord's mercy to place you where you are. . . . You cannot find nor behold the face of God but in Christ. . . . The true knowledge is not literal or speculative ; no, but inward ; transforming the mind to it. . . . Intend to understand the Estate I have settled. . . . I have heretofore suffered much by too much trusting others. . . .”

On May 9th took place the last storm of the war, that of Clonmel, where the enemy was stoutest and the storm hottest. Oliver would have wished to reduce Waterford ; but Scottish affairs were pressing ; and, leaving Ireton as Deputy, he reached London on May 31st, after nine months in Ireland. All the world came out to welcome him ; and his saying is reported that there would have been still greater crowds to see him hanged.

A decree of the Commonwealth exempted the labouring classes, imposed graduated punishment on rebellious Landlords and Papist Aristocracy, and death or banishment on those concerned in the massacre of '41. . . . Thenceforth the mass of the people lived quiet under a *new* Land Aristocracy, more prosperous than since they became a nation. Ireland would have grown sober and diligent, inclined to Calvinistic Protestantism—but for the Restoration !

PART VI. The object of the Scottish Puritan Revolt was to bring the Divine Law of the Bible into actual practice in men's affairs. But unfortunately they were pedants rather than poets in conduct, who adhered to the letter of their Covenant. There was no hero to discern the inarticulate divineness of the Present and Future, and dare all perils in the faith of that. . . . Had Oliver been born Scotch, the whole world might have become Puritan ; but there were only Argyles and Loudons of the Pedant species. . . . Besides the Divine Law, the Covenant recognises a



Stuart King. The Scotch Governors caused Charles II to adopt the Covenant, and so saved their parchment formula ; but the divine fact has gone to the wall !

The armies are ready on both sides, and Oliver as General-in-Chief has taken up the Scotch coil of troubles. Noteworthy is his talk with Ludlow, to whom he discourses of the 110th Psalm. The largest soul in England looks at this God's world with prophet's earnestness through that Hebrew Word. . . . Either in modern European or ancient Asiatic history was there ever a man practising this mean World's affairs with a heart more filled by the Idea of the Highest ? . . . Projected with terrible force from the Eternities, nothing in the Times and their arenas can withstand him.

LETTER CXXXIII. 20 June '50. To Lenthall. He pleads for Humphrey Hooke of Bristol, like to be expelled, because he had given assistance in the storming of Bristol in '45.

LETTER CXXXIV. 17 July '50. To Mayor. "I should be glad to hear how the little Brat doth. . . . I know my son is idle, but I had better thoughts of Doll. . . . He is in the dangerous time of his age ; and it's a very vain world. . . . Great place and business in the world is not worth the looking after ; I should have no comfort in mine but that my hope is in the Lord's presence. I have not sought these things ; truly I have been called into them by the Lord ; and therefore am not without some assurancce that He will enable His poor worm and weak servant to do His will. . . ."

On July 22nd Berwick was passed, and a Manifesto promulgated to this effect : Did you not see us and try us, what kind of men we were, when we came among you two years ago ? Did you find us plunderers, murderers, etc. ? . . . In Charles Stuart and his party there can be no salvation. . . . We seek the real substance of the Covenant, which it is perilous to desert for the mere outer form thereof. . . .

LETTER CXXXV. 30 July '50. To President of Council of State. Some skirmishing, etc., has taken place, the enemy's object being to "tempt us to attempt them in their fastness . . . or else hoping we shall famish for want of provisions."

Indeed, cautious Lesley cannot be tempted out, and all Scotland is safe behind him for supplies.

LETTER CXXXVI. 3 Aug. '50. To General Assembly of Kirk of Scotland. In spite of our Declaration you have judged us falsely in the things of our God. . . . "And by your hard and subtle words you have begotten prejudice in those who do too much, in matter of conscience—wherein every soul is to answer for itself to God—depend upon you. . . ." You have

concealed our papers from your people. Your papers may have a free passage among our people. . . . “Your own guilt is too much for you to bear : bring not therefore upon yourselves the blood of innocent men, deceived with pretences of King and Covenant ; from whose eyes you hide a better knowledge. . . . There may be . . . a carnal confidence upon misunderstood and misapplied precepts, which may be called spiritual drunkenness. . . .”

Provisions fail, and Oliver has to march his men back to Dunbar, and then encamp on the Pentlands. He receives a letter from Lesley enclosing the Kirk’s Declaration : the gist of which is to disclaim Malignants.

LETTER CXXXVII. 14 Aug. ’50. To David Lesley. It is not intended to hinder the Scotch from worshipping God as they please in their consciences ; but, under the pretence of a Covenant, they wish to force upon us a King : one who has a Popish army fighting for him in Ireland ; who has “Prince Rupert, a man who hath had his hand deep in the blood of many innocent men of England. . . .” You are espousing the interest of Malignants, who draw encouragement “from the late transactions of your Kirk and State with your King. . . .” We desire “satisfying security. . . . We commit both you and ourselves to Him who knows the heart and tries the reins. . . .”

There are hopes of peace, encouraged by interviews in the open fields between the armies. But the Covenanted King does sign the Declaration against his Father’s sins. The Scots keep within their fastnesses and will not risk a battle. Sickness is rife in the English army, and it depends on wind and tide whether even biscuit can be landed nearer than Dunbar.

LETTER CXXXVIII. 30 Aug. ’50. To a Member of Council of State : describing the manœuvrings of the rival armies and a skirmish near Sterling.

On August 30th it was resolved, in view of sickness and the wild weather making supply of victuals uncertain, to retreat to Dunbar and turn its harbour into a kind of citadel and winter quarter. At sight of the retreat, Lesley rushes out, occupies Prestonpans, and hangs close and heavy on Cromwell’s rear all the way to Dunbar.

The small town of Dunbar is on one of the projecting rock-promontories that niche the shore of the Firth of Forth. . . . A grim niched barrier of whinstone shelters it from the chafings and tumblings of the Ocean. . . . The town forms a peninsula, a mile and a half from sea to sea ; and along its base Oliver’s army stood forlornly ranked (2 Sept. ’50). Landward rise the dusky Lammermoor Hills ; and in such weather no army would attempt to cross their boggy passes and brawling stream-courses.



Lesley, 23,000 strong, lies along the outmost spur of these heights, embracing as within outspread tiger-claws the base-line of Oliver's peninsula.

LETTER CXXXIX. In Harvey's opinion, hope shone alone in Oliver, when it had gone out in all others. A genuine King among men : divinest sight seen by the world.

2 Sept. '50. To Haselrig, Governor of Newcastle. Oliver urges him to get what forces he can together, as his men are falling sick and the enemy blocking the way. Had his forces been ready, supplies might have reached. "But the only wise God knows what is best. . . . Our spirits are comfortable. . . . We have much hope in the Lord. . . ."

We must note well the little *burn* that springs from the Lammermoor, skirts Doon Hill (where Lesley is), and reaches the sea by Brocks mouth, on left base of Peninsula. It runs in a deep grassy glen, and on the left side Oliver's force is ranked. Lesley ranks on opposite side, on narrow ground—cornfields that swiftly slope up to the steep of Doon Hill. All this goes on in the wild showers and winds of Sept. 2, 1650. One important pass Lesley seizes ; the other is a mile east, where the London road now crosses. It flattens itself here into a passable shape, though still mounting towards the Doon ; and at this pass took place the brunt or essential agony of the battle.

Lesley, edging to the right, aims to get Brocks mouth House and the pass. Oliver discerns this and suggests to begin the attack. The Enemy's right, coming down, is open all sides to attack. The main-battle, hampered in the narrow sloping ground between Doon Hill and the brook, cannot manœuvre. Beat the right wing and drive it on the main-battle. Such was the plan.

The night is wild and wet ; the hoarse sea swings heavy against these whinstone bays. At 4 a.m. Yorkshire Hodgson marches left to storm the Scots right wing. The moon rides among hail-clouds, and there is a streak of dawn. . . . At last Lambert appears ; the trumpets make fierce clangour ; and cannons awaken all along the line. For three-quarters of an hour the dispute rages on the right wing. Charge and counter-charge take place across the brook ; but we break the Scotch with a shock like tornado tempests, drive them on to their own foot, to be trampled by their own horse. The Scotch army is in ruin ; and at the foot of Doon Hill Oliver halts to sing the 117th Psalm. The Letter of the Scotch Covenant will never rally again ; its Spirit and Substance will never die.

LETTER CXL. 4 Sept. '50. To Lenthall. He describes the operations ending in the battle. The Enemy tried to cut us off from our victual, and counted on the sickness of our men. At Dunbar, to which we retreated, there was more accommodation



for the sick, and a good Magazine ; but no good harbour from Berwick to Leith. Near Haddington a rear-guard action was fought, with danger to us, " had not the Lord by His Providence put a cloud over the moon, thereby giving us opportunity to draw off. . . ." Near Dunbar their whole army was after us, with heightened confidence. They occupied the hills and seized the pass. Yet the Lord supported us, and we knew that " because of their numbers, because of their advantages, because of their confidence, because of our weakness, because of our strait, we were in the Mount, and in the Mount the Lord would be seen. . . ." The same plan of attack occurred to Oliver and the Major-General ; and at 6 a.m. we " fell on." Our first attacks were repulsed but soon recovered. My own regiment came in, and at push of pike repelled the stoutest regiment, " merely with the courage the Lord was pleased to give. . . . The Lord of Hosts made them as stubble to their swords." Though all displayed great courage, they look not to be named. Against this total rout and numbers of slain and prisoners, " I do not believe we have lost twenty men. . . . It would do you good to see and hear our poor foot go up and down making their boast of God. . . . We that serve you beg of you not to own us, but God alone. . . . Disown yourselves ; but own your Authority ; and improve it to curb the proud and the insolent. . . . Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. . . ."

LETTER CXLI. 4 Sept. '50. To Haselrig. ". . . We may find opportunities both upon Edinburgh and Leith. . . ." Let him march here with all the forces at his disposal. . . . " Surely it's probable the Kirk have done their do. I believe their King will set-up upon his own score now ; wherein he will find many friends. . . ."

LETTER CXLII. 4 Sept. '50. To President of Council of State. He is sending six regiments towards Edinburgh, and purposes to follow. The prisoners are a cause of trouble by their numerousness. " We have been constrained even out of Christianity, humanity, and the forementioned necessity, to dismiss between 4,000 and 5,000 prisoners, almost starved, sick and wounded. . . ." " Some of the honestest in the army amongst the Scots did profess before the fight, That they did not believe their King in his Declaration ; and it's most evident he did sign it with as much reluctancy and so much against his heart as could be. . . ."

LETTER CXLIII. 4 Sept. '50. To his wife, Elizabeth. " My dearest,—I have not leisure to write much. But I could chide thee that in many of thy letters thou writest to me, That I should not be unmindful of thee and thy little ones. Truly, if

I love you not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any creature ; let that suffice. . . . My weak faith hath been upheld. I have been in my inward man marvellously supported ; though I assure thee, I grow an old man, and feel infirmities of age marvellously stealing upon me. Would my corruption did as fast decrease ! . . . My love to all dear friends."

LETTER CXLIV. 4 Sept. '50. To Mayor. Though full of business he takes occasion to impart the "mercy" of the late battle. . . . "I pray tell Doll I do not forget her nor her little brat. . . ."

LETTER CXLV. 4 Sept. '50. To Ireton (in Ireland). "I often remember you at the Throne of Grace. . . . We made great professions of love ; knowing we were to deal with many who were godly, and who pretended to be stumbled at our invasion. . . . We were rejected again and again ; yet still we begged to be believed that we loved them as our own souls. . . ." Our condition before the battle was sad through sickness and the Enemy's insults, "but the Lord upheld us with comfort in Himself beyond ordinary experience."

LETTER CXLVI. 4 Sept. '50. To Lord Wharton. "I was untoward when I spake last with you in St. James's Park. I spake cross in stating my grounds. . . . The results of your thoughts concerning late transactions I know to be mistakes of yours, by a better argument than *success*. . . . I have known my folly do good, when affection has overcome my reason. . . ."

Oliver had conveyed to Edinburgh permission for Ministers to preach in their several Churches ; but a refusal was returned, with complaint of personal persecution, unjust invasion, lack of security.

LETTER CXLVII. 9 Sept. '50. To Governor of Edinburgh Castle. "The kindness offered to the Ministers with you was done with ingenuity. . . . If their Master's service . . . were chiefly in their eye, imagination of suffering would not have caused such a return. . . ." No Minister in England, Scotland or Ireland has been molested for preaching the Gospel. . . . Under pretence of a glorious Reformation, Ministers aim at worldly power : e.g. their late Agreement with the King. "The Sion promised will not be built with such untempered mortar. . . ." As for the "unjust invasion," did not a Scotch army do the same ? . . . "When they purely trust to the Sword of the Spirit . . . then . . . shall Jerusalem the City of the Lord . . . be built. . . ."

The Scotch Clergy had never received such a reprimand since their ordination. Dundas answered that Ministers have been maltreated ; and it is no ingenuity to promise liberty with the



limit that they must not speak against the Civil Powers. . . . They meddle not in Civil Affairs except to hold forth the rule of the Word which shows the straightness and crookedness of men's actions. . . .

LETTER CXLVIII. 12 Sept. '50. To the Governor, etc. "Gross mistakes and inconsequential reasonings" were in his letter. "They must have patience to have the truth of their doctrines . . . tried by the sure touchstone of the Word of God." They assume to be infallible expositors of the Covenant ; but Ministers should be helpers not over-lords. . . . As to persecution, we cast out a tyrant. . . . If Ministers rail at the Civil Power, they must expect "personal persecution. . . ." You object to men of civil employment preaching, as if it were exclusively your function. If this is the Covenant, away with it ! It should will "that any should speak good of the name of Christ." Approbation (Ordination) from men has order in it, "yet he that hath no better warrant . . . hath none at all. . . ." "You say you have not so learned Christ as to hang the equity of your Cause upon events. . . . Ought not you and we to think, with fear and trembling, of the hand of the Great God in this mighty and strange appearance of His ; instead of slightly calling it an 'event' ! . . ." We yearn after the Godly in Scotland and lament your personal prejudices against us. . . . "The late blow you received is attributed to profane counsels and conduct. . . ." He concludes with certain queries : Has not the Covenant been made to serve politics and carnal ends ? . . . May not God mean something further than they imagine ? . . . Have they not broken the greatest of all laws, that of love, for form's sake ? . . . If your Reformation be so spiritual, will it need such carnal policies ? . . . You cry down Malignants, and set up the head of them. . . . You published his Declaration knowing under what threats he signed it. . . .

The Scottish Clergy reply through Dundas that they retain their old opinions. Oliver proclaims an open market to the inhabitants of Edinburgh and Leith, and protection from injury by the soldiers.

LETTER CXLIX. 25 Sept. '50. To President of Council of State. He describes the difficult march to Stirling, the decision not to storm, and return to Edinburgh. Deserters say that many soldiers were offended at the Ministers since our victory. . . . The poor of this city "acknowledge that our carriage to them is better than that of their own Army. . ." Many had fled from fear that "we would have imposed upon them some oath wherewith they could not have dispensed. . ." It may be possible to convince them of the justness of our Cause, but hitherto they are obstinate. "I thought I should have found



in Scotland a conscientious People . . . but the People generally are given to the most impudent lying and frequent swearing. . . ."

The Scottish people have indeed got into a sea of confusion ; their Covenanted King is a Solecism Incarnate. . . . Oliver, little as the Scots dream of it, is their friend, as he was Ireland's. Where would Scottish Puritanism—the greatest of Scotland's feats—be without Oliver ?

The Scots clear their army of Quasi-Malignants ; and a conference at Stirling discloses three parties : middle, official of Argyle, that keeps to old ground, and fills old ranks with new men ; Malignant or Royalist extreme ; and another extreme in western shires, strong for Covenant and against the King.

LETTER CL. 9 Oct. '50. To Committee of Estates of Scotland, Stirling. You did not love us as we loved you. The cause of your difficulties is in having espoused the King's interest, the centre of Malignancy, "against whose Family the Lord hath so eminently witnessed for bloodguiltiness," not to be done away with by the hypocrisy of the Declaration. Wherefore you rejected our overtures and caused bloodshed. The sadness of the spectacle of war makes us offer you terms again : if you do not prefer that Person to the welfare of your country, and above all to the honour of that God we serve. . . .

No answer was returned except one of civility. On Oct. 18th Oliver entered Glasgow ; and the good conduct of his troops was notable. He set off again for Edinburgh, when news came that the Western Army was threatening it. To Col. Strahan of the Western Army, who had addressed him queries about "satisfaction" and "security," he wrote thus :

LETTER CLI. 25 Oct. '50. To Col. Strahan. "We bear unto the Godly of Scotland the same Christian affection we have all along professed. . . ." We wish they would meet us with the same affection, and there does now seem some hope of this. . . . We hope, by means of the Lord's help, for a better understanding ; but a great difference still remains. . . . As to the queries, "a friendly and Christian Conference by equal persons" might remove doubts better than writing. If sincere believers among you think God is not well pleased, "we can, through Grace, be willing to lay our bones in the dust for your sakes. . . ."

Oliver makes a proclamation concerning the class called Moss troopers, who now abound : "I will require life for life, and a plenary satisfaction for their goods, of those Parishes and Places where the fact shall be committed ; unless they shall discover and produce the offender."

LETTER CLII. 18 Nov. '50. To Governor of Borthwick Castle. Let him surrender and walk away with his company and arms and goods. "You have harboured such . . . as have

... murdered our men : if you necessitate me to bend my cannon against you, you may expect what I doubt you will not be pleased with. . . ."

LETTER CLIII. 4 Dec. '50. To Lenthall. He tells how Ker was defeated by a strange Providence. . . . God is now working in the hearts of Ministers and People : which tends "to the justification of your Cause. . . ." The work of God, acting on the consciences of some, has forced them to self-accusation . . . and to "charging themselves as guilty of the blood shed in this war. . . ."

Strahan comes over to Cromwell, and the Western Army is dispersed. The two extreme parties are broken, and only the Middle, which now admits Malignants, is left. The Lord General has now mainly real Malignants for enemies, and can smite without reluctance.

LETTER CLIV. After three months, the Derbyshire miners have made small way against the hard rock of Edinburgh Castle, but now Oliver has his batteries ready.

12 Dec. '50. To the Governor : a summons to surrender, and reminder that the Lord "hath been pleased to bear a gracious and favourable testimony" to our desires and aims in relation to His glory.

The Governor demands ten days to consult the Estates.

LETTER CLV. To the same. He offers honourable terms. "But to deal plainly with you, I will not give liberty to you to consult your Committee of Estates ; because I hear those that are honest among them enjoy not satisfaction, and the rest are now discovered to seek another Interest than they have formerly pretended to."

The answer is a renewed request.

LETTER CLVI. 13 Dec. '50. To the same. "I cannot but hope that it is your conscience, and not policy, carrying you to that desire. Conscience compels me to refuse what is prejudicial to our affairs. . . ." After a Conference, your Estates will "carry on an Interest destructive and contrary to what they professed when they committed that trust to you. . . ." They have made many honest men depart, and admitted Malignants. . . .

The Governor in answer wishes to hear about the late proceedings.

LETTER CLVII. 14 Dec. '50. To the same. He may name whom he wills, and has liberty to come and speak for one hour.

LETTER CLVIII. To the same. He informs the Governor that the emissaries he appointed decline to come and speak.

The Governor asks for a competent time, within which, if no relief come, he will surrender upon conditions.

LETTER CLIX. 18 Dec. '50. To the same. If he send authorised Commissioners, he will receive honourable and safe terms.

For answer, two are appointed.

LETTER CLX. To the same : granting a Safe-conduct.

Handsome terms are fixed, Oliver being anxious to gain the place and conciliate the Godly people of the nation. He proclaims that those who have goods in the Castle may fetch them away ; and pain of death to soldiers who commit outrages. At Stirling, Dundas and others come over to Oliver ; Malignants and Quasi-Malignants are thus ranked against him in a definite body ; and he can strike hard.

LETTER CLXI. 24 Dec. '50. To Lenthall. "If it [the surrender] had not come in as it did, it would have cost very much blood to have attained, if at all to be attained. . . ."

On January 1st the Scots crown their King at Scone. Oliver is master of all Scotland south of the Forth.

LETTER CLXII. Col. Hacker had attended the King on the scaffold, for which he was rewarded with death after the Restoration. He made no repentance, and intimated he would answer in a higher Court than Westminster. . . . At present he is active upon Moss troopers.

25 Dec. '50. To Hacker. ". . . I was not satisfied with your last speech to me about Empson, that he was a better preacher than fighter. . . . Truly I think he that prays and preaches best will fight best. I know nothing that will give like courage and confidence as the knowledge of God in Christ will ; and I bless God to see any in this army able and willing to impart the knowledge they have, for the good of others. And I expect it be encouraged by all the Chief Officers in this Army especially ; and I hope you will do so. . . ."

We must quote a few sentences from a letter written at this time by the Lady Elizabeth Cromwell to her husband : "I wonder you should blame me for writing no oftener, when I have sent three for one. . . ." ". . . But when I do write, my Dear, I seldom have any satisfactory answer ; which makes me think my writing is slighted. . . ." ". . . Truly my life is but half a life in your absence. . . ."

LETTER CLXIII. 17 Jan. '51. To Lesley : on the exchange of three prisoners, Carstairs, Waugh and Jaffray, for certain "Seamen and Officers."

Carstairs was a Minister who rather inclined towards Cromwell's views. Waugh was one of the strait-laced clerical individuals for whom bad times were coming. He lost his living and had to preach in a barn, which he exchanged for prison. Evidently



he thought it indispensable for Christ's Kirk to have a Nell-Gwynn Defender set over it, rather than the bravest and devoutest of all British men.

LETTER CLXIV. Augustin, a German, purged out of the army before Dunbar, had caused annoyance as a Moss trooper.

17 Jan. '51. To Committee of Estates of Scotland. He had applied for justice on Augustin to Lesley, who alleged want of power.

LETTER CLXV. The official Medallist had arrived to take Oliver's effigies.

4 Feb. '51. To Committee of Army. Instead of his effigy, let there be engraved “on the one side the Parliament . . . on the other side an Army, with the inscription over the head of it, *The Lord of Hosts*. . . .” As the gentleman's trouble has been great, will they not confer a certain employment on him? Indeed the man is ingenious, and worthy of encouragement.

The Committee did not act upon the advice; and the medal by Symonds still exists and is a good likeness.

LETTER CLXVI. 4 Feb. '51. To the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and others. He acknowledges the honour in being chosen Chancellor; but as regards abilities and leisure, “as the first may not be well supposed, so the want of the latter may well become me to represent to you.” He is tied to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland for three years. . . . The honour of Oxford is such that he will not, through pretended modesty, dispute acceptance. “Only I hope it will not be imputed to me as a neglect towards you, that I cannot serve you in the measure I desire.” I say this to leave you free to mend your choice. “. . . Until I can personally serve you, you shall not want my prayers. . . .”

On Feb. 4th the Army advances to Stirling, etc., but is driven back by wild weather. Hail reservoirs open on them; and coated with white sleet they return to Edinburgh.

LETTER CLXVII. 14 Feb. '51. To the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford: recommending Waterhouse, a physician, who had done much good work in Ireland.

LETTER CLXVIII. Col. Robert Lilburn's reward of £1,000 for good service in 1648 had not been paid; and he will take Delinquents' lands for it.

8 March '51. To Lenthall. He asks for consideration for Lilburn's Report, which had been neglected. Let not his readiness to leave his own affairs and serve the Public turn to his disadvantage.

LETTER CLXIX. The project of a College at Durham emerges incidentally like a green fruitful islet from amid the dim storms of war.

11 March '51. To Lenthall. The houses of the late Dean and Chapter are to be converted into a School for Literature and all the Sciences. . . . "I could not but concur or fail to recommend same to Parliament by you the Speaker. . . ." It "may much conduce to the promoting of learning and piety in those poor rude and ignorant parts . . . and . . . by the blessing of God produce such happy and glorious fruits as are scarce thought on. . . ."

The pious project did take effect in seven years, chiefly through Oliver; and was terminated like others by the "blessed Restoration."

LETTER CLXX. Oliver had fallen ill as a result of the sleety expedition.

24 March '51. To President of Council of State. "I am a poor creature; and have been a dry bone; and am still an unprofitable servant to my Master and you. I thought I should have died of this fit of sickness; but the Lord seemeth to dispose otherwise. But truly, my Lord, I desire not to live, unless I may obtain mercy from the Lord to approve my heart and life to Him in more faithfulness and thankfulness, and to those I serve in more profitableness and diligence. . . ."

LETTER CLXXI. 12 April '51. To his wife. "I praise the Lord I am increased in strength in my outward man. But that will not satisfy me except I get a heart to love and serve my heavenly Father better . . . and more power over my corruptions: in these hopes I wait, and am not without expectation of a gracious return. . . ." "Mind poor Betty [Elizabeth Claypole] of the Lord's great mercy. . . . I desire her . . . to take heed of a departing heart, and of being cozened with worldly vanities and worldly company, which I doubt she is too subject to. . . ." "Beware of my Lord Herbert's resort to your house. If he do so it may occasion scandal, as if I were bargaining with him. . . . If Dick Cromwell and his wife be with you, my dear love to them. . . . I love them very dearly."

Lord Herbert afterwards became Duke of Beaufort: a professed Protestant, but coming of Papists and Malignants.

LETTER CLXXII. After the surrender of Edinburgh Castle the Public Writs had been embarked for Stirling; but the ship was taken and the Writs endangered.

12 April '51. To the Lord Register of Scotland. They shall be restored, and passes given for persons and vessels to carry them to such places as are appointed.

In April Oliver visited Glasgow for ten days, where a conference between leaders was held without bitterness. A luminous body crossing a dark country and century discloses much. In the desolate uplands of Lanark lived the Royalist Stewart family. The

Lady offered hospitality to Oliver ; and he asked a blessing in a long pathetic grace. James, a boy of ten, came near and handled the hilt of a sword ; and Oliver stroked his head. . . . Thenceforth the Lady abated much of her Royalist zeal, for she felt that Oliver feared God.

LETTER CLXXIII. 3 May '51. To his wife. ". . . I love to write to my dear, who is very much in my heart. . . . I am glad to hear thy son and daughter are with thee. I hope thou wilt have some good opportunity of good advice to him [Richard]. Present my duty to my mother. . . ."

The good old "Mother" is still spared to have "my duty" presented to her. A pale venerable Figure ; who has lived to see strange things in this world ; can piously, in her good old tremulous heart, rejoice in such a son.

A plot of English Presbyterian-Royalists comes to light. Oliver is ill with ague ; and Parliament sends two doctors and desires his return.

LETTER CLXXIV. 3 June '51. To President of Council of State. "I shall not need to recite the extremity of my last sickness : it was so violent that indeed my nature was not able to bear the weight thereof. But the Lord was pleased to deliver me, beyond expectation. . . . The indulgence of the Parliament . . . is a very high and undeserved favour. . . ." He is humbly thankful for the doctors, who have given much "encouragement and good directions. . . ."

On June 5th Oliver was abroad again ; and on the 25th the army marched towards Stirling. The Enemy are not to be forced from their bogs and brooks ; it was therefore decided to cross into Fife and take them in flank.

LETTER CLXXV. 21 July '51. To Lenthall. At the North Ferry Lambert has defeated Browne. "An unspeakable mercy. . . ." We had been in straits, and "knew not what to do. . . ."

LETTER CLXXVI. 24 July '51. To President of Council of State : saying how things are more hopeful ; describing marches, etc.

LETTER CLXXVII. 26 July '51. To the same. The Enemy is strongly posted near Stirling, and reinforced and provisioned from the north. Perhaps God will show us how to deal with this subtle enemy. Sickness, due to wet weather, causes us to need recruits. . . . "We hearing you rather choose to send us Volunteers than Pressed men, shall be very glad you go that way. . . ." We need money also with haste.

LETTER CLXXVIII. 28 July '51. To Mayor. "I hear my son hath exceeded his allowance, and is in debt. Truly I cannot commend him therein. . . . I grudge him not laudable



recreations. . . . I can find in my heart to allow him not only a sufficiency but more, for his good. . . . But if pleasure and self-satisfaction be made the business of a man's life . . . I scruple to feed this humour. . . ." Let him "seek grace from Christ. . . ." "This will not abridge of lawful pleasures ; but teach such a use of them as will have the peace of a good conscience going with it. Sir, I write what is in my heart. . . . Truly I love him, he is dear to me ; so is his wife ; and for their sakes do I thus write. . . . But indeed I cannot think I do well to feed a voluptuous humour in my son . . . in a time when some precious Saints are bleeding, and breathing out their last, for the safety of the rest. . . . Sir, I beseech you believe I here say not this to save my purse ; for I shall willingly do what is convenient to satisfy his occasions. . . ."

LETTER CLXXIX. 29 July '51. To Lenthall. The greater part of the army is in Fife. We have made important captures from the Enemy. "Surely the Lord will blow upon them."

LETTER CLXXX. The flank movement has cut off the Enemy's supplies. The King and army march south and enter England by Carlisle.

4 Aug. '51. To Lenthall. He expresses some fear of the consequences should the King get to England. Our object was to move him from Stirling, to save another winter in this hard country, and the endless expense of the war to England. Organise all the force you can. We know the enemy is "heart-smitten by God."

The Scots marched on, with Oliver in pursuit, and reached Worcester ; but no Royalists joined them on the way ; whereas Oliver steadily raised the country militias which flowed like the Ocean-tides towards Worcester.

LETTER CLXXXI. 27 Aug. '51. To Lord Wharton. . . . "You have opportunities again now [to help in raising forces]. . . ." "Let it appear you offer yourselves willingly to His work ! . . ." "Thanks to you and the dear Lady for all loves. . . ."

Wharton and others had formerly reasoned themselves out of God's service by excessive dubitations.

BATTLE OF WORCESTER. 3 Sept. '51. Oliver succeeds in crossing the Severn by Upton Bridge, and attacks "Fort Royal" on the south-east, where the Scots are entrenched. The King's party think the main army is there, and storm out on the east. Oliver recrosses the river ; and the deadliest tug-of-war begins. The small Scotch army, begirdled by overpowering force, storms forth in fiery pulses, now on this side of the river, now on that. Its pulsings are like the agonies of a lion coiled in the folds of a

boa. The Scots are driven into Worcester streets ; the King escapes by means of royal oaks ; but 14,000 others do not escape.

LETTER CLXXXII. 3 Sept. '51. To Lenthall : describing the battle. "This hath been a very glorious mercy ; and as stiff a contest for four or five hours as ever I have seen. . . ."

LETTER CLXXXIII. 4 Sept. '51. To the same. The victory was absolute, and much booty and many prisoners taken. ". . . It was a stiff business ; yet I do not think we have lost 200 men. . . . It is, for aught I know, a crowning mercy. . . I am bold humbly to beg . . . that the fatness of these continued mercies may not occasion pride and wantonness. . . ."

The following Sunday these letters were read from all London pulpits. On Sept. 12th Oliver arrived in London and received a great welcome. He showed much affability, and in speaking of Worcester never mentioned himself. It was his last battle, and henceforth he fought with other than steel weapons. Scotland, like Ireland, was now to be administered ; and the difficulties were great, as the Clergy were indisposed to Oliver, who had been so baleful to their formulas. They called him Sectary and Blasphemer, though he understood the real ends of the Covenant and discriminated them from the superficial forms. Yet they admitted that Christ's Gospel flourished in Scotland under his rule, as at no other time.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### "OLIVER CROMWELL'S LETTERS AND SPEECHES" III: ANALYSIS

PART VII. Nineteen important months, but almost vacant of letters, followed Worcester. Something may be learned from the speeches of a time which England must again start from as a basis if she is ever to struggle Godward instead of Devilward and Mammonward. The Rump or Long Parliament had been sitting indefinitely, although, while battles were being fought, the function of Parliament had become subaltern. On Oliver's return, a limit was fixed to November 3, 1654.

LETTER CLXXXIV. John Cotton was a Minister of Boston in Lincolnshire. He afterwards emigrated to America and fixed the name Boston on his new home. He had been writing in a congratulatory vein to Oliver, calling him Soldier and Priest of the Gospel.

2 Oct. '51. To Cotton. He welcomes his letter and glories in the Lord's works. ". . . How shall we behave ourselves after such mercies? . . . Who is a God like ours? . . . I am a poor weak creature, and not worthy the name of a worm; yet accepted to serve the Lord and His People. . . ."

Parliament decided to dismiss itself, and Oliver demanded a settlement of the nation. The Republic, which the soldiers desired, would offer difficulties, as England's laws were interwoven with the power and practice of Monarchy. . . . The Rump are not a likely set of men to reform the law; they spend months in debates of a hair-splitting character. . . . On July 9, '52, war with the Dutch breaks out, because the Navigation Act had injured the Dutch carrying-trade; but their best Admirals could not stand the terrible Puritan sailors and gunners. . . . Financial difficulties caused increased severities against Delinquents, and strong measures were taken to sell their Estates. Oliver was affected by the Royalist Squires, who with haggard looks asked mercy or swift judgment.

LETTER CLXXXV. 30 July '52. To Mr. Hungerford. A hasty note about business.



The souls of the men of the Rump Parliament have got tied up with red tape. What would become of the Commonwealth were it not for the Council of Officers who had spent their blood in its cause? They fought to realise the divine Kingdom on earth. For this they dared Tredah Storm, Dunbar death-agony. . . .

On August 13th the officers petition for reform. The Rump say No; and suggest no other remedy except that they themselves should continue in office.

LETTER CLXXXVI. Anthony Hungerford was a Royalist Member of Parliament who had lived secluded for some years.

10 Dec. '52. To Anthony Hungerford. Oliver vindicates himself from supposed "unhandsomeness" in avoiding his correspondent's visits. ". . . Truly, Sir, had I but once known of your being there, and had concealed myself, it had been an action so below a gentleman or an honest man, so full of ingratitude for your civilities I have received from you, as would have rendered me unworthy of human society! . . ."

LETTER CLXXXVII. 1652. To Fleetwood in Ireland. "Salute your dear wife for me. Bid her beware of a *bondage* spirit." Love is the antidote to Fear. Fear says, "If I had done this; if I had avoided that, how well it had been with me!" . . . Love argues, "What a Christ have I; what a Father in and through Him! . . ." The Covenant between God and Christ "is Grace, to or upon the Soul; to which it . . . is passive and receptive. . . ."

The Dutch war prospers, but internal affairs do not, owing to scission between Army and Parliament. On April 20, 1653, the Rump are about to pass a Bill perpetuating themselves. Oliver marches in with a company of Musketeers from his own regiment—men with faces like lions. "I say you are no Parliament," he exclaims; and speaks some home-truths at individual members. He orders the Mace or "bauble" to be removed, and Speaker Lenthall to be "fetched down." The Members flood clamorously out, and Oliver concludes, "I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work."

LETTER CLXXXVIII. 23 April '53. To Mr. Parker. If anything riotous has occurred in the disturbances connected with draining the fens, justice shall be done.

On July 4th there met a sort of Council of Notables convened by Oliver: the chief Puritan lights in their respective counties. This "Little Parliament" consisted of 138 men who feared God, and among them was Barebone. Only Oliver's speech remains; but we know that the Parliament was once a fact, standing dim in the heart of the extinct centuries

**SPEECH I.** The history of the war shows the workings of God, who has done so much by means of an inexperienced army. The King has been brought to justice, and other great reforms achieved. But, since Worcester, businesses have not been well transacted. We wished the Nation to reap the fruit of the blood and treasure spent in the Cause. We tried to conciliate Parliament; we wished them to bring forth the expected good things as if from their own ingenuity rather than the Army's suggestion. We prevailed little; and in the Act for a Representative, their intention was not to give the People a right of choice. This was the Cause for which we fought, and though we abhorred violence, we could not deliver up our rights sluggishly. As proof we give the growth of party spirit in affairs of public interest; and the elevation of Malignants over Honest People when the Preaching Ministry in Wales was to be established. And the "New Representative" meant to perpetuate men of such spirits. We spoke with some of the chief persons of the House, who objected to all our counter-expedients. They persisted in placing the Liberties of the Nation in the hands of those who never fought for it. Upon this they were dissolved, and you have been drawn together. We must not grasp at power or keep it in military hands, but entrust it to proper persons. You are called by God to rule with Him and for Him. For the execution of judgment you need wisdom from Above, and purity, impartiality, sincerity. Be as just to an Unbeliever as a Believer. God has wrought all the salvations for the good of the whole Flock. Endeavour the promoting of the Gospel. Encourage the good Ministers. I do not speak for a Ministry pretending to derive from the Papacy. The true Succession is through the Spirit. You are strangers to each other, but no one of you is without faith in Christ, and love to all His People and Saints. Never has such a body assembled under such a notion as this of serving God. The People will be more readily won over when they see they are ruled by men who fear God. This may be the door to usher in the things God has promised. God has appeared in a Military way: why not now in these Civil things?

Such a speech affords a glance into the Great Soul of a man, radiant with the splendours of very Heaven. He always spoke extempore, only when his mind was full of meaning, and careless of the words. But the true art is to have something genuine to speak.

**LETTER CLXXXIX.** The Little Parliament's object was to introduce Christianity into real practice. It could not but fail, having the anti-Christian qualities of some ten million men against it.

22 Aug. '53. To Fleetwood. He never more needed the help of Christian friends than now. His spirit of kindness to all men



is hardly accepted of any, so anxious is each to propagate his own judgment. . . . He thanks God for some sparks of the light of His countenance, and some sincerity above man's judgment.

LETTER CXC. Oct. '53. To Committee of Customs. He had recommended one who met with cold success. “His great necessities and my love once more invite me to write unto you in his behalf. . . .”

LETTER CXCI. 16 Nov. '53. To Henry Weston. A word of thanks for favour shown for his sake to Mr. Draper.

The Little Parliament sat for five months, but its real Christianity was opposed by sham. It perished by attacking the Lawyers in its decision to abolish Tithes and Chancery. To search for an Able-Man remains the one thing to be done, and by good luck such a man is already found. There is a Council of Officers, with much seeking of God by prayer, and on December 16th Oliver is made Lord Protector, with Council of fifteen or twenty-one. At the ceremonies he appears in black velvet ; his stature strong and solid ; his carriage partly military ; expression energy and delicacy based on simplicity ; lips full of sensitiveness and perhaps rigour ; deep loving eyes, that could be stern, looking from under craggy brows as if in life-long sorrow. . . . Let not the valet-soul prate of “Love of power” !

PART VIII. Oliver's post is a perilous one ; and a man apt to be overawed by any question smaller than Eternity would not suit well in it. Royalist and Anabaptist-Leveller plots break out ; and many Republicans accuse Oliver of preventing the reign of Christ and His Saints.

On March 20, 1654, Oliver established an Ordinance for the settlement of a Gospel Ministry. Episcopacy being down, and Presbytery not set up, there was Church Anarchy. Oliver appointed thirty-eight wise men to test Public Preachers ; and no person could hold a living without their sanction. A second Ordinance appointed men, some of whom were his political enemies, to enquire into unworthy Ministers.

LETTER CXCI. 4 May '54. To Mayor. “But indeed I am so unwilling to be a seeker after the world, having had so much favour from the Lord in giving me so much without seeking ; and am so unwilling that men should think me so, which they will though you only appear in it . . . that indeed I dare not meddle nor proceed therein” (in the business of making an advantageous purchase of land for Richard).

LETTER CXCI. 16 May '54. To Fleetwood. He is satisfied of Col. Alured's evil intentions, and revokes his commission.

LETTER CXCI. 16 May '54. To Col. Alured : conveying instructions to deliver up and “repair to me to London ; the reason whereof you shall know when you come hither.”



This was one of the fatalest elements in Oliver's position : the Republican discontents and tendencies to plot fermenting in his own Army, and turning old friends into enemies. The Royalist Plot of Vowel and Gerard to assassinate him on the way to Hampton Court next comes to light.

LETTER CXCIV. 5 July '54. To Lord Mayor of London. He favours Mr. Turner being made Vicar of Christ Church, Newgate Street, as it concerns the public peace and promotes the interest of the Gospel.

The New Parliament of four hundred members was now elected, consisting of Puritans or Neutrals, with no Malignants.

SPEECH II. You hold the interest of the whole Christian People in the world, and so great is this day that the only parallel is when God brought Israel out of Egypt. The Levellers had trampled on all distinctions, and set each man's hand against his brother's. Universal equality could not continue long ; and the very men who had served their own turns would then have cried up property and interest. As for Spirituals, things were worse still, and corresponded with St. Paul's description of the Antichrist. Liberty of Conscience and the Subject have been abused for the patronising of villains. Whereas, in former days, only the ordained could preach, now, he who is ordained is at a disadvantage. Another error of a more refined sort, full of spiritual pretensions, is the Fifth Monarchy.<sup>1</sup> Men must first prove God's presence with them before determining rights of property and liberty. But they tell us that these are not the badges of the Kingdom of Christ ; and the existing Law must be subverted and the Judaical Law brought in. Our enemies took advantage of our internal dissensions ; we had war with the Dutch ; and our Trade suffered. Our remedy was this form of Government ; and, in the interests of the people, persons of ability are endeavouring to reform the laws. Only men of integrity and true religion are to preach. A free Parliament has been called, and I desire above my life it may continue so. If any good has come of the foreign wars it is the Lord's doing. We have peace with Swedeland and the Danes, and we do not expect much from our Catholic neighbours. The Sound is open, and our Shipping, the strength of this Nation, will be supplied thence. We must be zealous for the Protestant cause ; and already in Portugal our people who trade there have liberty to worship in Chapels of their own. We are near a Treaty with France ; and when this Government was undertaken we were in the midst both of domestic divisions and foreign wars. Our treasure was exhausted, and taxes will still be heavy. With the Lord's blessing you may make the Nation

<sup>1</sup> Assyrian, Persian, Greek and Roman Monarchies were to be followed by that of Christ, and His Saints reigning for Him here on earth.

happy. I advise you to a sweet, gracious and holy understanding of one another and your business. I have spoken not as a master, but fellow-servant.

Constitutional debates of an interminable character set in : as to the powers of a Single Person and of Parliament, etc. Oliver summoned the Members to the Painted Chamber, while the House was locked and guarded by soldiers (12 Sept. '54). In his speech we see a dim adumbration of, How this business of Assuming the Protectorate may actually have been. Indeed, the Commonwealth and Puritan Rebellion first become conceivable from Oliver's Speeches. To get on with the new Parliament was his one chance of governing peaceably. None of his contemporaries disbelieved his protestations, but many thought he was deceiving himself.

SPEECH III. I called you a Free Parliament, but this implies reciprocity. If my calling be from God, and my testimony from the People, God and the People shall take it from me, else I will not part with it. I was by birth a Gentleman, living neither in any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity. I endeavoured to do my duty towards God, the People, and the Commonwealth ; and God's presence and testimony bear witness to me. After the successful wars I hoped for the liberty and privileges of a Christian and a man. I desired a private life, and let God be my judge if I lie. Uncharitable men who measure others by themselves can judge as they please. I begged the Parliament to period itself, for I knew the Nation loathed its sitting. Instead, it strove to perpetuate itself ; and it used its arbitrary power to make confiscations among poor men who did not deserve to forfeit a shilling. Then the Little Parliament was summoned as a remedy, to effect the settlement of the Nation. My own greatest end was to lay down the Power, and I say this in the presence of God. Perhaps the desire was sinful, as God put the power in my hands. My authority was boundless, as I was General of the forces of the Three Nations. The result of the meeting was resignation of the Parliament, and the re-delivery of the power into my hands. Those who framed the Government foretold blood and confusion if I did not undertake it. At the request of leaders of all kinds I accepted the Protectorship. I was approved by the Soldiery, the City of London, the Judges. My Writs brought you here ; and there was a proviso : That the persons chosen should not have the power to alter the Government as now settled in one Single Person and a Parliament. You are a Free Parliament, but I am the Authority that called you. It is astonishing that you should not own the authority under which you sit. There must be fundamental things in every Government : one is that Parliament shall not perpetuate itself, and



unmake laws that prevent evils ; another is Liberty of Conscience. The Militia is a fundamental ; it should be placed in One Person and Parliament : if solely in Parliament, what signifies the law that Parliament may not perpetuate itself ? In the intervals of Parliament the Council are the Trustees of the Commonwealth, and have an absolute negative on the Supreme Officer. The Circumstantials, such as money, etc., are not unalterable. . . . I would rather be rolled into my grave and buried with infamy than consent to the wilful throwing-away of this Government, owned by God, approved by men, and witnessed to in its fundamentals. I speak not for my good but that of these Nations and Posterity. You were put into undisturbed possession, and our enemies were scattered. Now our peace is shaken, and we are the scorn of strangers. If blood and ruin again ensue, who shall answer to God or men ? We cannot say we quarrelled for Liberty, for the Act of Settlement made this safe. The People, who hoped for rest after ten years' Civil War, will question our condition. . . . I am necessitated to ask what I have forborne : Owning of your Call and the Authority which brought you hither. Till you assent to a certain Parchment you may not enter Parliament. . . . You have a Legislative power without a negative from me : if I do not consent within twenty days it becomes law. . . .

The Parchment was to give effect to the Government as settled in a Single Person and Parliament, not to alter it. About 300 members signed, but the deep Republicans would not come in. The recusants were not molested ; and Parliament resumed its function, but effected nothing outside Constitutional logic. The Committee's attempts to settle a Godly Ministry met with failure. . . . Quakerisms and Socinianisms were springing up, but Oliver treated them with mildness. . . . On Sept. 29th a fall from his horse in Hyde Park revealed the fact that he always carried a pistol, and set tongues wagging. . . . Nov. 17th his mother died, aged ninety-four, having bestowed on him her last blessing. The Royalties of Whitehall had pleased her little ; she had been troubled with nervous fears for his life, and would see him once a day. . . . Dec. 16th a great sea armament sailed from Portsmouth. England had become more formidable abroad than ever before.

LETTER CXCVI. 12 Jan. '55. To Richard Bennet, Governor of Virginia. Your boundary disputes are before our Council. By a certain trespass you have caused disturbance. We ask you to forbear till our decision.

LETTER CXCVII. There were dangerous fomentings in the army, of a Fifth Monarchy, Anabaptist and Royalist nature. Allen was a resolute devout man who honoured Oliver ; but



the late change had stumbled him. Unton Crook, the son of a lawyer, was zealous for Oliver.

20 Jan. '55. To Crook : directing him to enquire after Allen, who “doth very ill offices by multiplying dissatisfaction in the minds of men to the present Government.”

Allen, convicted of questionable doings in the west, was cashiered from the army : a strenuous Anabaptist given to Fifth Monarchy notions. Add others of the kind, besides Charles Stuart, and reflect on Oliver's task, without a Pedant Parliament.

On Jan. 22nd Oliver, disappointed with Parliament, summoned Members to the Painted Chamber. His speech is no well-ordered Greek Temple, but an Alp mountain with chasms and cataracts and shaggy pine-forests. . . .

SPEECH IV. My hopefulest day was when I first saw you here, so great was your opportunity. At the second meeting there was much abatement of hope ; but after the Parchment I hoped again. You had once more the chance of making good and wholesome laws, without hindrance from me. I cared for your privileges and made no interruptions : but what have you done ? Instead of Peace and Settlement, briars and thorns thrive under your shadow. In the last five months dangers have multiplied, at home and abroad, from enemies who count on our divisions. . . . Has not God manifested Himself on behalf of His people in the late war ? He has restored to them liberty to worship, with the freedom of their consciences, and freedom in estates and persons when they do so. And thus we have found the Cause of God by the works of God : which are the testimony of God. . . . Now we have Cavaliers and Anabaptist Levellers projecting a common rising : built on the hope of Parliament not agreeing to a Settlement. When you first sat there was peace, and hope of Settlement, and a Government already in the possession of the People. . . . You might have settled peace and quietness among all professing Godliness. . . . As it is, men desire to pinch their brethren's consciences ; whereas we fought to obtain liberty from the tyranny of the Bishops. Is it ingenuous to ask liberty and not to give it ? Your time is spent and you have done nothing. The Long Parliament, with your opportunities, would have done otherwise, well as they loved their seats. For myself I desire not to keep my place in this Government an hour longer than I may preserve England in its just rights. The People have ratified government of a Single Person and a Parliament, with equal balance of authority. No future Protectors can refuse to alter anything in the Government for the good of the People. . . . The keeping up of the Militia seems hard at present ; but ourselves and the Cause depend on it. If a blessed peace does come, it can be easily disbanded. . . . You have done nothing to convert

me to your opinion. I desire only the good of the Nation, and would have opposed no worthy reform, provided it were founded on the acceptance and consent of the People. . . . No private interest led me to undertake this Government ; and I would have rejected an offer to place it in my family hereditarily. Let men be chosen for their love to God and Truth and Justice. . . . I would lay down my life for you. I have no unkind or unchristian thought towards you in your particular capacities. . . . This Nation has suffered extremely, and been disappointed in its expectations of justice from your long sitting. . . . This Cause is either of God or man. If it be of God, He will bear it up ; if of man, it will tumble. All our histories are proofs of God overthrowing everything He had not planted. I never found God failing when I trusted in Him. I can laugh and sing in my heart when I speak of these things to you or elsewhere. . . . The People will prefer their safety to their passions, and their real security to forms, when Necessity calls for Supplies. They may object that I make Necessities to benefit myself and my family : but no living man can prove such a charge. . . . The Nation came into your hands by divine dispensation. . . . It is blasphemy to speak of my *cunning*. . . . There are men who know not what it is to pray or believe, and to receive returns from God, and to be spoken unto by the Spirit of God. . . . Without the spirit all other teachings are ineffectual. . . . Men who live on their Masses and Service-books are strangers to God. . . . Take heed of provoking God by such blasphemies as to say man does these things. They speak against God, and they fall under His hand without a Mediator. If we deny the Spirit of Christ we provoke the Mediator, and He will leave us to God. . . . The worldly-minded man knows this not, hence his atheisms. . . . You have put me to the necessity of raising money, instead of seasonably providing for the army. I hope it was not done on purpose, but such is the state we are reduced to. . . . It is not for the profit of these Nations . . . for you to continue here any longer. . . . I do dissolve this Parliament.

PART IX. Left without supplies ; obliged to cut his Parliament adrift, and front the matter alone ; with England from end to end ripe for an explosion : such was the Protector's condition. He passed his own Ordinance for payment of old rates, and as the sum was low it was complied with. He had his eye on the plots, and seized and imprisoned the leaders : always hoping for reconciliation with the Anabaptist Royalists.

May 28, 1655, was the beginning of a scheme of government by Major-Generals, England being divided into districts. They were carefully chosen men who feared God and hated covetousness, and their rule, though arbitrary, was beneficial, and became



popular. Oliver alone carried out Chancery reform, which had not been confirmed by Parliament.

On June 3rd came news of Protestant banishment and massacre in the Savoy Alps. Pity and indignation blazed up in Oliver, and, through him, the French Cardinal forced the Duke of Savoy to do justice. It was a symbol of his foreign policy.

LETTER CXCVIII. 13 June '55. To General Blake. He acknowledges account of destruction of Turkish shipping before Tunis, and ascribes all to God. The King of Spain's fleet from the West Indies must be intercepted. . . .

LETTER CXCIX. Henry Cromwell had been sent to Ireland to interview Fleetwood. He acquitted himself well, and fifteen months later was made Lord Deputy. Fleetwood was recalled in a handsome way, and became a Major-General.

22 June '55. To Fleetwood. ". . . I desire thee to know I most dearly love thee. . . . The wretched jealousies that are amongst us, and the spirit of calumny, turn all into gall and wormwood. . . . It's reported that you are to be sent for and Harry to be Deputy ; which truly never entered into my heart. . . . My desire was for him and his brother to have lived private lives in the country. . . . Dear Charles, my dear love to thee ; and to my dear Biddy,<sup>1</sup> who is a joy to my heart for what I hear of the Lord in her. Bid her be cheerful. . . . If she knows the Covenant she cannot but do so. For that transaction is without her, sure and steadfast between the Father and the Mediator in His blood. . . . The Compact is for the Seed : God is bound in faithfulness to Christ, and in Him to us. . . . God engageth in it to pardon us ; to write His law in our heart ; to plant His fear so that we shall never depart from Him. We under all our sins and infirmities can daily offer a perfect Christ ; and thus we have peace and safety, and apprehension of love from a Father in Covenant, who cannot deny Himself. And truly in this is all my salvation ; and this helps me to bear my great burden."

LETTER CC. With all his courtesies, Oliver knew on occasion the word of command. William Beacham had been a worthy man ; and his widow, who lived on a meagre pension and had applied for free schooling for her son, had not met with much response.

29 July '55. To Secretary Thurloe. Beacham once did an important secret service effectually, to the great public good. This is not to be referred to the Commissioners for consideration. "I have not the particular shining bauble for crowds to gaze at or kneel to, but—to be short, I know how to deny Petitions ; and whatever I think proper, for outward form, to refer to any Office or Officer, I expect that such my compliance with custom

<sup>1</sup> Bridget Fleetwood, formerly Bridget Ireton—Cromwell's daughter.



shall be looked upon as an indication of my will and pleasure to have the thing *done*."

LETTER CCI. 30 July '55. To Blake. Owing to ill rumours from the West Indies, let him not, as agreed, send away part of his fleet till the secret instructions are executed. . . . "Nothing shall be omitted which can be done here for your supply and encouragement."

The new Swedish ambassador in England was striving to negotiate a league of amity. Oliver wished to include the Dutch, Prussians, Danes, as the basis of a Protestant league against Rome.

LETTER CCII. 13 Sept. '55. To Blake. It would be well to fight the Spanish fleet, to preserve our ships and interest in the West Indies. (The expedition there had failed.) But as we know little of their strength, this is no positive order. We trust the Lord will guide you. If you return before exhausting your provisions, have them preserved.

LETTER CCIII. 26 Sept. '55. To Commissioners of Maryland. Our former letter did not design to put a stop to the Commissioner's proceedings. It was to prevent any violence between Virginia and Maryland about their bounds.

A strange Quaker procession through mud and rain, headed by one James Nayler, took place at Bristol in October. George Fox had previously sought an interview with Oliver to represent to him the undeserved sufferings of Friends. They discoursed about this unfathomable Universe, the Light in it from Above, and Darkness from below. Oliver showed much moderation, having a sympathy with the Perennial. When Fox withdrew Oliver took his hand, and, with moist-beaming eyes, said, "Come again to my house!"

JAMAICA. The grand Sea-Armament had attacked Hispaniola and only realised the small waste island of Jamaica. It was Oliver's most unsuccessful enterprise, and he imputed the fault to himself and his choice of improper Generals. Broken Royalists and unruly veterans composed the armament, which Oliver hurled like a bolt into the dark Domdaniel of Spanish iniquity in the far West: where it exploded almost without effect. It had landed sixty miles from Hispaniola; attempted to march there through tropical forests; but, surprised by ambuscadoes, had fled back to its ships and made for Jamaica. In the new sultry element, soldiers and settlers died fast; many sailed for home, including the Generals Penn and Venables. But Oliver was resolved that Jamaica should yet be a colony, and Spain, God's enemy, smitten to the heart.

LETTER CCIV. Goodson had succeeded Penn as Vice-Admiral: a blunt, stout-hearted sailor, less stupid than he looks.

OCT. '55. To Goodson. You shall want nothing for carrying on the work. Consult with Fortescue how to prosecute your affairs "with that brotherly kindness that upon no colour whatsoever any divisions or distractions shall be amongst you. . . ." Try and weaken the Spaniard's ships by parcels. Engage those they are sending now before they join the ships to leeward of you. . . . "The Lord hath greatly humbled us in that sad loss sustained at Hispaniola. . . . We doubt we have provoked the Lord. . . . Yet He would not have us despond. . . ."

LETTER CCV. OCT. '55. To Serle, Governor of Barbadoes : thanking him for assistance at Hispaniola, though it miscarried by God's will.

LETTER CCVI. NOV. '55. To Major-General Fortescue at Jamaica. Our discouragements have been many, but your constancy and faithfulness great, and will not be forgotten by me. Ships will be sent and all necessary supplies. Though money is wanting we hope every soldier will do his best. Do not scatter till you have begun a security in some place. Form a body of horse to hinder a Spanish landing. . . . We would like to take Providence Island, to hinder the Spaniard's Peru and Carthagena trade. . . . As to the report of debauchedness, profaneness, etc., in the Army, we not only bewail it, but wish to see it discountenanced and punished. . . .

LETTER CCVII. 21 NOV. '55. To Henry Cromwell in Ireland. Some persons may show displeasure towards yourself and public affairs ; but this should not impress you too much. Let them see your moderation and love. . . . I will send out more men for your Council as soon as fitting ones are found. . . . Secure the Council in a safe place in case of a Rebellion.

LETTER CCVIII. Henry Cromwell, not twenty-nine, with a hot, proud temper, and much preached against by Anabaptist Colonels, has no holiday task.

21 APRIL '56. To Henry Cromwell. "I am glad to hear what I have heard of your carriage. . . . Cry to the Lord to give you a plain single heart. Take heed of being over-jealous, lest your apprehensions of others cause you to offend. . . . The Anabaptists are to blame in not being pleased with you. . . . Take heed of professing religion without the power : that will teach you to love all who are after the similitude of Christ. Take care of making it a business to be too hard for the men who contest with you. . . . I know they are weak ; because they are so peremptory in judging others. . . . Lastly, take heed of studying to lay for yourself the foundation of a great estate. It will be a snare to you. . . ."

LETTER CCIX. 28 APRIL '56. To Blake and Montague. You have a plentiful stock of prayers going on for you. . .

Hispaniola has taught us that man cannot direct his way. . . . Remember Solomon's counsel of doing what we have to do with all our might, and getting our hearts submitted to contentation with God's dispensation. . . . Might not the Spanish fleet in Cadiz be burnt or destroyed? Might not Cadiz or Gibraltar be attempted? It would advantage our trade and annoy the Spaniard.

LETTER CCX. 6 May '56. To the same. There are differences between us and Portugal. We had agreed with them for liberty of conscience for our merchants. But they wish to submit this to the Pope : which would bring us to owning the Pope. Besides, they offer facilities for Roman Catholics to seduce our men ; and their policy is one of evasion. . . . We have set a limit for their King's answer, that they may not get their fleet home before you can intercept it.

LETTER CCXI. 9 May '56. To Committee for Gresham College : requesting them to suspend the election of a Geometry Professor till he might speak with them on the business.

Oliver's faculty was great for choosing men and finding out those who excelled in any science.

LETTER CCXII. 29 May '56. To Richard Cromwell. There is a chance of selling Newhall, which for four years has yielded little, "nor did I ever hear you ever liked it for a Seat. . . ."

LETTER CCXIII. Thanks to her strong Protectorate Government England had peace at home, and was Queen of Protestantism abroad, defying Spain and Antichrist. But the domestic Hydra of anarchies is not slain, and revives on hint of foreign encouragement. War with Spain gave Charles Stuart a new lever ; and Spain promised him 7,000 men to invade England. A General Election is in progress, as supplies are needed to carry on war.

26 Aug. '56. To Henry Cromwell. We hear of plots to invade Ireland. Keep the forces ready, and have a considerable marching army. . . . The Elections go well for the Government.

LETTER CCXIV. Portugal has yielded. The Spaniards keep to their harbours ; but Cadiz and Gibraltar may not be taken without other force.

28 Aug. '56. To Blake and Montague. Keep twenty ships and send the rest home with one General. Endeavour to thwart the enemy's object of trading with the West Indies. . . . Look to the preservation of our trade to the Straits and Portugal. We let you know our general scope and leave the management and improvement to you. . . .

In the New Parliament there were some stiff Republicans, but on the whole it was well affected to Oliver (17 Sept. '56).



SPEECH V. Our business is to speak of Things. Our subject is of great interest for the glory of God and His interest in the world. His Church is the most peculiar interest ; and the concernment of the Living People His general interest. Our enemies are all the wicked men in the world, who see the glory of God more professed here than elsewhere ; and the un-Godly Spaniard is specially our enemy. Necessity compelled us to the hostility of Hispaniola. Necessity is above Law, and to oppose it is like opposing Providence. God has ordered enmity between us and Spain. They sought to destroy the reformed religion which our nation adopted under Elizabeth. The Spaniard looked on us as the obstacle to his design of dominating the whole Christian world. . . . Make any peace with a Popish State and you are bound and they loose. Peace is but to be kept so long as the Pope saith Amen to it. France is the only Popish State we now deal with ; but their tie to the Pope is less strict, and they do not break their word at his bidding. . . . Spain caused 20,000 Protestants to be murdered in Ireland, and has now espoused Charles Stuart's interest. I dare not believe anyone in this room wishes that person's return. We do not wish to return to the things we have fought against. All the interests of the Protestants in other countries are as yours. You act for a great many of God's own ; and your common enemy is the Antichrist of Scripture. In our home affairs the Spanish interest is a great source of danger ; and the King of Spain now has 7,000 or 8,000 men at Bruges in the cause of Charles Stuart. . . . Papists and Cavaliers shake hands in England ; and all discontented parties are tending towards the Cavaliers. Not long since, there was an attempt at insurrection, though Parliament, to whom it was hinted, believed it not. It was a general design, and many who carried themselves most demurely were engaged in it. If this is so, you are in danger with Spain, with whom all the Papal Interest is joined. In the Pope's zeal for his religion he may shame *us*. He is wise and politic, and designs to unite all the Popish interests in all the Christian world against this Nation above any, and against all the Protestant interest in the world. If we unite with these, how does it differ from Laud striving to reconcile matters of religion ? There are a company of poor men that are ready to spend their blood against such compliances. . . .

Some persons did not believe that the insurrections in Salisbury and North Wales took place. The Levellers and Commonwealth's men would have joined the Cavaliers, and they prepared a Declaration against all the things we had done. They plotted a march to London and my own assassination. The ringleaders were Papists and Cavaliers ; and they endeavoured to reconcile Fifth Monarchy and Commonwealth men that there might be union

to an end : and the end was blood and confusion. These at least stood aloof from Charles ; but the others plotted invasion with the King of Spain and mutiny in the fleet. . . . We started the Major-Generals to have a little inspection upon the People thus divided and discontented, and the workings of the Popish Party. . . . The Irish rebels who took part in the massacre were to have joined. . . . The danger is great, but should cause no despondency, as we have valour and courage from God. . . . I should be to blame now not to offer the remedies. A true Reformation will be our best security. We have peace with all but Spain : let us prosecute the war vigorously, though we are overwhelmed in debts. Let us forbear to waste precious time and stop quibbling over words. You may shrink from touching those plotters who are Protestants ; but we must not suffer the honest interests of the Nation to be eradicated. We have let people follow any religion they like quietly : if it is not made a pretence for arms and blood. . . . If men believe the remission of sins through the blood of Christ, and free justification by the Blood of Christ, and live upon the grace of God, then, let the Form be what it will, they walk peaceably without prejudice to others under other Forms. . . . Let there be no reproaches between Independents, Anabaptists, Presbyterians. . . . The Civil Magistrate should keep all professing Christians in this relation to one another. I will never consent to take away Tithes till some other maintenance be found. Scandalous Ministers have been ejected, and those brought in who have passed an Approbation. . . . God has for the Ministry a great seed in the youth now in the Universities. . . . As to Manners, we would keep up Nobility and Gentry by not letting them patronise debauchery and disorders. . . . Make it a shame to see men bold in sin and profaneness, and God will bless you. . . . The mind is the man. If that be kept pure a man signifies somewhat ; if not, I would very fain see what difference there is betwixt him and a beast. . . . There are some bad Laws which you may alter ; but let not men waste their time in petty matters. . . .

As to carrying on the war, the Treasury of the State is run out. We invite your inspection, and are not afraid to look the Nation in the face, and are guiltless of misemployment. . . . We have not been universally fortunate, and the chief reason was the plotting of the Cavaliers. . . . Our endeavours by the Major-Generals have been effectual for the preservation of your peace. They have done more to discountenance Vice and settle Religion than anything for fifty years. You cannot make laws against everything, but you can make good laws of Government ; and in times of Necessity one may apply extraordinary remedies. If Necessity be pretended it is the greater sin. . . . We have en-

deavoured to act so as to give an account of our authority to God and man. . . . We have not managed the Treasury unthriftily ; you are less in debt than we found you. . . . Now if I could but move affections in you to that which, if you do it, will save this Nation ! If not, you plunge into ruin. . . . Quit yourselves like Christian men : a neutral Laodicean spirit will not do. . . . Men who are opposite from scruples think that if they gain Civil Liberty Religion will follow. . . . I reckon that difficulty<sup>1</sup> more than all the wrestling with flesh and blood. Doubting, hesitating men are not fit for your work ; much less those who are carnal. . . . Do not dispute of unnecessary things. A union of you and me and both united in faith in Christ must ground this work. . . . There should be love between us, so that the Three Nations should say we are knit together in one bond to promote the glory of God against the Common Enemy. . . . Nothing else will work off these disaffections. . . . When I speak of these things I speak my heart before God ; and I dare not be bold with Him. I have a little faith : I have a little lived by faith, and therein I may be “bold.” . . .

No Royal Speech like this was ever delivered elsewhere in the world. It reveals the man himself and the England he presided over. We shall not again hear a Supreme Governor talk in this strain. The dialect is obsolete, but the spirit should not have grown obsolete, and must again revive. Men have since been bold with God and not with men.

Only 300 certificates were allotted among 400 Members, and those without cannot enter the House : a sore blow to Privilege. But this Parliament shows a real desire for Settlement. . . . Soon after the power of the Major-Generals was withdrawn. . . . At sea, Blake and Montague were victorious and took much silver from the Spaniards.

<sup>1</sup> The Pedant Parliament.





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