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"Shooting Niagara — And After?"

by

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I.

THERE probably never was since the Heptarchy ended, or almost since it began, so hugely critical an epoch in the history of England as this we have now entered upon, with universal self-congratulation and flinging up of caps; nor one in which, — with no Norman Invasion now ahead, to lay hold of it, to bridle and regulate it for us (little thinking it was *for us*), and guide it into higher and wider regions, — the question of utter death or of nobler new life for the poor Country was so uncertain. Three things seem to be agreed upon by gods and men, at least by English men and gods; certain to happen, and are now in visible course of fulfilment.

¹*Democracy* to complete itself; to go the full length of its course, towards the Bottomless or into it, no power now extant to prevent it or even considerably retard it, — till we have seen where it will lead us to, and whether there will *then* be any return possible, or none. Complete "liberty" to all persons; Count of Heads to be the Divine Court of Appeal on every question and interest of mankind; Count of Heads to choose a Parliament according to its own heart at last, and sit with Penny Newspapers zealously watching the same said Parliament, so chosen and so watched, to do what trifle of legislating and administering may still be needed in such an England, with its hundred and fifty millions 'free' more and more to follow each his own nose, by way of guide-post in this intricate world.

² That, in a limited time, say 50 years hence, the Church, all Churches and so-called religions, the Christian Religion itself, shall have deliquessed, — into "Liberty of Conscience," Progress of Opinion, Progress of Intellect, Philanthropic Movement, and other aqueous residues, of a vapid badly-scented character; — and shall, like water spilt upon the ground, trouble nobody considerably thence forth, but evaporate at its leisure.

³ That, in lieu thereof, there shall be Free Trade, in all senses, and to all lengths: unlimited Free Trade, — which some take to mean, 'Free racing, ere long with unlimited speed, in the career of *Cheap and Nasty*;' — this beautiful career, not in shop-goods only, but in all things temporal, spiritual and eternal, to be flung generously open, wide as the portals of the universe; so that everybody shall start free, and every-where, 'under enlightened popular suffrage,' the race shall be to the swift, and the high office shall fall to him who is ablest if not to do it, at least to get elected for doing it.

These are three altogether new and very considerable achievements, lying visibly ahead of us, not far off, — and so extremely considerable, that every thinking English creature is tempted to go into manifold reflections and inquiries upon them. My own have not been wanting, any time these thirty years past, but they have not been of a joyful or triumphant nature; not prone to utter themselves; indeed expecting, till lately, that they might with propriety lie

unuttered altogether. But the series of events comes swifter and swifter, at a strange rate; and hastens unexpectedly, '— 'velocity increasing' (if you will consider, for this too is as when the little stone has been loosened, which sets the whole mountain side in motion) 'as the *square* of the time:'— so that the wisest Prophecy finds it was quite wrong as to date; and, patiently, or even indolently waiting, is astonished to see it- self' fulfilled, not in centuries as anticipated, but in decades and years. It was a clear prophecy, for instance, that Germany would either become honourably Prussian or go to gradual annihilation: but who of us expect- ed that we ourselves, instead of our children's children, should live to behold it; that a magnanimous and fortunate Herr von Bismarck, whose dispraise was in all the newspapers, would, to his own amazement, find the thing now double; and would do it, do the essential of it, in a few of the cur- rent weeks? That England would have to take the Niagara leap of completed Democracy one day, was also a plain prophecy, though uncertain as to time.

II.

The prophecy, truly, was plain enough this long while : — "Dógma gar antwn tiV getabullei; For who can change the opinion of these people?" as the sage Antoninus notes. It is indeed strange how prepossessions and delusions seize upon whole communities of men; no basis in the notion they have formed, yet everybody adopting it, everybody finding the whole world agree with him in it, and accept it as an axiom of [p.674] Euclid; and, in the universal repetition an reverberation, taking all contradiction of it as an insult, and a sign of malicious insanity, hardly to be borne with patience.

"For who can change the opinion of these people?" as our Divus Imperator says. No wisest of mortals. This people cannot be convinced out of its "axiom of Euclid" by any reasoning whatsoever; on the contrary, all the world assenting, and continually repeating and reverberating there soon comes that singular phenomenon, which the Germans call *Schwärmerey* ('*enthusiasm*' is our poor Greek equivalent), which means simply 'Swarmery,' or the 'Gathering of Men in Swarms,' and what prodigies they are in the habit of doing and believing, when thrown into that miraculous condition. Some big Queen Bee is in the centre of the swarm ;— but any commonplace stupidest *bee*, Cleon the Tanner, Betles, John of Leyden, John of Bromwicham, any bee whatever, if he can happen, by noise or otherwise, to be chosen for the function, will straightway get fatted and inflated into *bulk*, which of itself means complete capacity; no difficulty about your Queen Bee: and the swarm once formed, finds itself impelled to action, as with one heart and one mind. Singular, in the case of human swarms, with what perfection of unanimity and quasi-religious conviction the stupidest absurdities can be received as axioms of Euclid, nay as articles of faith, which you are not only to believe, unless malignantly insane, but are (if you have any honour or morality) to push into practise, and *quàm primùm* see *done* if your soul would live! Divine commandment to vote (" Manhood Suffrage," — Horsehood, Doghood ditto not yet treated of); universal "glorious liberty" (to Sons of the Devil in overwhelming majority, as would appear): count of Heads the God-appointed way in this universe, all other ways Devil-appointed; in one brief word, which includes whatever of palpable incredibility and delirious absurdity, universally believed, can be uttered or imagined, on these points, "the equality of men," any man equal to any other; Quashee Nigger to Socrates or Shakspeare; Judas Iscariot to Jesus Christ; — and Bedlam and Gehenna equal to the New Jerusalem, shall we say? If these things are taken up, not only as axioms of Euclid, but as articles of religion burning to be put in practice for the salvation of the world, — I think you will admit that *Swarmery* plays a wonderful part in the heads of poor man kind; and that very considerable results are likely to follow from it in our day!

But you will in vain attempt, by argument of human intellect, to contradict or turn aside any of these divine axioms, indisputable as those of Euclid, and of sacred. or quasi-celestial quality to boot: if you have neglected the one method (which was a silent one) of dealing with them at an early stage, they are thenceforth invincible ; and will plunge .more and more madly forward towards practical fulfilment: — once fulfilled, it will then he seen how credible and wise they were. Not even the Queen Bee but will then know what to think of them. Then, and never till then.

By far the notablest result of Swarmery, in these times, is that of the late American War, with Settlement of the Nigger Question for result. Essentially the Nigger Question was one of the smallest; and in itself did not much concern mankind in the present time of struggles and hurries. One always rather likes the Nigger; evidently a poor blockhead with good dispositions, with affections, attachments, — with a turn for Nigger Melodies, and the like: — he is the only Savage of all the coloured races that doesn't die out on sight of the White Man; but can actually live beside him, and work and increase and be merry. The Almighty Maker has appointed him to be a Servant. Under penalty of Heaven's

curse, neither party to this pre-appointment shall neglect or misdo his duties therein ; — and it is certain (though as yet widely unknown), Servantship on the *nomadic* principle, at the rate of so many shillings per day, cannot be other than misdone. The whole world rises in shrieks against you, on hearing of such a thing: — yet the whole world, listening, to the cool Sheffield disclosures of *rattening*, and the market-rates of murder in that singular "Sheffield Assassination Company (Limited)," feels its hair rising on end; — to little purpose hitherto; being without even a gallows to make response! The fool of a world listens, year after year, for above a generation back, to "disastrous *strikes*," "merciless *lockouts*," and other details of the nomadic scheme of servitude; nay is becoming thoroughly disquieted about its own too lofty-minded flunkies, mutinous maid-servants (ending, too often as "distressed needle-women;" thirty thousand of these latter now on the pavements of London), and the kindred phenomena on every hand: but it will be long before the fool of a world open its eyes to the taproot of all that, to the frantic notion, in short, That servantship and mastership, on the nomadic principle, was ever, or will ever be, except for brief periods, possible among human creatures. Poor souls, and when they have [p.676] discovered it, what a puddling and weltering, and scolding and jargoning, there will be, before the first real step towards remedy is taken!

Servantship, like all solid contracts between men (like wedlock itself, which was *once* nomadic enough, temporary enough!), must become a contract of permanency, not easy to dissolve, but difficult extremely, — a "contract for life," if you can manage it (which you cannot, without many wise laws and regulations, and a great deal of earnest thought and anxious experience), will evidently be the best of all. And this was already the Nigger's essential position. Mischief, irregularities, injustices, did probably abound between Nigger and Buckra; but the poisonous taproot of all mischief, and impossibility of fairness, humanity, or well-doing in the contract, never had been there! Of all else the remedy was easy in comparison; vitally important to every just man concerned in it; and, under all obstructions (which in the American case, begirt with frantic "Abolitionists," fire-breathing like the old Chimæra, were immense), was gradually getting itself done. To me individually the Nigger's case was not the most pressing in the world, but among the least so! America, however, had got into *Swarmery* upon it (not America's blame either, but in great part ours, and that of the nonsense we sent over to them); and felt that in the Heavens or the Earth there was nothing so godlike, or incomparably pressing to be done. Their energy, their valour, their &c. &c. were worthy of the stock they sprang from: — and now, poor fellows, *done* it is, with a witness. A continent of the earth has been submerged, for certain years, by deluges as from the Pit of Hell; half a million (some say a whole million, but surely they exaggerate *) of excellent White Men, full of gifts and faculty, have slit one another into horrid death, in a temporary humor, which will Leave centuries of remembrance fierce enough: and three million Blacks, men and brothers (of a sort), are completely "emancipated;" launched into the career of improvement, — likely to be "improved off the face of the earth" in a generation or two! That is the dismal prediction to me, of the warmest enthusiast to their Cause whom I have known of American men, — who doesn't regret his great efforts either, in the great Cause now won, Cause incomparably the most important on Earth or in Heaven at this time. *Papae, papae*; wonderful indeed!

In our own country, too, *Swarmery* has played a great part for many years past; and especially is now playing, in these very days and months. Our accepted axioms about "Liberty," "Constitutional Government," "Reform," and the like objects, are of truly wonderful texture: venerable by antiquity, many of them, and written in all manner of Canonical Books; or else, the newer part of them, celestially clear as perfect unanimity of all tongues, and *Vox populi vox Dei*, can make them: axioms confessed, or even inspirations and gospel verities, to the general mind of man. To the mind of here and there a man, it begins to be suspected that perhaps they are only conditionally true; that taken unconditionally, or under changed conditions, they are not true, but false and even disastrously and fatally so. Ask yourself about "Liberty," for example; what you do really mean by it, what in any just and rational soul is that Divine quality of liberty? That a good man be "free," as we call it, be permitted to unfold himself in works of goodness and nobleness, is surely a blessing to him, immense and indispensable ; — to him and to those about him. But that a bad man be "free," — permitted to unfold himself in *his* particular way, is contrariwise, the fatallest curse you could inflict on him; curse and nothing else, to him and all his neighbours. Him the very Heavens call upon you to persuade, to urge, induce, compel, into something of well-doing; if you absolutely cannot, if he will continue in ill-doing, — then for him (I can assure you, though you will be shocked to hear it), the one "blessing" left is the speediest gallows you can lead him to. Speediest, that at least his ill-doing may cease *quàm primùm*. Oh, my friends, whither are you buzzing and swarming, in this extremely absurd manner? Expecting a Millennium from "extension of the suffrage," laterally, vertically, or in whatever way?

All the Millenniums I ever heard of heretofore were to be preceded by a "chaining of the Devil for a thousand years," — laying *him* up, tied neck and heels, and put beyond stirring, as the preliminary. You too have been taking preliminary steps, with more and more ardour, for a thirty years back; but they seem to be all in the opposite direction: a cutting asunder of straps and ties, wherever you might find them; pretty indiscriminate of choice in the matter: a general repeal of old regulations, fetters, [p.677] and restrictions (restrictions on the Devil originally, I believe, for most part, but now fallen slack and ineffectual), which had become unpleasant to many of you, — with loud shouting from the multitude, as strap after strap was cut, "Glory, glory, another strap is gone!" — this, I think, has mainly been the sublime legislative industry of Parliament since it became "Reform Parliament;" victoriously successful, and thought sublime and beneficent by some. So that now hardly any limb of the Devil has a thrum, or tatter of rope or leather left upon it: — there needs almost superhuman heroism in you to "whip" a Garotter; no Fenian taken with the reddest hand is to be meddled with, under penalties; hardly a murderer, never so detestable and hideous, but you find him "insane," and board him at the public expense, a very peculiar *British* Prytaneum of these days! And in fact, THE DEVIL (he, verily, if you will consider the sense of words) is likewise become an Emancipated Gentleman; lithe of limb as in Adam and Eve's time, and scarcely a toe or finger of him *tied* any more. And you, my astonishing friends, *you* are certainly getting into a millennium, such as never was before, — hardly even in the dreams of Bedlam. Better luck to you by the way, my poor friends; — a little less of buzzing, humming, *swarming* (i.e. tumbling in infinite noise and darkness), that you might try to look a little each for himself; what kind of "way" it is! But indeed your "Reform" movement, from of old, has been wonderful to me; everybody meaning by it, not "Reformation," practical amendment of his own foul courses, or even of his neighbour's; no thought of that whatever, though that, you would say, is the one thing to be thought of and aimed at; — but meaning simply Extension of the Suffrage! Bring in more voting; that will clear away the universal rottenness, and puddle of mendacities, in which poor England is drowning; let England only vote sufficiently, and all is clean and sweet again. A very singular *swarmery* this of the Reform movement, I must say.

III.

Inexpressibly delirious seems to me, at present in my solitude, the puddle of Parliament and Public upon what it calls the "Reform Measure;" that is to say, The calling in of new supplies of blockheadism, gullibility, bribeability, amenability to beer and balderdash, by way of amending the woes that we have had from our previous supplies of that bad article. The intellect of a man who believes in the possibility of "improvement" by such a method is to me a finished off and shut up intellect, with which I would not argue: mere waste of wind between us to exchange words on that class of topics. It is not Thought, this which my reforming brother utters to me with such emphasis and eloquence; it is mere "reflex and reverberation," repetition of what he has always heard others imagining to think, and repeating as orthodox, indisputable, and the gospel of our salvation in this world. Does not all Nature groan everywhere, and lie in bondage, till you give it a Parliament? Is one a man at all unless one have a suffrage to Parliament? These are axioms admitted by all English creatures for the last two hundred years. If you have the misfortune not to believe in them at all, but to believe the contrary for a long time past, the inferences and inspirations drawn from them, and the "*swarmeries*" and enthusiasms of mankind thereon, will seem to you not a little marvellous! —

Meanwhile the *good* that lies in this delirious "new Reform Measure," — as there lies something of good in almost everything, — is perhaps not inconsiderable. It accelerates notably what I have long looked upon as inevitable; — pushes us at once into the Niagara Rapids: irresistibly propelled, with ever-increasing velocity, we shall now arrive who knows how *soon*! For the last thirty years it has been growing more and more evident that there was only this issue; but now the issue itself has become imminent, the distance of it to be guessed by years. Traitorous Politicians, grasping at votes, even votes from the rabble, have brought it on; — one cannot but consider them traitorous; and for one's own poor share, would rather have been shot than been concerned in it: — but, after all my silent indignation and disgust, I cannot pretend to be clearly sorry that such a consummation is expedited. I say to myself; "Well, perhaps the sooner such a mass of hypocrisies, universal mismanagements and brutal platitudes and infidelities *ends*, — if not in some improvement, then in death and finis, — may it not be the better? The sum of our sins, increasing steadily day by day, will at least be less, the sooner the settlement is!" Nay, have not I a kind of secret satisfaction, of the malicious or even of the judiciary kind (*schadenfreude*, 'mischief-joy,' the Germans call it, but really it is *justice*-joy withal), he they call "Dizzy" is to do it; that others jugglers, of an unconscious and [p.678] deeper type, having sold their poor Mother's body for a mess of Official Pottage, this clever conscious juggler steps in, "Soft you, my honourable friends; I will weigh out the corpse of your Mother (mother of mine she never was, but only stepmother and milk-cow); — and you shan't have the pottage: not yours, you observe, but mine!" This really is a pleasing trait of its sort.

Perhaps the consummation may be now nearer than is thought. It seems to me sometimes as if everybody had privately now given up serious notion of resisting it. Beales and his ragamuffins pull down the railings of Her Majesty's Park, when Her Majesty refuses admittance; Home Secretary Walpole (representing England's Majesty) listens to a Colonel Dickson talking of "barricades," "improvised pikes," &c.; does *not* order him to be conducted, and if necessary, to be kicked downstairs, with orders never to return, in case of worse; and when Beales says, "I will see that the Queen's Peace is kept," Queen (by her Walpole) answers, "Will you, then; God bless *you!*" and bursts into tears. Those tears are certainly an epoch in England; nothing seen, or dreamt of, like them in the History of poor England till now.

In the same direction we have also our remarkable "Jamaica Committee;" and a Lord Chief Justice 'speaking six hours' (with such "eloquence," such &c. &c. as takes with rapture the general Editorial ear, Penny and Three-penny), to prove that there is no such thing, nor ever was, as Martial Law; — and that any governor, commanded soldier, or official person, putting down the frightfullest Mob-insurrection, Black or White, shall do it with the rope round *his* neck, by way of encouragement to him. Nobody answers this remarkable Lord Chief Justice, "Lordship, if you were to speak for six hundred years, instead of six hours, you would only prove the more to us that, unwritten if you will, but real and fundamental, anterior to all written laws, and first making written laws *possible*, there must have been, and is, and will be, coeval with Human Society, from its first beginnings to its ultimate end, an actual *Martial Law*, of more validity than any other law whatever. Lordship, if there is no written law that three and three shall be six, do you wonder at the Statute Book for that omission? You may shut those eloquent lips and go home to dinner. May your shadow never be less; greater it perhaps has little chance of being."

Truly one knows not whether less to venerate the Majesty's Ministers, who, instead of rewarding their Governor Eyre, throw him out of window to a small loud group, small as now appears, and nothing but a group or knot of rabid Nigger-Philanthropists, barking furiously in the gutter, and threatening one's Reform Bill with loss of certain friends and votes (which could not save it, either, the dear object), — or that other unvenerable Majesty's Ministry, which on Beales's generous undertaking for the Peace of an afflicted Queen's Majesty, bursts into tears.

Memorable considerably, and altogether new in our History, are both those ministerial feats; and both point significantly the same way. The perceptible, but as yet unacknowledged truth is, people are getting dimly sensible that our social affairs and arrangements, all but the money-safe, are pretty universally a Falsehood, an elaborate old-established Hypocrisy, which is even serving its own poor private purpose ill, and is openly mismanaging every public purpose or interest, to a shameful and indefensible extent. For such a Hypocrisy, in any detail of it (except the money-safe), nobody, official or other, is willing to risk his skin; but cautiously looks round whether there is no postern to retire by, and retires accordingly, — leaving any mob-leader, Beales, John of Leyden, Walter-the-Pennyles, or other impotent enough loud individual, with his tail of loud Roughts, to work their own sweet will. Safer to humour the mob than repress them, with the rope about *your* neck. Everybody sees the Official slinking off, has a secret fellow-feeling with it; nobody admires it; but the spoken diapproval is languid, and generally from the teeth outwards. "Has not everybody been very good to you?" say the highest Editors, in these current days, admonishing and soothing down Beales and his Roughts. So that if loud mobs, supported by one or two Eloquences in the House, choose to proclaim, some day, with vociferation, as some day they will, "Enough of kingship, and its grimacings and futilities! Is it not a Hypocrisy and Humbug, as you yourselves well know? We demand to become *Commonwealth of England*; that will perhaps be better, worse it cannot be!" — in such case, how much of available resistance does the reader think would ensue? From official persons, with the rope round their neck, should you expect a great amount? I do not; or that resistance to the death would anywhere, 'within these walls' or without, be the prevailing phenomenon.

For we are a people drowned in Hypoc-[p.679]risy; saturated with it to the bone — alas it is even so, in spite of far other intentions at one time, and of a languid, dumb, but ineradicable inward protest against it still: — and we are beginning to be universally conscious of that horrible condition, and by no means disposed to die in behalf of continuing it! It has lasted long, that unblest process; process of 'lying to steep in the Devil's Pickle,' for above two hundred years (I date the formal beginning of it from the year 1660, and desperate *return* of Sacred Majesty after such an ousting as it had got); process which appears to be now about complete. Who could regret the finis of such a thing; finis on any terms what- ever! Possibly it will not be death eternal, possibly only death temporal, death temporary.

My neighbours, by the million against one, all expect that it will almost certainly be New-birth, a Saturnian time, — with gold nuggets themselves more plentiful than ever. or us we will say, Rejoice in the *awakening* of poor England

even on these terms. To lie torpid, sluttishly gurgling and mumbling, spiritually in soak 'in the Devil's Pickle' (choicest elixir the Devil brews, — is not unconscious or half-conscious *Hypocrisy*, and quiet *Make-believe* of yourself and others, strictly that?) for above two hundred years: that was the infinitely dismal condition, all others are but finitely so.

IV.

Practically the worthiest inquiry, in regard to all this, would be: "What are probably the steps towards consummation all this will now take; what are, in main features, the issues it will arrive at, on unexpectedly (with immense surprise to the most) *shooting* Niagara to the bottom? And above all, what are the possibilities, resources, impediments, conceivable methods and attemptings of its ever getting out again?" Darker subject of Prophecy can be laid before no man: and to be candid with myself up to this date, I have never seriously meditated it, far less grappled with it as a Problem in any sort practical. Let me avoid branch *first* of this inquiry altogether. If "immortal smash," and shooting of the Falls, be the one issue, ahead, our and the reformed Parliament's procedures and adventures in arriving there are not worth conjecturing in comparison! — And yet the inquiry means withal, both branches of it mean, "What are the duties of good citizens in it, now and onwards?" Meditated it must be, and light sought on it, however hard or impossible to find! It is not always the part of the infinitesimally small minority of wise men and good citizens to sit silent; idle they should never sit.

Supposing the *Commonwealth* established, and Democracy rampant, as in America, or in France by fits for 70 odd years past, — it is a favourable fact that our Aristocracy~ in their essential height of position, and capability (or possibility) of doing good, are not at once likely to be interfered with that they will be continued farther on their trial, and only the question somewhat more stringently put to them, "What *are* you good for, then? Show us, show us, or else disappear!" I regard this, potentially a great benefit; — springing from what seems a mad enough phenomenon, the fervid zeal in *behalf* of this "new Reform Bill" and all kindred objects, which is manifested by the better kind of our young Lords and Honourables; a thing very curious to me. Somewhat resembling that bet of the impetuous Irish carpenter, astride of his plank firmly stuck out of window in the sixth story; "Two to one, I *can* saw this plank in so many minutes;" and sawing accordingly, fiercely impetuous, — with success! But from the maddest thing, as we said, there usually may come some particle of good withal (if any poor particle of *good* did lie in it, waiting to be disengaged !) — and this is a signal instance of that kind. Our Aristocracy are not hated or disliked by any Class of the People, but on the contrary are looked up to, — with a certain vulgarly human admiration, and spontaneous recognition of their good qualities and good fortune, which is by no means wholly envious or wholly servile, — by all classes, lower and lowest class included. And indeed, in spite of lamentable exceptions too visible all round, my vote would still be, That from Plebs to Princeps, there was still no Class among us intrinsically so valuable and recommendable.

What the possibilities of our Aristocracy might still be? this is a question I have often asked myself. Surely their possibilities might still be considerable; though I confess they lie in a most abstruse, and as yet quite uninvestigated condition. But a body of brave men, and of beautiful polite women, furnished *gratis* as they are, — some of them (as my Lord Derby, I am told, in a few years will be) with not far from two-thirds of a million sterling annually, — ought to be good for something, in a society mostly fallen vulgar and chaotic like ours. [p.680] More than once, I have been affected with a deep sorrow and respect for noble souls among them, and their high stoicism, and silent resignation to a kind of life which they individually could not alter, and saw to be so empty and paltry: life of Giving and receiving Hospitalities in a gracefully splendid manner. "This, then" (such mute soliloquy I have read on some noble brow), "this, and something of Village-schools, of Consulting with the Parson, care of Peasant Cottages and Economies, is to be all our task in the world? Well, well let us at least *do* this, in our most perfect way!"

In past years I have sometimes thought what a thing it would be, could the Queen "in Council" (in Parliament or wherever it were) pick out some gallant-minded, stout, well gifted Cadet, younger son of a Duke, of an Earl, of a Queen herself; younger Son doomed now to go mainly to the Devil, for absolute want; of a career; — and say to him, "Young fellow, if there do lie in you potentialities of governing, of gradually guiding, leading and coercing to a noble goal, how sad is it they should be all lost! They are the grandest gifts a mortal can have; and they are of all, the most necessary to other mortals in this world. See, I have scores on scores of 'Colonies,' all ungoverned, and nine-tenths of them full of

jungles, boa constrictors, rattlesnakes, Parliamentary Eloquences, and Emancipated Niggers, ripening towards nothing but destruction: one of these *you* shall have, you as Vice-King; on rational conditions, and *ad vitam aut culpam* it shall be yours (and your posterity's if worthy): go you and buckle with it, in the name of Heaven and let us see what you will build it to!" To something how much better than the Parliamentary Eloquences are doing, — thinks the reader? Good Heavens, these West-India Islands, some of them, appear to be the richest and most favoured spots on the Planet Earth. Jamaica is an angry subject, and I am shy to speak of it. Poor Dominica itself is described to me in a way to kindle a heroic young heart; look at Dominica for an instant:

Hemispherical, they say, or in the shape of an Inverted Washbowl; rim of it, first twenty miles of it all round, starting from the sea, is flat alluvium, the fruitfulest in Nature, fit for any noblest spice or product, but unwholesome except for Niggers held steadily to their work: ground then gradually rises, umbrageously rich throughout, becomes fit for coffee; still rises, now bears oak woods, cereals, Indian corn, English wheat, and in this upper portion is salubrious and delightful for the European, — who might there spread and grow, according to the wisdom given him; say only to a population of 100,000 adult men; well fit to defend their Island against all comers, and beneficently keep steady to their work, a million of Niggers on the lower ranges. What a kingdom my poor Frederick William, followed by his Frederic, would have made of this Inverted Washbowl; clasped round, and lovingly kissed and laved, by the beautifullest seas in the world, and beshone by the grandest sun and sky! "For ever impossible," say you; "contrary to all our notions, regulations, and ways of proceeding or of thinking?" Well, I dare say. And the state your regulations have it in, at present, is: Population of 100 white men (by no means of select type); unknown cipher of rattlesnakes, profligate Niggers, and Mulattoes; governed by a Piebald Parliament of Eleven (head Demosthenes there a Nigger Tinman), — and so exquisite a care of Being and of Well-being that the old Fortifications have become jungle quarries (Tinman "at liberty to tax himself"), vigorous roots penetrating the old ashlar, dislocating it everywhere, with tropical effect; old cannon going quietly to honeycomb and oxid of iron in the vigorous embrace of jungle: military force nil, police force next to nil: an Island capable of being taken by the crew of a man-of-war's boat. And indeed it was nearly lost, the other year, by an accidental collision of two Niggers on the street, and a concourse of other idle Niggers to see, who would not go away again, but idly re-assembled with increased numbers on the morrow, and with ditto the next day; assemblage pointing *ad infinitum* seemingly, — had not some charitable small French Governor, from his bit of Island within reach, sent over a Lieutenant and twenty soldiers, to extinguish the devouring absurdity, and order it home straightway to its bed; which instantly saved this valuable Possession of ours, and left our Demosthenic Tinman and his Ten, with their liberty to tax themselves as heretofore. Is not "Self-government" a sublime thing, in Colonial Islands and others? But to leave all this.

V.

I almost think, when once we have made the Niagara leap, the better kind of our Nobility, perhaps after experimenting, will more and more withdraw themselves from the Parliamentary, Oratorical or Political element; leaving that to such Cleon the [p.681] Tanner and Company as it rightfully belongs to; and be far more chary of their speech than now. Speech, issuing in no deed, is hateful and contemptible: — how can a man have any nobleness who knows not that? In God's name let us find out what of noble and profitable we can do; if it be nothing, let us at least keep silence, and bear gracefully our strange lot!

The English Nobleman has still left in him, after such sorrowful erosions, something considerable of chivalry and magnanimity; polite he is, in the finest form; politeness, modest, simple, veritable, ineradicable, dwells in him to the bone; I incline to call him the politest kind of nobleman or man (especially his wife the politest and gracefulest kind of woman) you will find in any country. An immense endowment this if you consider it well! A very great and indispensable help to whatever other faculties of *kingship* a man may have. Indeed it springs from them all (its sources, every kingly faculty lying in you); and is as the beautiful natural skin, and visible sanction, index, and outcome of them all. No king can rule without it; none but potential kings can really have it. In the crude, what we call unbred or *Orson* form, all "men of genius" have it; but see what it avails some of them, — your Samuel Johnson, for instance, — in that crude form, who was so rich in it, too, in the crude way!

It is perhaps a fortunate circumstance, that the population has no wild notions, no political enthusiasms of a "New Era" or the like. This, though in itself a dreary and ignoble item, in respect of the revolutionary change, may nevertheless be for good, if the Few *shall* be really high and brave, as things roll on.

Certain it is, there is nothing but vulgarity in our People's expectations, resolutions or desires, in this Epoch. It is all a peaceable mouldering or tumbling down from mere rottenness and decay; whether slowly mouldering or rapidly tumbling, there will be nothing found of real or true in the rubbish-heap, but a most true desire of making money easily, and of eating it pleasantly. A poor ideal for "reformers," sure enough. But it is the fruit of long antecedents, too; and from of old our habits in regard to "re-formation," or repairing what went wrong (as something is always doing), have been strangely didactic.

And to such length have we at last brought it, by our wilful, conscious and now long-continued method of using *varnish*, instead of actual repair by honest *carpentry*, of what we all knew and saw to have gone undeniably wrong in our procedures and affairs! Method deliberately, steadily, and even solemnly continued, with much admiration of it from ourselves and others, as the best and only good one, for above two hundred years. Ever since that *annus mirabilis* of 1660, when Oliver Cromwell's dead clay was hung on the gibbet, and a much easier "reign of Christ" under the divine gentleman called Charles II. was thought the fit thing, this has been our steady method: varnish, varnish; if a thing have grown so rotten that it yawns palpable, and is so inexpressibly ugly that the eyes of the very populace discern it and detest it, — bring out a new pot of varnish, with the requisite supply of putty; and lay it on handsomely. Don't spare varnish; how well it will all look in a few days, if laid on well! Varnish alone is cheap and is safe; avoid carpentering, chiselling, sawing and hammering on the old quiet House; — dry-rot is in it, who knows how deep; don't disturb the old beams and junctures: varnish, varnish, if you will be blessed by gods and men! This is called the constitutional System, Conservative System, and other fine names; and this at last has its fruits, such as we see. Mendacity hanging in the very air we breathe; all men become, unconsciously or half or wholly consciously, — *liars* to their own souls and to other men's; grimacing, finessing, periphrasing, in continual hypocrisy of *word*, by way of varnish to continual past, present, future, misperformance of *thing*: — clearly sincere about nothing whatever, except in silence, about the appetites of their own huge belly, and the readiest method of assuaging these. From a Population of that sunk kind, ardent only in pursuits that are low and industries that are sensuous and *beaverish*, there is little peril of *human* enthusiasms, or revolutionary transports, such as occurred in 1789, for instance. A low-minden *pecus* all that; essentially torpid and *ignavum*, on all that is high or nobly human in revolutions.

It is true there is in such a population, of itself, no *help* at all towards reconstruction of the wreck of your Niagara plunge; of themselves they, with whatever cry of "liberty" in their mouths, are inexorably marked by Destiny as *slaves*; and not even the immortal gods could make them free, — except by making them anew and on a different pattern. No help in them at all, to your model Aristocrat, or to any noble man or thing. But then likewise there is no hindrance, or a minimum of it! Nothing there in *bar* of the noble Few, who we al-[p.682]ways trust will be born to us, generation after generation; and on whom and whose living of a noble and valiantly cosmic life amid the worst impediments and hugest anarchies, the whole of our hope depends. Yes, on them only! If amid the thickest welter of surrounding gluttony and baseness, and what must be reckoned bottomless anarchy from shore to shore, there be found no man, no small but invincible minority of men, capable of keeping themselves free from all that, and of living a heroically human life, while the millions round them are noisily living a mere beaverish or dog-like one, then truly all hope is gone. But we always struggle to believe Not. Aristocracy by title, by fortune, and position, who can doubt but there are still precious possibilities among the chosen of that class? And if that fail us, there is still, we hope, the unclassed Aristocracy by nature, not inconsiderable in numbers, and supreme in faculty, in wisdom, human talent, nobleness and courage "who derive their patent of nobility direct from Almighty God." If indeed these also fail us, and are trodden out under the unanimous torrent of brutish hoofs and hobnails, and cannot vindicate themselves into clearness here and there, but at length cease even to try it, — then indeed it is all ended: national death, scandalous "Copper-Captaincy" as of France, stern Russian Abolition and Erasure as of Poland; in one form or another, well deserved annihilation, and dismissal from God's universe, that and nothing else lies ahead for our once heroic England too.

How many of our Titular Aristocracy will prove real gold when thrown into the crucible? That is always a highly interesting question to me; and my answer or guess has still something considerable of hope lurking in it. But the question as to our Aristocracy by Patent from God the Maker, is infinitely interesting. How many of these, amid the ever-increasing bewilderments, and welter of impediments, will be able to develop themselves into something of Heroic Well-doing by act and by word? How many of them will be drawn, pushed and seduced, their very docility and lovingness assisting, into the universal vulgar whirlpool of Parliamentearing, Newspapering, Novel-writing, Comte-Philosophy-ing, immortal Verse-writing, &c. &c. (if of *vocal* turn, as they mostly will be, for some time yet?) How many, by their too desperate resistance to the unanimous vulgar of a Public round them, will become spasmodic instead

of strong; and will be overset, and trodden out, under the hoofs and hobnails above-said? Will there, in short, prove to be a recognisable small nucleus of Invincible "Aristoi" fighting for the Good Cause, in their various wisest ways, and never ceasing or slackening till they die? This is the question of questions, on which all turns; in the answer to this, could we give it clearly, as no man can, lies the oracle-response, "Life for you," or "Death for you!" Looking into this, there are doubtful dubitations, many. But considering what of Piety, the devoutest and the bravest yet known, there once was in England, and how extensively, in stupid, maundering and degraded forms, it still lingers, one is inclined timidly to hope the best!

The *best*: for if this small Aristocratic nucleus can hold out and work, it is in the sure case to increase and increase; to become (as Oliver once termed them) "a company of poor men, who will shed all their blood rather." An openly belligerent company, capable of taking the biggest slave Nation by the beard, and saying to it, "Enough, ye slaves, and servants of the mud-gods; all this must cease! Our heart abhors all this; our soul is sick under it; God's curse is on us while this lasts. Behold we will all die rather than that this last. Rather all die we say; — what is your view of the corresponding alternative on your own part?" I see well it must at length come to battle; actual fighting, bloody wrestling, and a great deal of it: but were it unit against thousand, or against thous- and-thousand, on the above terms, I know the issue, and have no fear about it. That also is an issue which has been often tried in Human History; and "while God lives" — (I hope the phrase is not yet obsolete, for the fact is eternal, tho' so many have forgotten it!) said issue can or will fall only one way.

VI.

What we can expect this Aristocracy of Nature to do for us? They are of two kinds: the Speculative, speaking or vocal; and the Practical or industrial, whose function is silent. These are of brother quality; but they go very different roads: "men of *genius*" they all emphatically are, the "inspired Gift of God" lodged in each of them. They do infinitely concern the world and us; especially that first or speaking class, — provided God *have* "touched their lips with his hallowed fire!" Supreme is the importance [p.683] of these. They are our inspired speakers and seers, the light of the world; who are to deliver the world from its swarmeries, its superstitions (political or other); — priceless and indispensable to us that first Class!

Nevertheless I will omit these at present, and touch only of the second, or Industrial Hero, as more within my limits and the reader's.

This Industrial hero, here and there recognisable, and known to me, as developing himself, and as an opulent and dignified kind of man, is already almost an Aristocrat by class. And if his chivalry is still somewhat in the *Orson* form, he is already by intermarriage and otherwise coming into 'contact with the Aristocracy by title; and by degrees, will acquire the fit *Valentinism*, and other more important advantages there. He cannot do better than unite with this naturally noble kind of Aristocrat by title; the Industrial noble and this one are brothers- born; called and impelled to co-operate and go together. Their united result is what we want from both. And the Noble of the Future, — if there be any such, as I believe there must; — will have grown out of both. A new "Valentine;" and perhaps a considerably improved, — by such recontact with his wild Orson kinsman, and with the earnest veracities this latter has learned in the Woods and the Dens of Bears.

The Practical "man of genius" will probably *not* be altogether absent from the Reformed Parliament : — his *Make-believe*, the vulgar millionaire, (truly a "bloated" specimen, this!) is sure to be frequent there! and along with the multitude of *brass* guineas, it will be very salutary to have a *gold* one or two ! — In or out of Parliament, our Practical hero will find no end of work ready for him. It is he that has to recivilize, out of its now utter savagery, the world of industry; — think what a set of items: to change *nomadic* contract into *permanent*; annihilation of the soot and dirt and squalid horror now defacing this England, once so clean and comely while it was poor; matters sanitary (and that not to the body only) for his people; matters governmental for them; matters, &c. &c. ; — no want of work for this Hero, through a great many generation yet!

And indeed reformed Parliament itself, with or without his presence, will you would suppose have to start at once upon the industrial question and go quite deep into it. That of Trades Union, in quest of its "4 eights,"* with assassin pistol in its hand will at once urge itself on reformed Parliament: and. reformed Parliament will give us Blue Books upon it if

nothing further. Nay, almost still more urgent, and what I could reckon, — as touching on our Ark of our Covenant, on sacred free trade itself, — to be the preliminary of all, there is the immense and universal question of *Cheap and Nasty*, let me explain it a little.

"Cheap and Nasty;" there is a pregnancy in that poor vulgar proverb, which I wish we better saw and valued! It is the rude indignant protest of human nature against a mischief which in all times and places taints it or lies near it, and which never in any time or place was so like utterly overwhelming it as here and now. Understand, if you will consider it, that no good man did, or ever should, encourage "cheapness" at the ruinous expense of *unfitness*, which is always infidelity, and is dishonourable to a man. If I want an article, let it be genuine, at whatever price; if the price is too high for me, I will go without it, unequipped with it for the present, — I shall not have equipped myself with a hypocrisy, at any rate! This, if you will reflect, is primarily the rule of all purchasing or employing men. They are not permitted to encourage, patronize, or in any form countenance the working, wearing, or acting of Hypocrisies in this world. On the contrary, they are to hate all such with a perfect hatred; to do their best in extinguishing them as the poison of mankind. This is the temper for purchasers of work; how much more that for doers and producers of it! Work, every one of you, like the Demiurgus or Eternal World-builder; work, none of you like the Diabolus or Denier and Destroyer, — under penalties!

And now, if this is the fact, that you are not to purchase, to make or to vend any ware or product of the "cheap and nasty" genus, and cannot in any case do it without sin, and even treason against the Maker of you, — consider what a *quantity* of sin, of treason petty and high, must be accumulating in poor England every day! It is certain as the National Debt; and what are all National money Debts in comparison? Do you know the shop, saleshop, workshop, industrial establishment temporal or spiritual, in broad England, where genuine work is to be had? I confess I hardly do; the more [p.684] is my sorrow! For a whole Pandora's Box of evils lies in that one fact, my friend; that one is enough for us, and may be taken as the sad summary of all. Universal *shoddy* and Devil's dust cunningly varnished over; that is what you will find presented you in all places, as ware invitingly cheap, if your experience is like mine. Yes; if Free Trade is the new religion, and if Free Trade do mean, Free racing with unlimited velocity in the career of *Cheap and Nasty*, — our practical hero will be infinitely anxious to deal with that question, and see how Free Trade with such a devil in the belly of it, is to be tied again a little.

One small example only! London bricks are reduced to dry clay again in the course of sixty years or sooner. *Bricks*, burn them rightly, build them faithfully, with mortar faithfully tempered, they will stand, I believe, barring earthquakes and cannons, for 6,000 years if you like! Etruscan Pottery (*baked clay*, but rightly baked) is some 3,000 years of age, and still fresh as an infant. Nothing I know is more lasting than a well-made brick, — we have them here, at the head of this Garden (wall once of a Manor Park,) which are in their third or fourth century (Henry Eighth's time, I was told,) and still perfect in every particular.

Truly the state of London houses and London house-building, at this time, who shall express how detestable it is, how frightful! For there lies in it not the Physical mischief only, but the Moral too, which is far more. I have often sadly thought of this. That a fresh human soul should be born in such a place; born in the midst of a concrete mendacity; taught at every moment not to abhor a lie but to think a lie all proper, the fixed custom and general law of man, and to twine its young affections round that sort of thing! England needs to be *rebuilt* once every seventy years. Built it once *rightly*, the expense will be say fifty per cent. more; but it will stand till the day of judgment.

Every seventy years we shall save the expense of building all England over again! Say nine-tenths of the expense, say three-fourths of it allowing for the changes necessary or permissible in the change of things;) and in rigorous arithmetic, such is the saving possible to you; laying under your nose there; soliciting you to pick it up, — by the mere act of behaving like sons of Adam, not like scandalous esurient Phantasms and sons of Bel and the Dragon.

Here is a thrift of money, if you want money! The money-saving would (you can compute in what short length of time) pay your National Debt for you, bridge the ocean for you; wipe away your smoky nuisances, your muddy ditto, your miscellaneous ditto, and make the face of England clean again; — and all this I reckon as mere zero in comparison with the accompanying improvement to your poor souls, — now dead in trespasses and sins, drowned in beer-butts, wine-butts, in gluttonies, slaveries, quackeries, but recalled *then* to blessed life again, and the sight of Heaven and Earth instead of Payday, and Meux and Co.'s Entire. Oh, my bewildered brothers, what foul infernal Circe has come over

you, and changed you from men once really rather noble of their kind, into beavers, into hogs and asses, and beasts of the field or the slum! I declare I had rather die....

One hears sometimes of religious controversies running very high, about faith, works, grace, prevenient grace, the Arches Court and *Essays and Reviews*; — into none of which do I enter, or concern myself with your entering. One thing I will remind you of, that the essence and outcome of all religions, creeds, and liturgies whatsoever is, to do one's work in a faithful manner. Unhappy caitiff, what to you is the use of orthodoxy, if with every stroke of your hammer you are breaking all the Ten Commandments, — operating upon Devil's dust, and endeavouring to reap where you have not sown? — But to return to our Aristocracy by title.

VII.

Orsonism is not what will hinder our Aristocracy from still reigning, still, or much farther than now, — to the very utmost limit of their capabilities and opportunities, in the new times that come. What are these *opportunities*, — granting the capability to be (as I believe) very considerable if seriously exerted? — This is a question of the highest interest just now.

In their own Domains and land territories, it is evident each of them can still, for certain years and decades, be a complete king; and may, if he strenuously try, mould and manage everything, till both his people and his dominion correspond gradually to the ideal he has formed. Refractory subjects he has the means of *banishing*; the relations between all classes, from the biggest farmer to the poorest orphan ploughboy, are under his control; nothing ugly or unjust or improper, but he could by degrees undertake steady war against, and manfully subdue or extirpate. Till all his Domain were, [p.685] through every field and homestead of it, and were maintained in continuing and being, manlike, decorous, fit; comely to the eye and to the soul of whoever wisely looked on it; or honestly lived in it. This is a beautiful ideal; which might he carried out on all sides to indefinite lengths, — not in management of land only, but in thousand-fold countenancing, protecting and encouraging of human worth, and *dis*-countenancing and sternly repressing the want of ditto, wherever met with among surrounding mankind. Till the whole surroundings of a nobleman were made noble like himself; and all men should recognise that here verily was a bit of kingdom ruling "by the Grace of God," in difficult circumstances, but *not* in vain.

This were a way, if this were commonly adopted, of by degrees reinstating Aristocracy in all the privileges, authorities, reverences and honours it ever had, in its palmiest times, under any Kaiser Barbarossa, Henry Fowler (*Heinrich der Vogeler*), Henry Fine-Scholar (*Beau-clerc*), or Wilhelmus Bastardus the Acquirer; this would be divine; blessed is every individual that shall manfully, all his life, solitary or in fellowship, address himself to this! But, alas, this is an ideal, and I've practically little faith in it. Discerning well how *few* would seriously adopt this as a trade in life, I can only say, "Blessed is every one that does!" — Readers can observe that only zealous aspirants to *be* "noble" and worthy of their title (who are not a numerous class) could adopt this trade; and that of these few, only the fewest, or the actually *noble*, could to much effect do it when adopted. "Management of one's land on this principle," yes, in some degree this might be possible: but as to "fostering merit" or human worth, the question would arise (as it did with a late Noble Lord still in wide enough esteem),* "What is merit? The opinion one man entertains of another! (*Hear hear!*) By *this* plan of diligence in promoting human worth, you would do little to redress our griefs; this plan would be a quenching of the fire by oil: a dreadful plan! (In fact, this is what you may see everywhere going on just now; this is what has reduced us to the pass we are at!) — To recognise merit you must first yourself have it; to recognise false merit, and crown it as true, because a long tail runs after it, is the saddest operation under the sun; and it is one you have only to open your eyes and see every day. Alas! no? Ideals won't carry many people far. To have an Ideal generally done, it must be compelled by the vulgar appetite there is to do it, by indisputable advantage seen in doing it.

In such an independent position; acknowledged king of one's own territories, well withdrawn from the raging inanities of "politics," leaving the loud rabble and their spokesmen to consummate all that in their own sweet way, and make Anarchy again horrible, and Government or real Kingship the thing desirable, — one fancies there might be actual scope for a kingly soul to aim at unfolding itself at imprinting itself in all manner of beneficent arrangements and improvements of things around it. Schools, for example, schooling and training of *its* young subjects in the way that

they should go, and in the things that they should do: what a boundless outlook that of schools, and of improvement in school methods, and school purposes, which in these ages lie hitherto all superannuated and to a frightful degree inapplicable! Our schools go all upon the *vocal* hitherto; no clear aim in them but to teach the young creature how he is to speak, to utter himself by tongue and pen; — which supposing him even to *have something to utter*, as he so very rarely has, is by no means the thing he specially wants in our times. How he is to work, to behave and do; that is the question for him which he seeks the answer of in schools; — in schools, having now so little chance of it elsewhere. In other times, many or most of his neighbors round him, his superiors over him, if he looked well and could take example, and learn by what he saw, were in use to yield him very much of answer to this vitallest of questions: but now they do not, or do it fatally the reverse way! Talent of speaking grows daily commoner among one's neighbors; amounts already to a weariness and a nuisance, so barren is it of great benefit, and liable to be of great hurt; but the talent of right conduct, of wise and useful behaviour seems to grow rarer every day, and is nowhere taught in the streets and thoroughfares any more. Right schools were never more desirable than now. Nor ever more unattainable, by public clamouring and jargoning than now. Only the wise Ruler (acknowledged king in his own territories), taking counsel with the wise, and earnestly pushing and endeavouring all his days, might do something in it. It is true, I suppose him to be capable of recognising and searching out "the *wise*," who are apt *not* to be found on the high roads at present, or only to be [p.686] transiently passing there, with closed lips, swift step, and possibly a grimmish aspect of countenance, among the crowd of loquacious *sham-wise*. To be capable of actually recognising and discerning these; and that is no small postulate (how great a one I know well): — in fact, unless our Noble by rank be a Noble by nature, little or no success is possible to us by him.

But granting this great postulate, what a field in the *Non-vocal* School department such as was not dreamt of before! *Non-vocal*; presided over by whatever of Pious Wisdom this king could eliminate from all corners of the impious world; and could consecrate with means and appliances for making the new generation by degrees, less impious. Tragical to think of: Every new generation is born to us direct out of Heaven; white as purest writing paper, white as snow; — everything we please can be written on it; — and our pleasure and our negligence is, To begin blotching it, scrawling, smutching and smearing it, from the first day it sees the sun: towards such a con- summation of ugliness, dirt, and blackness of darkness, as is too often visible. Woe on us; there is no woe like this, — if we were not sunk in stupefaction, and had still eyes to discern or souls to feel it! — Goethe has shadowed out a glorious far-glancing specimen of that *Non-vocal*, or very partially-*vocal* kind of School. I myself remember to have seen an extremely small, but highly useful and practicable little corner of one, actually on work at Glasnevin in Ireland about fifteen years ago; and *have* often thought of it since.

VII.

I always fancy there might much be done in the way of military drill withal. Beyond all other schooling, and as supplement or even as succedaneum for all other, one often wishes the entire Population could be thoroughly drilled; into co-operative movement, into individual behaviour, correct, precise, and at once habitual and orderly as mathematics, in all or in very many points, — and ultimately in the point of actual *Military Service*, should such be required of it!

That of commanding and obeying, were there nothing more, is it not the basis of all human culture; ought not all to have it; and how many ever do? I often say, The one Official Person, royal, sacerdotal, scholastic, governmental, of our times, who is still thoroughly a truth and a reality, and *not* in great part a hypothesis, and worn-out humbug, proposing and attempting a duty which he fails to do, — is the Drill-Sergeant who is master of his work, and who will perform it. By Drill-Sergeant understand not the man in three stripes alone; understand him as meaning all such men, up to the Turenne, to the Friedrich of Prussia; *he* does his function, he is genuine; and from the highest to the lowest no one else does. Ask your poor King's Majesty, Captain-General of England, Defender of the Faith, and so much else; ask your poor Bishop, sacred Overseer of souls; your poor Lawyer, sacred Dispenser of justice; your poor Doctor, ditto of health: they will all answer, "Alas, no, worthy sir, we are all of us unfortunately fallen not a little, some of us altogether, into the imaginary or quasi- humbug condition, and cannot help ourselves; he alone of the three stripes, or of the gorget and baton, *does* what he pretends to!" That is the melancholy fact; well worth considering at present. — Nay I often consider farther, If, in any Country, the Drill-Sergeant himself fall into the partly imaginary or humbug condition (as is my frightful apprehension of him here in England, on survey of him in his marvellous Crimean expeditions, marvellous Courts martial revelations, Newspaper controversies, and the like), what is to become of that Country and its thrice

miserable Drill-Sergeant?

But now, what is to hinder the acknowledged king in all corners of his territory, to introduce wisely a universal system of Drill, not military only but human in all kinds; so that no child or man born in *his* territory might miss the benefit of it, — which would be immense to man, woman and child? I would begin with it, in mild, soft forms, so soon almost as my children were able to stand on their legs; and. I would never wholly remit it till they had done with the world and me. Poor Wilderspin knew something of this; the great Goethe evidently knew a great deal! This of outwardly combined and plainly consociated Discipline, in simultaneous movement and action, which may be practical, symbolical, artistic, mechanical in all degrees and modes, — is one of the noblest capabilities of man (most sadly undervalued hitherto); and one he takes the greatest pleasure in exercising and unfolding, not to mention at all the invaluable benefit it would afford him if unfolded. From correct marching in line, to rhythmic dancing in cotillon or minuet, — and to infinitely higher degrees [p.687] (that of symboling in concert your "first reverence," for instance supposing reverence and symbol of it to be both sincere!) there is a natural charm in it; the fulfilment of a deep-seated, universal desire, to all rhythmic social creatures ! In man's heaven-born Docility, or power of being Educated, it is estimable as perhaps the deepest and richest element; or the next to that of music, of Sensibility to Song, to Harmony and Number, which some have reckoned the deepest of all. A richer mine than any in California for poor human creatures; richer by what a multiple; and hitherto as good as never opened, — worked only for the fighting purpose. Assuredly I would not neglect the Fighting purpose: no, from sixteen to sixty, not a son of mine but should know the Soldier's function too, and be able to defend his native soil and self, in best perfection, when need came. But I should not begin with this; I should carefully end with this, after careful travel in innumerable fruitful fields by the way leading to this.

It is strange to me, stupid creatures of routine as we mostly are, how in all education of mankind, this of simultaneous Drilling into combined rhythmic action, for almost all good purposes, has been overlooked and left neglected by the elaborate and many-sounding Pedagogues and Professorial persons we have had for the long centuries past! It really should be set on foot a little; and developed gradually into the multiform opulent results it holds for us. As might well be done, by an acknowledged king in his own territory, if he were wise. To all children of men it is such an entertainment, when you set them to it. I believe the vulgarest Cockney crowd, flung out million-fold on a Whit Sunday, with nothing but beer and dull folly to depend on for amusement, would at once kindle into something human, if you set them to do almost any regulated act in common. And would dismiss their beer and dull foolery, in the silent charm of rhythmic human companionship, in the practical feeling, probably new, that all of us are made on one pattern, and are, in an unfathomable way, brothers to one another.

Soldier-Drill, for fighting purposes, as I have said, would be the last or finishing touch of all these sorts of Drilling processes; and certainly the acknowledged king would reckon it not the least important to him, but even perhaps the most so, in these peculiar times. Anarchic Parliaments and Penny Newspapers might perhaps grow jealous of him; in any case, would he have to be cautious, punctilious, severely correct, and obey to the letter whatever laws and regulations they emitted on the subject. But that done, how could the most anarchic Parliament, or Penny Editor, think of forbidding any fellow-citizen such a manifest improvement on all the human creatures round him? Our wise Hero Aristocrat, or acknowledged king in his own territory, would by no means think of employing his superlative private Field-regiment in levy of war against the most anarchic Parliament: on the contrary, might and would loyally but help said Parliament in warring down much anarchy worse than its own, and so gain steadily new favour from it. From it, and from all men and gods! And would have silently the consciousness, too, that with every new Disciplined Man, he was widening the arena of *Anti-Anarchy*, of God-appointed Order in this world and Nation, — and was looking forward to a day, very distant probably, but certain as Fate.

For I suppose it would in no moment be doubtful to him That, between Anarchy and Anti-ditto, it would have to come to sheer fight at last; and that nothing short of duel to the death could ever void that great quarrel. And he would have his hopes, his assurances, as to how the victory would lie. For everywhere in this universe, and in every nation that is not *divorced* from it and in the act of perishing forever, Anti-Anarchy is silently on the increase, at all moments: Anarchy, not, but contrariwise; having the whole universe for ever set against it; pushing it slowly at all moments towards suicide and annihilation. To Anarchy, however million-headed, there is no victory possible. Patience, silence, diligence, ye chosen of the world! Slowly or fast in the course of time you will grow to a minority that can actually step forth (sword not yet drawn, but sword ready to be drawn), and say "here are we, Sirs; we also are minded to *vote*, — to

all lengths, as you may perceive. A company of poor men (as friend Oliver termed us) who will spend all our blood, if needful!" What are Beales and his 50,000 roughs against such; what are the noisiest anarchic Parliaments, in majority of a million to one, against such? Stubble against fire. Fear not, my friend; the issue is very certain when it comes so far as this!

Footnotes

* - [p.676] "More than half a million" (Lunt, *Origin of the Late War*, New York, 1867) [[back](#)]

* - [p.683] "Eight hours to work, and eight hours to play;
Eight hours to sleep, and eight shillings a day."
— *Reformed Workman's Pisgah Song*. [[back](#)]

§ - [Note on electronic text: as reprinted in *Littell's Living Age* (ed. E. Littell, Boston), 1867, Vol. 94 p.674-87. Available in [GIF format online](#) from the Cornell University's "[Making of America](#)" Database.]



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