

man escape, but all are like to be brought low with it, and made 'poor' enough, in the money sense or a far fataler one.

Of these successful skilful workers some two millions, it is now counted, sit in Workhouses, Poor-law Prisons; or have 'out-door relief' flung over the wall to them,—the workhouse Bastille being filled to bursting, and the strong Poor-law broken asunder by a stronger.¹ They sit there, these many months now; their hope of deliverance as yet small. In workhouses, pleasantly so-named, because work cannot be done in them. Twelve-hundred-thousand workers in England alone; their cunning right-hand lamed, lying idle in their sorrowful bosom; their hopes, outlooks, share of this fair world, shut-in by narrow walls. They sit there, pent up, as in a kind of horrid enchantment; glad to be imprisoned and enchanted, that they may not perish starved. The picturesque Tourist, in a sunny autumn day, through this bounteous realm of England, descries the Union Workhouse on his path. 'Passing by the Workhouse of St. Ives in Huntingdonshire, on a bright day last autumn,' says the picturesque Tourist, 'I saw sitting on wooden benches, in front of their Bastille and within their ring-wall and its railings, some half-hundred or more of these men. Tall robust figures, young mostly or of middle age; of honest countenance, many of them thoughtful and even intelligent-looking men. They sat there, near by one another; but in a kind of torpor, especially in a silence, which was very striking. In silence: for, alas, what word was to be said? An Earth all lying round, crying, Come and till me, come and reap me;—yet we here sit enchanted! In the eyes and brows of these men hung the gloomiest expression, not of anger, but of grief and shame and manifold inarticulate distress and weariness; they returned my glance with a glance that seemed to say, "Do not look at us. We sit enchanted here, we know not why. The Sun shines and the Earth calls; and, by the governing Powers and Impotences of this England, we are forbidden to obey. It is impossible, they tell us!" There was something that reminded me of Dante's Hell in the look of all this; and I rode swiftly away.'

So many hundred thousands sit in workhouses: and other hundred thousands have not yet got even workhouses; and in

¹ The Return of Paupers for England and Wales, at Ladyday 1842, is, 'In-door 221,687, Out-door 1,207,402, Total 1,429,089.' *Official Report*.

thrifty Scotland itself, in Glasgow or Edinburgh City, in their dark lanes, hidden from all but the eye of God, and of rare Benevolence the minister of God, there are scenes of woe and destitution and desolation, such as, one may hope, the Sun never saw before in the most barbarous regions where men dwelt. Competent witnesses, the brave and humane Dr. Alison, who speaks what he knows, whose noble Healing Art in his charitable hands becomes once more a truly sacred one, report these things for us : these things are not of this year, or of last year, have no reference to our present state of commercial stagnation, but only to the common state. Not in sharp fever-fits, but in chronic gangrene of this kind is Scotland suffering. A Poor-law, any and every Poor-law, it may be observed, is but a temporary measure ; an anodyne, not a remedy : Rich and Poor, when once the naked facts of their condition have come into collision, cannot long subsist together on a mere Poor-law. True enough :—and yet, human beings cannot be left to die ! Scotland too, till something better come, must have a Poor-law, if Scotland is not to be a byword among the nations. O, what a waste is there ; of noble and thrice-noble national virtues ; peasant Stoicisms, Heroisms ; valiant manful habits, soul of a Nation's worth,—which all the metal of Potosi cannot purchase back ; to which the metal of Potosi, and all you can buy with it, is dross and dust !

Why dwell on this aspect of the matter ? It is too indisputable, not doubtful now to any one. Descend where you will into the lower class, in Town or Country, by what avenue you will, by Factory Inquiries, Agricultural Inquiries, by Revenue Returns, by Mining-Labourer Committees, by opening your own eyes and looking, the same sorrowful result discloses itself : you have to admit that the working body of this rich English Nation has sunk or is fast sinking into a state, to which, all sides of it considered, there was literally never any parallel. At Stockport Assizes, —and this too has no reference to the present state of trade, being of date prior to that, —a Mother and a Father are arraigned and found guilty of poisoning three of their children, to defraud a ' burial-society ' of some 3*l.* 8*s.* due on the death of each child : they are arraigned, found guilty ; and the official authorities, it is whispered, hint that perhaps the case is not solitary, that perhaps you had better not probe farther into that department of things. This is in

the autumn of 1841; the crime itself is of the previous year or season. "Brutal savages, degraded Irish," mutters the idle reader of Newspapers; hardly lingering on this incident. Yet it is an incident worth lingering on; the depravity, savagery and degraded Irishism being never so well admitted. In the British land, a human Mother and Father, of white skin and professing the Christian religion, had done this thing; they, with their Irishism and necessity and savagery, had been driven to do it. Such instances are like the highest mountain apex emerged into view; under which lies a whole mountain region and land, not yet emerged. A human Mother and Father had said to themselves, What shall we do to escape starvation? We are deep sunk here, in our dark cellar; and help is far.—Yes, in the Ugolino Hunger-tower stern things happen; best-loved little Gaddo fallen dead on his Father's knees!—The Stockport Mother and Father think and hint: Our poor little starveling Tom, who cries all day for victuals, who will see only evil and not good in this world: if he were out of misery at once; he well dead, and the rest of us perhaps kept alive? It is thought, and hinted; at last it is done. And now Tom being killed, and all spent and eaten, Is it poor little starveling Jack that must go, or poor little starveling Will?—What a committee of ways and means!

In starved sieged cities, in the uttermost doomed ruin of old Jerusalem fallen under the wrath of God, it was prophesied and said, 'The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children.' The stern Hebrew imagination could conceive no blacker gulf of wretchedness; that was the ultimatum of degraded god-punished man. And we here, in modern England, exuberant with supply of all kinds, besieged by nothing if it be not by invisible Enchantments, are we reaching that?—How come these things? Wherefore are they, wherefore should they be?

Nor are they of the St. Ives workhouses, of the Glasgow lanes, and Stockport cellars, the only unblessed among us. This successful industry of England, with its plethoric wealth, has as yet made nobody rich; it is an enchanted wealth, and belongs yet to nobody. We might ask, Which of us has it enriched? We can spend thousands where we once spent hundreds; but can purchase nothing good with them. In Poor and Rich, in-

stead of noble thrift and plenty, there is idle luxury alternating with mean scarcity and inability. We have sumptuous garnitures for our Life, but have forgotten to *live* in the middle of them. It is an enchanted wealth ; no man of us can yet touch it. The class of men who feel that they are truly better off by means of it, let them give us their name !

Many men eat finer cookery, drink dearer liquors,—with what advantage they can report, and their Doctors can : but in the heart of them, if we go out of the dyspeptic stomach, what increase of blessedness is there ? Are they better, beautifuler, stronger, braver ? Are they even what they call ‘happier’ ? Do they look with satisfaction on more things and human faces in this God’s-Earth ; do more things and human faces look with satisfaction on them ? Not so. Human faces gloom discordantly, disloyally on one another. Things, if it be not mere cotton and iron things, are growing disobedient to man. The Master Worker is enchanted, for the present, like his Workhouse Workman ; clamours, in vain hitherto, for a very simple sort of ‘Liberty :’ the liberty ‘to buy where he finds it cheapest, to sell where he finds it dearest.’ With guineas jingling in every pocket, he was no whit richer ; but now, the very guineas threatening to vanish, he feels that he is poor indeed. Poor Master Worker ! And the Master Unworker, is not he in a still fataler situation ? Pausing amid his game-preserves, with awful eye,—as he well may ! Coercing fifty-pound tenants ; coercing, bribing, cajoling ; ‘doing what he likes with his own.’ His mouth full of loud futilities, and arguments to prove the excellence of his Corn-law ; and in his heart the blackest misgiving, a desperate half-consciousness that his excellent Corn-law is *indefensible*, that his loud arguments for it are of a kind to strike men too literally *dumb*.

To whom, then, is this wealth of England wealth ? Who is it that it blesses ; makes happier, wiser, beautifuler, in any way better ? Who has got hold of it, to make it fetch and carry for him, like a true servant, not like a false mock-servant ; to do him any real service whatsoever ? As yet no one. We have more riches than any Nation ever had before ; we have less good of them than any Nation ever had before. Our successful industry is hitherto unsuccessful ; a strange success, if we stop here ! In the midst of plethoric plenty, the people perish ; with gold walls, and full barns, no man feels himself safe or

satisfied. Workers, Master Workers, Unworkers, all men, come to a pause ; stand fixed, and cannot farther. Fatal paralysis spreading inwards, from the extremities, in St. Ives workhouses, in Stockport cellars, through all limbs, as if towards the heart itself. Have we actually got enchanted, then ; accursed by some god ?—

Midas longed for gold, and insulted the Olympians. He got gold, so that whatsoever he touched became gold,—and he, with his long ears, was little the better for it. Midas had misjudged the celestial music-tones ; Midas had insulted Apollo and the gods : the gods gave him his wish, and a pair of long ears, which also were a good appendage to it. What a truth in these old Fables !

CHAPTER II.

THE SPHINX.

How true, for example, is that other old Fable of the Sphinx, who sat by the wayside, propounding her riddle to the passengers, which if they could not answer she destroyed them ! Such a Sphinx is this Life of ours, to all men and societies of men. Nature, like the Sphinx, is of womanly celestial loveliness and tenderness ; the face and bosom of a goddess, but ending in claws and the body of a lioness. There is in her a celestial beauty,—which means celestial order, pliancy to wisdom ; but there is also a darkness, a ferocity, fatality, which are infernal. She is a goddess, but one not yet disimprisoned ; one still half imprisoned,—the articulate, lovely still encased in the inarticulate, chaotic. How true ! And does she not propound her riddles to us ? Of each man she asks daily, in mild voice, yet with a terrible significance, “ Knowest thou the meaning of this Day ? What thou canst do Today ; wisely attempt to do ? ” Nature, Universe, Destiny, Existence, howsoever we name this grand unnamable Fact in the midst of which we live and struggle, is as a heavenly bride and conquest to the wise and brave, to them who can discern her behests and do them ; a destroying fiend to them who cannot. Answer her riddle, it is well with thee. Answer it not, pass on regarding it not, it will answer itself ; the solution for thee is a thing of teeth and claws ;

Nature is a dumb lioness, deaf to thy pleadings, fiercely devouring. Thou art not now her victorious bridegroom ; thou art her mangled victim, scattered on the precipices, as a slave found treacherous, recreant, ought to be and must.

With Nations it is as with individuals : Can they rede the riddle of Destiny ? This English Nation, will it get to know the meaning of *its* strange new Today ? Is there sense enough extant, discoverable anywhere or anyhow, in our united twenty-seven million heads to discern the same ; valour enough in our twenty-seven million hearts to dare and do the bidding thereof ? It will be seen !—

The secret of gold Midas, which he with his long ears never could discover, was, That he had offended the Supreme Powers ; —that he had parted company with the eternal inner Facts of this Universe, and followed the transient outer Appearances thereof ; and so was arrived *here*. Properly it is the secret of all unhappy men and unhappy nations. Had they known Nature's right truth, Nature's right truth would have made them free. They have become enchanted ; stagger spell-bound, reeling on the brink of huge peril, because they were not wise enough. They have forgotten the right Inner True, and taken up with the Outer Sham-true. They answer the Sphinx's question *wrong*. Foolish men cannot answer it aright ! Foolish men mistake transitory semblance for eternal fact, and go astray more and more.

Foolish men imagine that because judgment for an evil thing is delayed, there is no justice, but an accidental one, here below. Judgment for an evil thing is many times delayed some day or two, some century or two, but it is sure as life, it is sure as death ! In the centre of the world-whirlwind, verily now as in the oldest days, dwells and speaks a God. The great soul of the world is *just*. O brother, can it be needful now, at this late epoch of experience, after eighteen centuries of Christian preaching for one thing, to remind thee of such a fact ; which all manner of Mahometans, old Pagan Romans, Jews, Scythians and heathen Greeks, and indeed more or less all men that God made, have managed at one time to see into ; nay which thou thyself, till 'redtape' strangled the inner life of thee, hadst once some inkling of : That there *is* justice here below ; and even, at bottom, that there is nothing else but justice ! Forget that, thou hast forgotten all. Success will never more attend thee : how can

it now? Thou hast the whole Universe against thee. No more success : mere sham-success, for a day and days ; rising ever higher,—towards its Tarpeian Rock. Alas, how, in thy soft-hung Longacre vehicle, of polished leather to the bodily eye, of redtape philosophy, of expediencies, clubroom moralities, Parliamentary majorities to the mind's eye thou beautifully rollest : but knowest thou whitherward ? It is towards the *road's end*. Old use-and-wont ; established methods, habitudes, *once* true and wise ; man's noblest tendency, his perseverance, and man's ignoblest, his inertia ; whatsoever of noble and ignoble Conservatism there is in men and Nations, strongest always in the strongest men and Nations : all this is as a road to thee, paved smooth through the abyss,—till all this *end*. Till men's bitter necessities can endure thee no more. Till Nature's patience with thee is done ; and there is no road or footing any farther, and the abyss yawns sheer !—

Parliament and the Courts of Westminster are venerable to me ; how venerable ; gray with a thousand years of honourable age ! For a thousand years and more, Wisdom and faithful Valour, struggling amid much Folly and greedy Baseness, not without most sad distortions in the struggle, have built them up ; and they are as we see. For a thousand years, this English Nation has found them useful or supportable : they have served this English Nation's want ; *been* a road to it through the abyss of Time. They are venerable, they are great and strong. And yet it is good to remember always that they are not the venerablest, nor the greatest, nor the strongest ! Acts of Parliament are venerable ; but if they correspond not with the writing on the 'Adamant Tablet,' what are they ? Properly their one element of venerableness, of strength or greatness, is, that they at all times correspond therewith as near as by human possibility they can. They are cherishing destruction in their bosom every hour that they continue otherwise.

Alas, how many causes that can plead well for themselves in the Courts of Westminster ; and yet in the general Court of the Universe, and free Soul of Man, have no word to utter ! Honourable Gentlemen may find this worth considering, in times like ours. And truly, the din of triumphant Law-logic, and all shaking of horse-hair wigs and learned-serjeant gowns having comfortably ended, we shall do well to ask ourselves withal, What says that high and highest Court to the verdict ?

For it is the Court of Courts, that same ; where the universal soul of Fact and very Truth sits President ;—and thitherward, more and more swiftly, with a really terrible increase of swiftness, all causes do in these days crowd for revisal,—for confirmation, for modification, for reversal with costs. Dost thou know that Court ; hast thou had any Law-practice there ? What, didst thou never enter ; never file any petition of redress, reclaimer, disclaimer or demurrer, written as in thy heart's blood, for thy own behoof or another's ; and silently await the issue ? Thou knowest not such a Court ? Hast merely heard of it by faint tradition as a thing that was or had been ? Of thee, I think, we shall get little benefit.

For the gowns of learned-serjeants are good : parchment records, fixed forms, and poor terrestrial Justice, with or without horse-hair, what sane man will not reverence these ? And yet, behold, the man is not sane but insane, who considers these alone as venerable. Oceans of horse-hair, continents of parchment, and learned-serjeant eloquence, were it continued till the learned tongue wore itself small in the indefatigable learned mouth, cannot make unjust just. The grand question still remains, Was the judgment just ? If unjust, it will not and cannot get harbour for itself, or continue to have footing in this Universe, which was made by other than One Unjust. Enforce it by never such statuting, three readings, royal assents ; blow it to the four winds with all manner of quilted trumpeters and pursuivants, in the rear of them never so many gibbets and hangmen, it will not stand, it cannot stand. From all souls of men, from all ends of Nature, from the Throne of God above, there are voices bidding it : Away, away ! Does it take no warning ; does it stand, strong in its three readings, in its gibbets and artillery-parks ? The more woe is to it, the frightfuler woe. It will continue standing for its day, for its year, for its century, doing evil all the while ; but it has One enemy who is Almighty : dissolution, explosion, and the everlasting Laws of Nature incessantly advance towards it ; and the deeper its rooting, more obstinate its continuing, the deeper also and huger will its ruin and overturn be.

In this God's-world, with its wild-whirling eddies and mad foam-oceans, where men and nations perish as if without law, and judgment for an unjust thing is sternly delayed, dost thou think that there is therefore no justice ? It is what the fool

hath said in his heart. It is what the wise, in all times, were wise because they denied, and knew forever not to be. I tell thee again, there is nothing else but justice. One strong thing I find here below : the just thing, the true thing. My friend, if thou hadst all the artillery of Woolwich trundling at thy back in support of an unjust thing ; and infinite bonfires visibly waiting ahead of thee, to blaze centuries long for thy victory on behalf of it,—I would advise thee to call halt, to fling down thy baton, and say, “In God’s name, No!” Thy ‘success’? Poor devil, what will thy success amount to? If the thing is unjust, thou hast not succeeded ; no, not though bonfires blazed from North to South, and bells rang, and editors wrote leading-articles, and the just thing lay trampled out of sight, to all mortal eyes an abolished and annihilated thing. Success? In few years thou wilt be dead and dark,—all cold, eyeless, deaf ; no blaze of bonfires, ding-dong of bells or leading-articles visible or audible to thee again at all forever : What kind of success is that!—

It is true, all goes by approximation in this world ; with any not insupportable approximation we must be patient. There is a noble Conservatism as well as an ignoble. Would to Heaven, for the sake of Conservatism itself, the noble alone were left, and the ignoble, by some kind severe hand, were ruthlessly lopped away, forbidden evermore to show itself ! For it is the right and noble alone that will have victory in this struggle ; the rest is wholly an obstruction, a postponement and fearful imperilment of the victory. Towards an eternal centre of right and nobleness, and of that only, is all this confusion tending. We already know whither it is all tending ; what will have victory, what will have none ! The Heaviest will reach the centre. The Heaviest, sinking through complex fluctuating media and vortices, has its deflexions, its obstructions, nay at times its resiliences, its reboundings ; whereupon some blockhead shall be heard jubilating, “See, your Heaviest ascends !”—but at all moments it is moving centreward, fast as is convenient for it ; sinking, sinking ; and, by laws older than the World, old as the Maker’s first Plan of the World, it has to arrive there.

Await the issue. In all battles, if you await the issue, each fighter has prospered according to his right. His right and his might, at the close of the account, were one and the same. He

has fought with all his might, and in exact proportion to all his right he has prevailed. His very death is no victory over him. He dies indeed ; but his work lives, very truly lives. A heroic Wallace, quartered on the scaffold, cannot hinder that his Scotland become, one day, a part of England : but he does hinder that it become, on tyrannous unfair terms, a part of it ; commands still, as with a god's voice, from his old Valhalla and Temple of the Brave, that there be a just real union as of brother and brother, not a false and merely semblant one as of slave and master. If the union with England be in fact one of Scotland's chief blessings, we thank Wallace withal that it was not the chief curse. Scotland is not Ireland : no, because brave men rose there, and said, " Behold, ye must not tread us down like slaves ; and ye shall not,—and cannot !" Fight on, thou brave true heart, and falter not, through dark fortune and through bright. The cause thou fightest for, so far as it is true, no farther, yet precisely so far, is very sure of victory. The falsehood alone of it will be conquered, will be abolished, as it ought to be : but the truth of it is part of Nature's own Laws, coöperates with the World's eternal Tendencies, and cannot be conquered.

The *dust* of controversy, what is it but the *falsehood* flying off from all manner of conflicting true forces, and making such a loud dust-whirlwind,—that so the truths alone may remain, and embrace brother-like in some true resulting-force ! It is ever so. Savage fighting Heptarchies : their fighting is an ascertainment, who has the right to rule over whom ; that out of such waste-bickering Saxondom a peacefully coöperating England may arise. Seek through this Universe ; if with other than owl's eyes, thou wilt find nothing nourished there, nothing kept in life, but what has right to nourishment and life. The rest, look at it with other than owl's eyes, is not living ; is all dying, all as good as dead ! Justice was ordained from the foundations of the world ; and will last with the world and longer.

From which I infer that the inner sphere of Fact, in this present England as elsewhere, differs infinitely from the outer sphere and spheres of Semblance. That the Temporary, here as elsewhere, is too apt to carry it over the Eternal. That he who dwells in the temporary Semblances, and does not pene-

trate into the eternal Substance, will *not* answer the Sphinx-riddle of Today, or of any Day. For the substance alone is substantial; that is the law of Fact; if you discover not that, Fact, who already knows it, will let you also know it by and by!

What is Justice? that, on the whole, is the question of the Sphinx to us. The law of Fact is, that Justice must and will be done. The sooner the better; for the Time grows stringent, frightfully pressing! "What is Justice?" ask many, to whom cruel Fact alone will be able to prove responsive. It is like jesting Pilate asking, What is Truth? Jestling Pilate had not the smallest chance to ascertain what was Truth. He could not have known it, had a god shown it to him. Thick serene opacity, thicker than amaurosis, veiled those smiling eyes of his to Truth; the inner *retina* of them was gone paralytic, dead. He looked at Truth; and discerned her not, there where she stood. "What is Justice?" The clothed embodied Justice that sits in Westminster Hall, with penalties, parchments, tipstaves, is very visible. But the *unembodied* Justice, whereof that other is either an emblem, or else is a fearful indescribability, is not so visible! For the unembodied Justice is of Heaven; a Spirit, and Divinity of Heaven,—*invisible* to all but the noble and pure of soul. The impure ignoble gaze with eyes, and she is not there. They will prove it to you by logic, by endless Hansard Debatings, by bursts of Parliamentary eloquence. It is not consolatory to behold! For properly, as many men as there are in a Nation who *can* withal see Heaven's invisible Justice, and know it to be on Earth also omnipotent, so many men are there who stand between a Nation and perdition. So many, and no more. Heavy-laden England, how many hast thou in this hour? The Supreme Power sends new and ever new, all *born* at least with hearts of flesh and not of stone;—and heavy Misery itself, once heavy enough, will prove didactic!—

CHAPTER III.

MANCHESTER INSURRECTION.

BLUSTEROWSKI, Colacorde, and other Editorial prophets of the Continental-Democratic Movement, have in their leading-

articles shown themselves disposed to vilipend the late Manchester Insurrection, as evincing in the rioters an extreme backwardness to battle ; nay as betokening, in the English People itself, perhaps a want of the proper animal courage indispensable in these ages. A million hungry operative men started up, in utmost paroxysm of desperate protest against their lot ; and, ask Colacorde and company, How many shots were fired ? Very few in comparison ! Certain hundreds of drilled soldiers sufficed to suppress this million-headed hydra, and tread it down, without the smallest appeasement or hope of such, into its subterranean settlements again, there to reconsider itself. Compared with our revolts in Lyons, in Warsaw and elsewhere, to say nothing of incomparable Paris City past or present, what a lamblike Insurrection !—

The present Editor is not here, with his readers, to vindicate the character of Insurrections ; nor does it matter to us whether Blusterowski and the rest may think the English a courageous people or not courageous. In passing, however, let us mention that, to our view, this was not an unsuccessful Insurrection ; that as Insurrections go, we have not heard lately of any that succeeded so well.

A million of hungry operative men, as Blusterowski says, rose all up, came all out into the streets, and—stood there. What other could they do ? Their wrongs and griefs were bitter, insupportable, their rage against the same was just : but who are they that cause these wrongs, who that will honestly make effort to redress them ? Our enemies are we know not who or what ; our friends are we know not where ! How shall we attack any one, shoot or be shot by any one ? Oh, if the accursed invisible Nightmare, that is crushing out the life of us and ours, would take a shape ; approach us like the Hyrcanian tiger, the Behemoth of Chaos, the Archfiend himself ; in any shape that we could see, and fasten on !—A man can have himself shot with cheerfulness ; but it needs first that he see clearly for what. Show him the divine face of Justice, then the diabolic monster which is eclipsing that : he will fly at the throat of such monster, never so monstrous, and need no bidding to do it. Woolwich grapeshot will sweep clear all streets, blast into invisibility so many thousand men : but if your Woolwich grapeshot be but eclipsing Divine Justice, and the God's-radiance itself gleam recognisable athwart such grapeshot,—then, yes then is the

time come for fighting and attacking. All artillery-parks have become weak, and are about to dissipate : in the God's thunder, their poor thunder slackens, ceases ; finding that it is, in all senses of the term, a *brute* one !—

That the Manchester Insurrection stood still, on the streets, with an indisposition to fire and bloodshed, was wisdom for it even as an Insurrection. Insurrection, never so necessary, is a most sad necessity ; and governors who wait for that to instruct them, are surely getting into the fatalest courses,—proving themselves Sons of Nox and Chaos, of blind Cowardice, not of seeing Valour ! How can there be any remedy in insurrection ? It is a mere announcement of the disease,—visible now even to Sons of Night. Insurrection usually ‘gains’ little ; usually wastes how much ! One of its worst kinds of waste, to say nothing of the rest, is that of irritating and exasperating men against each other, by violence done ; which is always sure to be injustice done, for violence does even justice unjustly.

Who shall compute the waste and loss, the obstruction of every sort, that was produced in the Manchester region by Peterloo alone ! Some thirteen unarmed men and women cut down,—the number of the slain and maimed is very countable : but the treasury of rage, burning hidden or visible in all hearts ever since, more or less perverting the effort and aim of all hearts ever since, is of unknown extent. “How ye came among us, in your cruel armed blindness, ye unspeakable County Yeomanry, sabres flourishing, hoofs prancing, and slashed us down at your brute pleasure ; deaf, blind to all *our* claims and woes and wrongs ; of quick sight and sense to your own claims only ! There lie poor sallow work-worn weavers, and complain no more now ; women themselves are slashed and sabred, howling terror fills the air ; and ye ride prosperous, very victorious,—ye unspeakable : give *us* sabres too, and then come-on a little !” Such are Peterloos. In all hearts that witnessed Peterloo, stands written, as in fire-characters, or smoke-characters prompt to become fire again, a legible balance-account of grim vengeance ; very unjustly balanced, much exaggerated, as is the way with such accounts : but payable readily at sight, in full with compound interest ! Such things should be avoided as the very pestilence ! For men's hearts ought not to be set against one another ; but set *with* one another, and all against the Evil

Thing only. Men's souls ought to be left to see clearly ; not jaundiced, blinded, twisted all awry, by revenge, mutual abhorrence, and the like. An Insurrection that can announce the disease, and then retire with no such balance-account opened anywhere, has attained the highest success possible for it.

And this was what these poor Manchester operatives, with all the darkness that was in them and round them, did manage to perform. They put their huge inarticulate question, "What do you mean to do with us?" in a manner audible to every reflective soul in this kingdom ; exciting deep pity in all good men, deep anxiety in all men whatever ; and no conflagration or outburst of madness came to cloud that feeling anywhere, but everywhere it operates unclouded. All England heard the question : it is the first practical form of *our* Sphinx-riddle. England will answer it ; or, on the whole, England will perish ;—one does not yet expect the latter result !

For the rest, that the Manchester Insurrection could yet discern no radiance of Heaven on any side of its horizon ; but feared that all lights, of the O'Connor or other sorts, hitherto kindled, were but deceptive fish-oil transparencies, or bog will-o'-wisp lights, and no dayspring from on high : for this also we will honour the poor Manchester Insurrection, and augur well of it. A deep unspoken sense lies in these strong men,—inconsiderable, almost stupid, as all they can articulate of it is. Amid all violent stupidity of speech, a right noble instinct of what is doable and what is not doable never forsakes them : the strong inarticulate men and workers, whom *Fact* patronises ; of whom, in all difficulty and work whatsoever, there is good augury ! This work too is to be done : Governors and Governing Classes that *can* articulate and utter, in any measure, what the law of Fact and Justice is, may calculate that here is a Governed Class who will listen.

And truly this first practical form of the Sphinx-question, inarticulately and so audibly put there, is one of the most impressive ever asked in the world. "Behold us here, so many thousands, millions, and increasing at the rate of fifty every hour. We are right willing and able to work ; and on the Planet Earth is plenty of work and wages for a million times as many. We ask, If you mean to lead us towards work ; to try to lead us,—by ways new, never yet heard of till this new unheard-of Time ? Or if you declare that you cannot lead us ?

And expect that we are to remain quietly unled, and in a composed manner perish of starvation? What is it you expect of us? What is it you mean to do with us?" This question, I say, has been put in the hearing of all Britain; and will be again put, and ever again, till some answer be given it.

Unhappy Workers, unhappier Idlers, unhappy men and women of this actual England. We are yet very far from an answer, and there will be no existence for us without finding one. "A fair day's-wages for a fair day's-work:" it is as just a demand as Governed men ever made of Governing. It is the everlasting right of man. Indisputable as Gospels, as arithmetical multiplication-tables: it must and will have itself fulfilled;—and yet, in these times of ours, with what enormous difficulty, next-door to impossibility! For the times are really strange; of a complexity intricate with all the new width of the ever-widening world; times here of half-frantic velocity of impetus, there of the deadest-looking stillness and paralysis; times definable as showing two qualities, Dilettantism and Mammonism;—most intricate obstructed times! Nay, if there were not a Heaven's radiance of Justice, prophetic, clearly of Heaven, discernible behind all these confused world-wide entanglements, of Landlord interests, Manufacturing interests, Tory-Whig interests, and who knows what other interests, expediencies, vested interests, established possessions, inveterate Dilettantisms, Midas-eared Mammonisms,—it would seem to every one a flat impossibility, which all wise men might as well at once abandon. If you do not know eternal Justice from momentary Expediency, and understand in your heart of hearts how Justice, radiant, beneficent, as the all-victorious Light-element, is also in essence, if need be, an all-victorious *Fire*-element, and melts all manner of vested interests, and the hardest iron cannon, as if they were soft wax, and does ever in the long-run rule and reign, and allows nothing else to rule and reign,—you also would talk of impossibility! But it is only difficult, it is not impossible. Possible? It is, with whatever difficulty, very clearly inevitable.

Fair day's-wages for fair day's-work! exclaims a sarcastic man: Alas, in what corner of this Planet, since Adam first awoke on it, was that ever realised? The day's-wages of John Milton's day's-work, named *Paradise Lost* and *Milton's Works*,

were Ten Pounds paid by instalments, and a rather close escape from death on the gallows. Consider that : it is no rhetorical flourish ; it is an authentic, altogether quiet fact,—emblematic, quietly documentary of a whole world of such, ever since human history began. Oliver Cromwell quitted his farming ; undertook a Hercules' Labour and lifelong wrestle with that Lernean Hydra-coil, wide as England, hissing heaven-high through its thousand crowned, coroneted, shovel-hatted quack-heads ; and he did wrestle with it, the truest and terriblest wrestle I have heard of ; and he wrestled it, and mowed and cut it down a good many stages, so that its hissing is ever since pitiful in comparison, and one can walk abroad in comparative peace from it ;—and his wages, as I understand, were burial under the gallows-tree near Tyburn Turnpike, with his head on the gable of Westminster Hall, and two centuries now of mixed cursing and ridicule from all manner of men. His dust lies under the Edgware Road, near Tyburn Turnpike, at this hour ; and his memory is—Nay what matters what his memory is ? His memory, at bottom, is or yet shall be as that of a god : a terror and horror to all quacks and cowards and insincere persons ; an everlasting encouragement, new memento, battleword, and pledge of victory to all the brave. It is the natural course and history of the Godlike, in every place, in every time. What god ever carried it with the Tenpound Franchisers ; in Open Vestry, or with any Sanhedrim of considerable standing ? When was a god found 'agreeable' to everybody ? The regular way is to hang, kill, crucify your gods, and execrate and trample them under your stupid hoofs for a century or two ; till you discover that they are gods,—and then take to braying over them, still in a very long-eared manner !—So speaks the sarcastic man ; in his wild way, very mournful truths.

Day's-wages for day's-work ? continues he : The Progress of Human Society consists even in this same, The better and better apportioning of wages to work. Give me this, you have given me all. Pay to every man accurately what he has worked for, what he has earned and done and deserved,—to this man broad lands and honours, to that man high gibbets and tread-mills : what more have I to ask ? Heaven's Kingdom, which we daily pray for, *has* come ; God's will is done on Earth even as it is in Heaven ! This *is* the radiance of celestial Justice ; in the light or in the fire of which all impediments, vested in-

terests, and iron cannon, are more and more melting like wax, and disappearing from the pathways of men. A thing ever struggling forward ; irrepressible, advancing inevitable ; perfecting itself, all days, more and more,—never to be *perfect* till that general Doomsday, the ultimate Consummation, and Last of earthly Days.

True, as to 'perfection' and so forth, answer we ; true enough ! And yet withal we have to remark, that imperfect Human Society holds itself together, and finds place under the Sun, in virtue simply of some *approximation* to perfection being actually made and put in practice. We remark farther, that there are supportable approximations, and then likewise insupportable. With some, almost with any, supportable approximation men are apt, perhaps too apt, to rest indolently patient, and say, It will do. Thus these poor Manchester manual workers mean only, by day's-wages for day's-work, certain coins of money adequate to keep them living ;—in return for their work, such modicum of food, clothes and fuel as will enable them to continue their work itself ! They as yet clamour for no more ; the rest, still inarticulate, cannot yet shape itself into a demand at all, and only lies in them as a dumb wish ; perhaps only, still more inarticulate, as a dumb, altogether unconscious want. *This* is the supportable approximation they would rest patient with, That by their work they might be kept alive to work more !—*This* once grown unattainable, I think your approximation may consider itself to have reached the *insupportable* stage ; and may prepare, with whatever difficulty, reluctance and astonishment, for one of two things, for changing or perishing ! With the millions no longer able to live, how can the units keep living ? It is too clear the Nation itself is on the way to suicidal death.

Shall we say then, The world has retrograded in its talent of apportioning wages to work, in late days ? The world had always a talent of that sort, better or worse. Time was when the mere *handworker* needed not announce his claim to the world by Manchester Insurrections !—The world, with its Wealth of Nations, Supply-and-demand and suchlike, has of late days been terribly inattentive to that question of work and wages. We will not say, the poor world has retrograded even here : we will say rather, the world has been rushing on with such fiery animation to get work and ever more work done, it

has had no time to think of dividing the wages ; and has merely left them to be scrambled for by the Law of the Stronger, law of Supply-and-demand, law of Laissez-faire, and other idle Laws and Un-laws,—saying, in its dire haste to get the work done, That is well enough !

And now the world will have to pause a little, and take up that other side of the problem, and in right earnest strive for some solution of that. For it has become pressing. What is the use of your spun shirts ? They hang there by the million unsaleable ; and here, by the million, are diligent bare backs that can get no hold of them. Shirts are useful for covering human backs ; useless otherwise, an unbearable mockery otherwise. You have fallen terribly behind with that side of the problem ! Manchester Insurrections, French Revolutions, and thousandfold phenomena great and small, announce loudly that you must bring it forward a little again. Never till now, in the history of an Earth which to this hour nowhere refuses to grow corn if you will plough it, to yield shirts if you will spin and weave in it, did the mere manual two-handed worker (however it might fare with other workers) cry in vain for such ‘wages’ as *he* means by ‘fair wages,’ namely food and warmth ! The Godlike could not and cannot be paid ; but the Earthly always could. Gurth, a mere swineherd, born thrall of Cedric the Saxon, tended pigs in the wood, and did get some parings of the pork. Why, the four-footed worker has already *got* all that this two-handed one is clamouring for ! How often must I remind you ? There is not a horse in England, able and willing to work, but *has* due food and lodging ; and goes about sleek-coated, satisfied in heart. And you say, It is impossible. Brothers, I answer, if for you it be impossible, what is to become of you ? It is impossible for us to believe it to be impossible. The human brain, looking at these sleek English horses, refuses to believe in such impossibility for English men. Do you depart quickly ; clear the ways soon, lest worse befall. We for our share do purpose, with full view of the enormous difficulty, with total disbelief in the impossibility, to endeavour while life is in us, and to die endeavouring, we and our sons, till we attain it or have all died and ended.

Such a Platitude of a World, in which all working horses could be well fed, and innumerable working men should die starved, were it not best to end it ; to have done with it, and

restore it once for all to the *Jötuns*, Mud-giants, Frost-giants, and Chaotic Brute-gods of the Beginning? For the old Anarchic Brute-gods it may be well enough; but it is a Platitude which Men should be above countenancing by their presence in it. We pray you, let the word *impossible* disappear from your vocabulary in this matter. It is of awful omen; to all of us, and to yourselves first of all.

CHAPTER IV.

MORRISON'S PILL.

WHAT is to be done, what would you have us do? asks many a one, with a tone of impatience, almost of reproach; and then, if you mention some one thing, some two things, twenty things that might be done, turns round with a satirical tehee, and "These are your remedies!" The state of mind indicated by such question, and such rejoinder, is worth reflecting on.

It seems to be taken for granted, by these interrogative philosophers, that there is some 'thing,' or handful of 'things,' which could be done; some Act of Parliament, 'remedial measure' or the like, which could be passed, whereby the social malady were fairly fronted, conquered, put an end to; so that, with your remedial measure in your pocket, you could then go on triumphant, and be troubled no farther. "You tell us the evil," cry such persons, as if justly aggrieved, "and do not tell us how it is to be cured!"

How it is to be cured? Brothers, I am sorry I have got no Morrison's Pill for curing the maladies of Society. It were infinitely handier if we had a Morrison's Pill, Act of Parliament, or remedial measure, which men could swallow, one good time, and then go on in their old courses, cleared from all miseries and mischiefs! Unluckily we have none such; unluckily the Heavens themselves, in their rich pharmacopœia, contain none such. There will no 'thing' be done that will cure you. There will a radical universal alteration of your regimen and way of life take place; there will a most agonising divorce between you and your chimeras, luxuries and falsities, take place; a most toilsome, all-but 'impossible' return to Nature, and her veracities and her integrities, take place: that

so the inner fountains of life may again begin, like eternal Light-fountains, to irradiate and purify your bloated, swollen, foul existence, drawing nigh, as at present, to nameless death! Either death, or else all this will take place. Judge if, with such diagnosis, any Morrison's Pill is like to be discoverable!

But the Life-fountain within you once again set flowing, what innumerable 'things,' whole sets and classes and continents of 'things,' year after year, and decade after decade, and century after century, will then be doable and done! Not Emigration, Education, Corn-Law Abrogation, Sanitary Regulation, Land Property-Tax; not these alone, nor a thousand times as much as these. Good Heavens, there will then be light in the inner heart of here and there a man, to discern what is just, what is commanded by the Most High God, what *must* be done, were it never so 'impossible.' Vain jargon in favour of the palpably unjust will then abridge itself within limits. Vain jargon, on Hustings, in Parliaments or wherever else, when here and there a man has vision for the essential God's-Truth of the things jargoned of, will become very vain indeed. The silence of here and there such a man, how eloquent in answer to such jargon! Such jargon, frightened at its own gaunt echo, will unspeakably abate; nay, for a while, may almost in a manner disappear,—the wise answering it in silence, and even the simple taking cue from them to hoot it down wherever heard. It will be a blessed time; and many 'things' will become doable,—and when the brains are out, an absurdity will die! Not easily again shall a Corn-Law argue ten years for itself; and still talk and argue, when impartial persons have to say with a sigh that, for so long back, they have heard no 'argument' advanced for it but such as might make the angels and almost the very jackasses weep!—

Wholly a blessed time: when jargon might abate, and here and there some genuine speech begin. When to the noble opened heart, as to such heart they alone do, all noble things began to grow visible; and the difference between just and unjust, between true and false, between work and sham-work, between speech and jargon, was once more, what to our happier Fathers it used to be, *infinite*,—as between a Heavenly thing and an Infernal: the one a thing which you were *not* to do, which you were wise not to attempt doing; which it were better for you to have a millstone tied round your neck, and be

cast into the sea, than concern yourself with doing !—Brothers, it will not be a Morrison's Pill, or remedial measure, that will bring all this about for us.

And yet, very literally, till, in some shape or other, it be brought about, we remain cureless ; till it begin to be brought about, the cure does not begin. For Nature and Fact, not Redtape and Semblance, are to this hour the basis of man's life ; and on those, through never such strata of these, man and his life and all his interests do, sooner or later, infallibly come to rest,—and to be supported or be swallowed according as they agree with those. The question is asked of them, not, How do you agree with Downing Street and accredited Semblance ? but, How do you agree with God's Universe and the actual Reality of things ? This Universe *has* its Laws. If we walk according to the Law, the Law-Maker will befriend us ; if not, not. Alas, by no Reform Bill, Ballot-box, Five-point Charter, by no boxes or bills or charters, can you perform this alchemy : ' Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action ! ' It is a distillation, once for all, not possible. You pass it through alembic after alembic, it comes out still a Dishonesty, with a new dress on it, a new colour to it. ' While we ourselves continue valets, how *can* any hero come to govern us ? ' We are governed, very infallibly, by the ' sham-hero, '—whose name is Quack, whose work and governance is Plausibility, and also is Falsity and Fatuity ; to which Nature says, and must say when it comes to *her* to speak, eternally No ! Nations cease to be befriended of the Law-Maker, when they walk *not* according to the Law. The Sphinx-question remains unsolved by them, becomes ever more insoluble.

If thou ask again, therefore, on the Morrison's-Pill hypothesis, What is to be done ? allow me to reply : By thee, for the present, almost nothing. Thou there, the thing for thee to do is, if possible, to cease to be a hollow sounding-shell of hearsays, egoisms, purblind dilettantisms ; and become, were it on the infinitely small scale, a faithful discerning soul. Thou shalt descend into thy inner man, and see if there be any traces of a *soul* there ; till then there can be nothing done ! O brother, we must if possible resuscitate some soul and conscience in us, exchange our dilettantisms for sincerities, our dead

hearts of stone for living hearts of flesh. Then shall we discern, not one thing, but, in clearer or dimmer sequence, a whole endless host of things that can be done. *Do* the first of these; do it; the second will already have become clearer, doabler; the second, third and three-thousandth will then have begun to be possible for us. Not any universal Morrison's Pill shall we then, either as swallowers or as venders, ask after at all; but a far different sort of remedies: Quacks shall no more have dominion over us, but true Heroes and Healers!

Will not that be a thing worthy of 'doing;' to deliver ourselves from quacks, sham-heroes; to deliver the whole world more and more from such? They are the one bane of the world. Once clear the world of them, it ceases to be a Devil's world, in all fibres of it wretched, accursed; and begins to be a God's-world, blessed, and working hourly towards blessedness. Thou for one wilt not again vote for any quack, do honour to any edge-gilt vacuity in man's shape: cant shall be known to thee by the sound of it;—thou wilt fly from cant with a shudder never felt before; as from the opened litany of Sorcerers' Sabbaths, the true Devil-worship of this age, more horrible than any other blasphemy, profanity or genuine black-guardism elsewhere audible among men. It is alarming to witness,—in its present completed state! And Quack and Dupe, as we must ever keep in mind, are upper-side and under of the selfsame substance; convertible personages: turn up your dupe into the proper fostering element, and he himself can become a quack; there is in him the due prurient insincerity, open voracity for profit, and closed sense for truth, whereof quacks too, in all their kinds, are made.

Alas, it is not to the hero, it is to the sham-hero, that, of right and necessity, the valet-world belongs. 'What is to be done?' The reader sees whether it is like to be the seeking and swallowing of some 'remedial measure'!

CHAPTER V.

ARISTOCRACY OF TALENT.

WHEN an individual is miserable, what does it most of all behove him to do? To complain of this man or of that, of this

thing or of that? To fill the world and the street with lamentation, objugation? Not so at all; the reverse of so. All moralists advise him not to complain of any person or of any thing, but of himself only. He is to know of a truth that being miserable he has been unwise, he. Had he faithfully followed Nature and her Laws, Nature, ever true to her Laws, would have yielded fruit and increase and felicity to him: but he has followed other than Nature's Laws; and now Nature, her patience with him being ended, leaves him desolate; answers with very emphatic significance to him: No. Not by this road, my son; by another road shalt thou attain well-being: this, thou perceivest, is the road to ill-being; quit this!—So do all moralists advise: that the man penitently say to himself first of all, Behold I was not wise enough; I quitted the laws of Fact, which are also called the Laws of God, and mistook for them the Laws of Sham and Semblance, which are called the Devil's Laws; therefore am I here!

Neither with Nations that become miserable is it fundamentally otherwise. The ancient guides of Nations, Prophets, Priests, or whatever their name, were well aware of this; and, down to a late epoch, impressively taught and inculcated it. The modern guides of Nations, who also go under a great variety of names, Journalists, Political Economists, Politicians, Pamphleteers, have entirely forgotten this, and are ready to deny this. But it nevertheless remains eternally undeniable: nor is there any doubt but we shall all be taught it yet, and made again to confess it: we shall all be striped and scourged till we do learn it; and shall at last either get to know it, or be striped to death in the process. For it is undeniable! When a Nation is unhappy, the old Prophet was right and not wrong in saying to it: Ye have forgotten God, ye have quitted the ways of God, or ye would not have been unhappy. It is not according to the laws of Fact that ye have lived and guided yourselves, but according to the laws of Delusion, Imposture, and wilful and unwilful *Mistake* of Fact; behold therefore the Unveracity is worn out; Nature's long-suffering with you is exhausted; and ye are here!

Surely there is nothing very inconceivable in this, even to the Journalist, to the Political Economist, Modern Pamphleteer, or any two-legged animal without feathers! If a country finds itself wretched, sure enough that country has been *misguided*: it

is with the wretched Twenty-seven Millions, fallen wretched, as with the Unit fallen wretched : they, as he, have quitted the course prescribed by Nature and the Supreme Powers, and so are fallen into scarcity, disaster, infelicity ; and pausing to consider themselves, have to lament and say : Alas, we were not wise enough ! We took transient superficial Semblance for everlasting central Substance ; we have departed far away from the *Laws* of this Universe, and behold now lawless Chaos and inane Chimera is ready to devour us !—‘ Nature in late centuries,’ says Sauerteig, ‘ was universally supposed to be dead ; an old eight-day clock, made many thousand years ago, and still ticking, but dead as brass,—which the Maker, at most, sat looking at, in a distant, singular and indeed incredible manner : but now I am happy to observe, she is everywhere asserting herself to be not dead and brass at all, but alive and miraculous, celestial-infernal, with an emphasis that will again penetrate the thickest head of this Planet by and by !’—

Indisputable enough to all mortals now, the guidance of this country has not been sufficiently wise ; men too foolish have been set to the guiding and governing of it, and have guided it *hither* ; we must find wiser,—wiser, or else we perish ! To this length of insight all England has now advanced ; but as yet no farther. All England stands wringing its hands, asking itself, nigh desperate, What farther ? Reform Bill proves to be a failure ; Benthamite Radicalism, the gospel of ‘ Enlightened Selfishness,’ dies out, or dwindles into Five-point Chartism, amid the tears and hootings of men : what next are we to hope or try ? Five-point Charter, Free-trade, Church-extension, Sliding-scale ; what, in Heaven’s name, are we next to attempt, that we sink not in inane Chimera, and be devoured of Chaos ?—The case is pressing, and one of the most complicated in the world. A God’s-message never came to thicker-skinned people ; never had a God’s-message to pierce through thicker integuments, into heavier ears. It is Fact, speaking once more, in miraculous thunder-voice, from out of the centre of the world ;—how unknown its language to the deaf and foolish many ; how distinct, undeniable, terrible and yet beneficent, to the hearing few : Behold, ye shall grow wiser, or ye shall die ! Truer to Nature’s Fact, or inane Chimera will swallow you ; in whirlwinds of fire, you and your Mammonisms, Dilettantisms, your Midas-eared philosophies, double-barrelled Aristocracies,

shall disappear!—Such is the God's-message to us, once more, in these modern days.

We must have more Wisdom to govern us, we must be governed by the Wisest, we must have an Aristocracy of Talent! cry many. True, most true; but how to get it? The following extract from our young friend of the *Houndsditch Indicator* is worth perusing: 'At this time,' says he, 'while there is a cry everywhere, articulate or inarticulate, for an "Aristocracy of Talent," a Governing Class namely which did govern, not merely which took the wages of governing, and could not with all our industry be kept from misgoverning, corn-lawing, and playing the very deuce with us,—it may not be altogether useless to remind some of the greener-headed sort what a dreadfully difficult affair the getting of such an Aristocracy is! Do you expect, my friends, that your indispensable Aristocracy of Talent is to be enlisted straightway, by some sort of recruitment aforethought, out of the general population; arranged in supreme regimental order; and set to rule over us? That it will be got sifted, like wheat out of chaff, from the Twenty-seven Million British subjects; that any Ballot-box, Reform Bill, or other Political Machine, with Force of Public Opinion never so active on it, is likely to perform said process of sifting? Would to Heaven that we had a sieve; that we could so much as fancy any kind of sieve, wind-fanners, or ne-plus-ultra of machinery, devisable by man, that would do it! Done nevertheless, sure enough, it must be; it shall and will be. We are rushing swiftly on the road to destruction; every hour bringing us nearer, until it be, in some measure, done. The doing of it is not doubtful; only the method and the costs! Nay I will even mention to you an infallible sifting process whereby he that has ability will be sifted out to rule among us, and that same blessed Aristocracy of Talent be verily, in an approximate degree, vouchsafed us by and by: an infallible sifting-process; to which, however, no soul can help his neighbour, but each must, with devout prayer to Heaven, endeavour to help himself. It is, O friends, that all of us, that many of us, should acquire the true *eye* for talent, which is dreadfully wanting at present! The true eye for talent presupposes the true reverence for it,—O Heavens, presupposes so many things! For example, you Bobus Higgins, Sausage-maker on the

‘great scale, who are raising such a clamour for this Aristocracy of Talent, what is it that you do, in that big heart of yours, chiefly in very fact pay reverence to? Is it to talent, intrinsic manly worth of any kind, you unfortunate Bobus? The manliest man that you saw going in a ragged coat, did you ever reverence him; did you so much as know that he was a manly man at all, till his coat grew better? Talent! I understand you to be able to worship the fame of talent, the power, cash, celebrity or other success of talent; but the talent itself is a thing you never saw with eyes. Nay what is it in yourself that you are proudest of, that you take most pleasure in surveying meditatively in thoughtful moments? Speak now, is it the bare Bobus stript of his very name and shirt, and turned loose upon society, that you admire and thank Heaven for; or Bobus with his cash-accounts and larders dropping fatness, with his respectabilities, warm garnitures, and pony-chaise, admirable in some measure to certain of the flunky species? Your own degree of worth and talent, is it of *infinite* value to you; or only of finite,—measurable by the degree of currency, and conquest of praise or pudding, it has brought you to? Bobus, you are in a vicious circle, rounder than one of your own sausages; and will never vote for or promote any talent, except what talent or sham-talent has already *got* itself voted for!’—We here cut short the *Indicator*; all readers perceiving whither he now tends.

‘More Wisdom’ indeed: but where to find more Wisdom? We have already a Collective Wisdom, after its kind,—though ‘class-legislation,’ and another thing or two, affect it somewhat! On the whole, as they say, Like people like priest; so we may say, Like people like king. The man gets himself appointed and elected who is ablest—to be appointed and elected. What can the incorruptiblest *Bobuses* elect, if it be not some *Bobissimus*, should they find such?

Or again, perhaps there is not, in the whole Nation, Wisdom enough, ‘collect’ it as we may, to make an adequate Collective! That too is a case which may befall: a ruined man staggers down to ruin because there was not wisdom enough in him; so, clearly also, may Twenty-seven Million collective men!—But indeed one of the infalliblest fruits of Unwisdom in a Nation is that it cannot get the use of what Wisdom is

actually in it : that it is not governed by the wisest it has, who alone have a divine right to govern in all Nations ; but by the sham-wisest, or even by the openly not-so-wise, if they are handiest otherwise ! This is the infalliblest result of Unwisdom ; and also the balefulest, immeasurablest, —not so much what we can call a *poison-fruit*, as a universal death-disease, and poisoning of the whole tree. For hereby are fostered, fed into gigantic bulk, all manner of Unwisdoms, poison-fruits ; till, as we say, the life-tree everywhere is made a upas-tree, deadly Unwisdom overshadowing all things ; and there is done what lies in human skill to stifle all Wisdom everywhere in the birth, to smite our poor world barren of Wisdom,—and make your utmost Collective Wisdom, were it collected and elected by Rhadamanthus, Æacus and Minos, not to speak of drunken Tenpound Franchisers with their ballot-boxes, an inadequate Collective ! The Wisdom is not now there : how will you ‘collect’ it ? As well wash Thames mud, by improved methods, to find more gold in it.

Truly, the first condition is indispensable, That Wisdom be there : but the second is like unto it, is properly one with it ; these two conditions act and react through every fibre of them, and go inseparably together. If you have much Wisdom in your Nation, you will get it faithfully collected ; for the wise love Wisdom, and will search for it as for life and salvation. If you have little Wisdom, you will get even that little ill-collected, trampled under foot, reduced as near as possible to annihilation ; for fools do not love Wisdom ; they are foolish, first of all, because they have never loved Wisdom,—but have loved their own appetites, ambitions, their coroneted coaches, tankards of heavy-wet. Thus is your candle lighted at both ends, and the progress towards consummation is swift. Thus is fulfilled that saying in the Gospel : To him that hath shall be given ; and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. Very literally, in a very fatal manner, that saying is here fulfilled.

Our ‘Aristocracy of Talent’ seems at a considerable distance yet ; does it not, O Bokus ?

CHAPTER VI.

HERO-WORSHIP.

To the present Editor, not less than to Bobus, a Government of the Wisest, what Bobus calls an Aristocracy of Talent, seems the one healing remedy: but he is not so sanguine as Bobus with respect to the means of realising it. He thinks that we have at once missed realising it, and come to need it so pressingly, by departing far from the inner eternal Laws, and taking-up with the temporary outer semblances of Laws. He thinks that 'enlightened Egoism,' never so luminous, is not the rule by which man's life can be led. That 'Laissez-faire,' 'Supply-and-demand,' 'Cash-payment for the sole nexus,' and so forth, were not, are not and will never be, a practicable Law of Union for a Society of Men. That Poor and Rich, that Governed and Governing, cannot long live together on any such Law of Union. Alas, he thinks that man has a soul in him, *different* from the stomach in any sense of this word; that if said soul be asphyxied, and lie quietly forgotten, the man and his affairs are in a bad way. He thinks that said soul will have to be resuscitated from its asphyxia; that if it prove irresuscitable, the man is not long for this world. In brief, that Midas-eared Mammonism, double-barrelled Dilettantism, and their thousand adjuncts and corollaries, are *not* the Law by which God Almighty has appointed this his Universe to go. That, once for all, these are not the Law: and then farther that we shall have to return to what *is* the Law,—not by smooth flowery paths, it is like, and with 'tremendous cheers' in our throat; but over steep untrodden places, through stormclad chasms, waste oceans, and the bosom of tornadoes; thank Heaven, if not through very Chaos and the Abyss! The resuscitating of a soul that has gone to asphyxia is no momentary or pleasant process, but a long and terrible one.

To the present Editor, 'Hero-worship,' as he has elsewhere named it, means much more than an elected Parliament, or stated Aristocracy, of the Wisest; for in his dialect it is the summary, ultimate essence, and supreme practical perfection of all manner of 'worship,' and true worthships and noblenesses whatsoever. Such blessed Parliament and, were it once in perfection, blessed Aristocracy of the Wisest, god-honoured and

man-honoured, he does look for, more and more perfected,—as the topmost blessed practical apex of a whole world reformed from sham-worship, informed anew with worship, with truth and blessedness! He thinks that Hero-worship, done differently in every different epoch of the world, is the soul of all social business among men; that the doing of it well, or the doing of it ill, measures accurately what degree of well-being or of ill-being there is in the world's affairs. He thinks that we, on the whole, do our Hero-worship worse than any Nation in this world ever did it before: that the Burns an Exciseman, the Byron a Literary Lion, are intrinsically, all things considered, a baser and falser phenomenon than the Odin a God, the Mahomet a Prophet of God. It is this Editor's clear opinion, accordingly, that we must learn to do our Hero-worship better; that to do it better and better, means the awakening of the Nation's soul from its asphyxia, and the return of blessed life to us,—Heaven's blessed life, not Mammon's galvanic accursed one. To resuscitate the Asphyxied, apparently now moribund and in the last agony if not resuscitated: such and no other seems the consummation.

'Hero-worship,' if you will,—yes, friends; but, first of all, by being ourselves of heroic mind. A whole world of Heroes; a world not of Flunkies, where no Hero-King *can* reign: that is what we aim at! We, for our share, will put away all Flunkysim, Baseness, Unveracity from us; we shall then hope to have Noblenesses and Veracities set over us; never till then. Let Bobus and Company sneer, "That is your Reform!" Yes, Bobus, that is our Reform; and except in that, and what will follow out of that, we have no hope at all. Reform, like Charity, O Bobus, must begin at home. Once well at home, how will it radiate outwards, irrepressible, into all that we touch and handle, speak and work; kindling ever new light, by incalculable contagion, spreading in geometric ratio, far and wide,—doing good only, wheresoever it spreads, and not evil.

By Reform Bills, Anti-Corn-Law Bills, and thousand other bills and methods, we will demand of our Governors, with emphasis, and for the first time not without effect, that they cease to be quacks, or else depart; that they set no quackeries and blockheadisms anywhere to rule over us, that they utter or act no cant to us,—it will be better if they do not. For we shall now know quacks when we see them; cant, when we hear it, shall

be horrible to us! We will say, with the poor Frenchman at the Bar of the Convention, though in wiser style than he, and 'for the space' not 'of an hour' but of a lifetime: "*Je demande l'arrestation des coquins et des lâches.*" 'Arrestment of the knaves and dastards:' ah, we know what a work that is; how long it will be before *they* are all or mostly got 'arrested:' — but here is one; arrest him, in God's name; it is one fewer! We will, in all practicable ways, by word and silence, by act and refusal to act, energetically demand that arrestment, — "*je demande cette arrestation-là!*" — and by degrees infallibly attain it. Infallibly: for light spreads; all human souls, never so bedarkened, love light; light once kindled spreads, till all is luminous; — till the cry, "*Arrest your knaves and dastards*" rises imperative from millions of hearts, and rings and reigns from sea to sea. Nay how many of them may we not 'arrest' with our own hands, even now; we! Do not countenance them, thou there: turn away from their lacquered sumptuosities, their belauded sophistries, their serpent graciousities, their spoken and acted cant, with a sacred horror, with an *Apage Satanas*. — Bobus and Company, and all men will gradually join us. We demand arrestment of the knaves and dastards, and begin by arresting our own poor selves out of that fraternity. There is no other reform conceivable. Thou and I, my friend, can, in the most flunky world, make, each of us, *one* non-flunky, one hero, if we like: that will be two heroes to begin with: — Courage! even that is a whole world of heroes to end with, or what we poor Two can do in furtherance thereof! Yes, friends: Hero-kings, and a whole world not unheroic, — there lies the port and happy haven, towards which, through all these stormtost seas, French Revolutions, Chartisms, Manchester Insurrections, that make the heart sick in these bad days, the Supreme Powers are driving us. On the whole, blessed be the Supreme Powers, stern as they are! Towards that haven will we, O friends; let all true men, with what of faculty is in them, bend valiantly, incessantly, with thousandfold endeavour, thither, thither! There, or else in the Ocean-abysses, it is very clear to me, we shall arrive.

Well; here truly is no answer to the Sphinx-question; not the answer a disconsolate public, inquiring at the College of Health, was in hopes of! A total change of regimen, change

of constitution and existence from the very centre of it; a new body to be got, with resuscitated soul,—not without convulsive travail-throes; as all birth and new-birth presupposes travail! This is sad news to a disconsolate discerning Public, hoping to have got off by some Morrison's Pill, some Saint-John's corrosive mixture and perhaps a little blistery friction on the back!—We were prepared to part with our Corn-Law, with various Laws and Unlaws: but this, what is this?

Nor has the Editor forgotten how it fares with your ill-boding Cassandras in Sieges of Troy. Imminent perdition is not usually driven away by words of warning. Didactic Destiny has other methods in store; or these would fail always. Such words should, nevertheless, be uttered, when they dwell truly in the soul of any man. Words are hard, are importunate; but how much harder the importunate events they foreshadow! Here and there a human soul may listen to the words,—who knows how many human souls?—whereby the importunate events, if not diverted and prevented, will be rendered *less* hard. The present Editor's purpose is to himself full of hope.

For though fierce travails, though wide seas and roaring gulfs lie before us, is it not something if a Loadstar, in the eternal sky, do once more disclose itself; an everlasting light, shining through all cloud-tempests and roaring billows, ever as we emerge from the trough of the sea: the blessed beacon, far off on the edge of far horizons, towards which we are to steer incessantly for life? Is it not something; O Heavens, is it not all? There lies the Heroic Promised Land; under that Heaven's-light, my brethren, bloom the Happy Isles,—there, O there! Thither will we;

‘There dwells the great Achilles whom we knew.’¹

There dwell all Heroes, and will dwell: thither, all ye heroic-minded!—The Heaven's Loadstar once clearly in our eye, how will each true man stand truly to *his* work in the ship; how, with undying hope, will all things be fronted, all be conquered. Nay, with the ship's prow once turned in that direction, is not all, as it were, already well? Sick wasting misery has become noble manful effort with a goal in our eye. ‘The choking Nightmare chokes us no longer; for we *stir* under it; the Nightmare has already fled.’—

¹ Tennyson's *Poems* (Ulysses).

Certainly, could the present Editor instruct men how to know Wisdom, Heroism, when they see it, that they might do reverence to *it* only, and loyally make it ruler over them,—yes, he were the living epitome of all Editors, Teachers, Prophets, that now teach and prophesy; he were an *Apollo*-Morrison, a Trismegistus and *effective* Cassandra! Let no Able Editor hope such things. It is to be expected the present laws of copyright, rate of reward per sheet, and other considerations, will save him from that peril. Let no Editor hope such things: no;—and yet let all Editors aim towards such things, and even towards such alone! One knows not what the meaning of editing and writing is, if even this be not it.

Enough, to the present Editor it has seemed possible some glimmering of light, for here and there a human soul, might lie in these confused Paper-Masses now intrusted to him; wherefore he determines to edit the same. Out of old Books, new Writings, and much Meditation not of yesterday, he will endeavour to select a thing or two; and from the Past, in a circuitous way, illustrate the Present and the Future. The Past is a dim indubitable fact: the Future too is one, only dimmer; nay properly it is the *same* fact in new dress and development. For the Present holds it in both the whole Past and the whole Future;—as the LIFE-TREE IGDRASIL, wide-waving, many-toned, has its roots down deep in the Death-kingdoms, among the oldest dead dust of men, and with its boughs reaches always beyond the stars; and in all times and places is one and the same Life-tree!

BOOK SECOND.

THE ANCIENT MONK.

CHAPTER I.

JOCELIN OF BRAKELOND.

WE will, in this Second Portion of our Work, strive to penetrate a little, by means of certain confused Papers, printed and other, into a somewhat remote Century; and to look face to face on it, in hope of perhaps illustrating our own poor Century thereby. It seems a circuitous way; but it may prove a way nevertheless. For man has ever been a striving, struggling, and, in spite of wide-spread calumnies to the contrary, a veracious creature: the Centuries too are all lineal children of one another; and often, in the portrait of early grandfathers, this and the other enigmatic feature of the newest grandson shall disclose itself, to mutual elucidation. This Editor will venture on such a thing.

Besides, in Editors' Books, and indeed everywhere else in the world of Today, a certain latitude of movement grows more and more becoming for the practical man. Salvation lies not in tight lacing, in these times;—how far from that, in any province whatsoever! Readers and men generally are getting into strange habits of asking all persons and things, from poor Editors' Books up to Church Bishops and State Potentates, not, By what designation art thou called; in what wig and black triangle dost thou walk abroad? Heavens, I know thy designation and black triangle well enough! But, in God's name, what *art* thou? Not Nothing, sayest thou! Then, How

much and what? This is the thing I would know; and even *must* soon know, such a pass am I come to!—What weather-symptoms,—not for the poor Editor of Books alone! The Editor of Books may understand withal that if, as is said, ‘many kinds are permissible,’ there is one kind not permissible, ‘the kind that has nothing in it, *le genre ennuyeux*,’ and go on his way accordingly.

A certain Jocelinus de Brakelonda, a natural-born Englishman, has left us an extremely foreign Book,¹ which the labours of the Camden Society have brought to light in these days. Jocelin’s Book, the ‘Chronicle,’ or private Boswellian Notebook, of Jocelin, a certain old St. Edmundsbury Monk and Boswell, now seven centuries old, how remote is it from us; exotic, extraneous; in all ways, coming from far abroad! The language of it is not foreign only but dead: Monk-Latin lies across not the British Channel, but the ninefold Stygian Marshes, Stream of Lethe, and one knows not where! Roman Latin itself, still alive for us in the Elysian Fields of Memory, is domestic in comparison. And then the ideas, life-furniture, whole workings and ways of this worthy Jocelin; covered deeper than Pompeii with the lava-ashes and inarticulate wreck of seven hundred years!

Jocelin of Brakelond cannot be called a conspicuous literary character; indeed few mortals that have left so visible a work, or footmark, behind them can be more obscure. One other of those vanished Existences, whose work has not yet vanished;—almost a pathetic phenomenon, were not the whole world full of such! The builders of Stonehenge, for example:—or, alas, what say we, Stonehenge and builders? The writers of the *Universal Review* and *Homer’s Iliad*; the paviors of London streets;—sooner or later, the entire Posterity of Adam! It is a pathetic phenomenon; but an irremediable, nay, if well meditated, a consoling one.

By his dialect of Monk-Latin, and indeed by his name, this Jocelin seems to have been a Norman Englishman; the surname *de Brakelonda* indicates a native of St. Edmundsbury itself, *Brakelond* being the known old name of a street or quarter

¹ *Chronica JOCELINI DE BRAKELONDA, de rebus gestis Samsonis Abbatis Monasterii Sancti Edmundi: nunc primum typis mandata, curante Johanne Gage Rokewood.* (Camden Society, London, 1840.)

in that venerable Town. Then farther, sure enough, our Jocelin was a Monk of St. Edmundsbury Convent; held some '*obedientia*,' subaltern officiality there, or rather, in succession several; was, for one thing, 'chaplain to my Lord Abbot, living beside him night and day for the space of six years;'—which last, indeed, is the grand fact of Jocelin's existence, and properly the origin of this present Book, and of the chief meaning it has for us now. He was, as we have hinted, a kind of born *Boswell*, though an infinitesimally small one; neither did he altogether want his *Johnson* even there and then. Johnsons are rare; yet, as has been asserted, Boswells perhaps still rarer,—the more is the pity on both sides! This Jocelin, as we can discern well, was an ingenious and ingenuous, a cheery-hearted, innocent, yet withal shrewd, noticing, quick-witted man; and from under his monk's cowl has looked out on that narrow section of the world in a really *human* manner; not in any *simial*, canine, ovine, or otherwise *inhuman* manner,—afflictive to all that have humanity! The man is of patient, peaceable, loving, clear-smiling nature; open for this and that. A wise simplicity is in him; much natural sense; a *veracity* that goes deeper than words. Veracity: it is the basis of all; and, some say, means genius itself; the prime essence of all genius whatsoever. Our Jocelin, for the rest, has read his classical manuscripts, his Virgilius, his Flaccus, Ovidius Naso; of course still more, his Homilies and Breviaries, and if not the Bible, considerable extracts of the Bible. Then also he has a pleasant wit; and loves a timely joke, though in mild subdued manner: very amiable to see. A learned grown man, yet with the heart as of a good child; whose whole life indeed has been that of a child,—St. Edmundsbury Monastery a larger kind of cradle for him, in which his whole prescribed duty was to *sleep* kindly, and love his mother well! This is the Biography of Jocelin; 'a man of excellent religion,' says one of his contemporary Brother Monks, '*eximie religionis, potens sermone et opere.*'

For one thing, he had learned to write a kind of Monk or Dog-Latin, still readable to mankind; and, by good luck for us, had bethought him of noting down thereby what things seemed notablest to him. Hence gradually resulted a *Chronica Jocelini*; new Manuscript in the *Liber Albus* of St. Edmundsbury. Which Chronicle, once written in its childlike transparency, in its innocent good-humour, not without touches of

An example of Carlyle's art in authentic, unadorned, unadorned

ready pleasant wit and many kinds of worth, other men liked naturally to read: whereby it failed not to be copied, to be multiplied, to be inserted in the *Liber Albus*; and so surviving Henry the Eighth, Putney Cromwell, the Dissolution of Monasteries, and all accidents of malice and neglect for six centuries or so, it got into the *Harleian Collection*,—and has now therefrom, by Mr. Rokewood of the Camden Society, been deciphered into clear print; and lies before us, a dainty thin quarto, to interest for a few minutes whomsoever it can.

because
C. lived in
Putney.

Started by
Lord Harley
(ruining it all)

Here too it will behove a just Historian gratefully to say that Mr. Rokewood, Jocelin's Editor, has done his editorial function well. Not only has he deciphered his crabbed Manuscript into clear print; but he has attended, what his fellow editors are not always in the habit of doing, to the important truth that the Manuscript so deciphered ought to have a meaning for the reader. Standing faithfully by his text, and printing its very errors in spelling, in grammar or otherwise, he has taken care by some note to indicate that they are errors, and what the correction of them ought to be. Jocelin's Monk-Latin is generally transparent, as shallow limpid water. But at any stop that may occur, of which there are a few, and only a very few, we have the comfortable assurance that a meaning does lie in the passage, and may by industry be got at; that a faithful editor's industry had already got at it before passing on. A compendious useful Glossary is given; nearly adequate to help the uninitiated through: sometimes one wishes it had been a trifle larger; but, with a *Spelman* and *Ducange* at your elbow, how easy to have made it far too large! Notes are added, generally brief; sufficiently explanatory of most points. Lastly, a copious correct Index; which no such Book should want, and which unluckily very few possess. And so, in a word, the *Chronicle of Jocelin* is, as it professes to be, unwrapped from its thick cerements, and fairly brought forth into the common daylight, so that he who runs, and has a smattering of grammar, may read.

Prob. the
Latin book
any of the
time

Jocelin's
work).

We have heard so much of Monks; everywhere, in real and fictitious History, from *Muratori Annals* to *Radcliffe Romances*, these singular two-legged animals, with their rosaries and breviaries, with their shaven crowns, hair-cilices, and vows of poverty, masquerade so strangely through our fancy; and

shirts

a glass in which we may read the past
 they are in fact so very strange an extinct species of the human family,—a veritable Monk of Bury St. Edmunds is worth attending to, if by chance made visible and audible. Here he is ; and in his hand a magical speculum, much gone to rust indeed, yet in fragments still clear ; wherein the marvellous image of his existence does still shadow itself, though fitfully, and as with an intermittent light ! Will not the reader peep with us into this singular *camera lucida*, where an extinct species, though fitfully, can still be seen alive ? Extinct species, we say ; for the live specimens which still go about under that character are too evidently to be classed as spurious in Natural History : the Gospel of Richard Arkwright once promulgated, no Monk of the old sort is any longer possible in this world. But fancy a deep-buried Mastodon, some fossil Megatherion, Ichthyosaurus, were to begin to *speak* from amid its rock-swathings, never so indistinctly ! The most extinct fossil species of Men or Monks can do, and does, this miracle,—thanks to the Letters of the Alphabet, good for so many things.

Jocelin, we said, was somewhat of a Boswell ; but unfortunately, by Nature, he is none of the largest, and distance has now dwarfed him to an extreme degree. His light is most feeble, intermittent, and requires the intensest kindest inspection ; otherwise it will disclose mere vacant haze. It must be owned, the good Jocelin, spite of his beautiful child-like character, is but an altogether imperfect ‘mirror’ of these old-world things ! The good man, he looks on us so clear and cheery, and in his neighbourly soft-smiling eyes we see so well our *own* shadow,—we have a longing always to cross-question him, to force from him an explanation of much. But no ; Jocelin, though he talks with such clear familiarity, like a next-door neighbour, will not answer any question : that is the peculiarity of him, dead these six hundred and fifty years, and quite deaf to us, though still so audible ! The good man, he cannot help it, nor can we.

But truly it is a strange consideration this simple one, as we go on with him, or indeed with any lucid simple-hearted soul like him : Behold therefore, this England of the Year 1200 was no chimerical vacuity or dreamland, peopled with mere vaporous Fantasms, Rymer’s Fœdera, and Doctrines of the Constitution ; but a green solid place, that grew corn and several other things. The Sun shone on it ; the vicissitude of

invention of the spinning machine

seasons and human fortunes. Cloth was woven and worn; ditches were dug, furrow-fields ploughed, and houses built. Day by day all men and cattle rose to labour, and night by night returned home weary to their several lairs. In wondrous Dualism, then as now, lived nations of breathing men; alternating, in all ways, between Light and Dark; between joy and sorrow, between rest and toil,—between hope, hope reaching high as Heaven, and fear deep as very Hell. Not vapour Fantasms, Rymer's *Fœdera* at all! Cœur-de-Lion was not a theatrical popinjay with greaves and steel-cap on it, but a man living upon victuals,—*not* imported by Peel's Tariff. Cœur-de-Lion came palpably athwart this Jocelin at St. Edmundsbury; and had almost peeled the sacred gold '*Feretrum*,' or St. Edmund Shrine itself, to ransom him out of the Danube Jail.

These clear eyes of neighbour Jocelin looked on the bodily presence of King John; the very John *Sansterre*, or Lackland, who signed *Magna Charta* afterwards in Runnymede. Lackland, with a great retinue, boarded once, for the matter of a fortnight, in St. Edmundsbury Convent; daily in the very eyesight, palpable to the very fingers of our Jocelin: O Jocelin, what did he say, what did he do; how looked he, lived he;—at the very lowest, what coat or breeches had he on? Jocelin is obstinately silent. Jocelin marks down what interests *him*; entirely deaf to *us*. With Jocelin's eyes we discern almost nothing of John Lackland. As through a glass darkly, we with our own eyes and appliances, intensely looking, discern at most: A blustering, dissipated human figure, with a kind of blackguard quality air, in *cramoisy* velvet, or other uncertain texture, uncertain cut, with much plumage and fringing; amid numerous other human figures of the like; riding abroad with hawks; talking noisy nonsense;—tearing out the bowels of St. Edmundsbury Convent (its larders namely and cellars) in the most ruinous way, by living at rack and manger there. Jocelin notes only, with a slight subacidity of manner, that the King's Majesty, *Dominus Rex*, did leave, as gift for our St. Edmund Shrine, a handsome enough silk cloak,—or rather pretended to leave, for one of his retinue borrowed it of us, and *we* never got sight of it again; and, on the whole, that the *Dominus Rex*, at departing, gave us 'thirteen *sterlingii*,' one shilling and one penny, to say a mass for him; and so departed,—like a shabby Lackland as he was! 'Thirteen pence sterling,' this was what

the Convent got from Lackland, for all the victuals he and his had made away with. We of course said our mass for him, having covenanted to do it,—but let impartial posterity judge with what degree of fervour!

And in this manner vanishes King Lackland; traverses swiftly our strange intermittent magic-mirror, jingling the shabby thirteen pence merely; and rides with his hawks into Egyptian night again. It is Jocelin's manner with all things; and it is men's manner and men's necessity. How intermittent is our good Jocelin; marking down, without eye to *us*, what *he* finds interesting! How much in Jocelin, as in all History, and indeed in all Nature, is at once inscrutable and certain; so dim, yet so indubitable; exciting us to endless considerations. For King Lackland *was* there, verily he; and did leave these *tredecim sterlingii*, if nothing more, and did live and look in one way or the other, and a whole world was living and looking along with him! There, we say, is the grand peculiarity; the immeasurable one; distinguishing, to a really infinite degree, the poorest historical Fact from all Fiction whatsoever. Fiction, 'Imagination,' 'Imaginative Poetry,' &c. &c., except as the vehicle for truth, or *fact* of some sort,—which surely a man should first try various other ways of vehiculating, and conveying safe,—what is it? Let the Minerva and other Presses respond!—

But it is time we were in St. Edmundsbury Monastery, and Seven good Centuries off. If indeed it be possible, by any aid of Jocelin, by any human art, to get thither, with a reader or two still following us?

CHAPTER II.

ST. EDMUNDSBURY.

THE *Burg*, Bury, or 'Berry' as they call it, of St. Edmund is still a prosperous brisk Town; beautifully diversifying, with its clear brick houses, ancient clean streets, and twenty or fifteen thousand busy souls, the general grassy face of Suffolk; looking out right pleasantly, from its hill-slope, towards the rising Sun: and on the eastern edge of it, still runs, long, black and massive, a range of monastic ruins; into the wide

internal spaces of which the stranger is admitted on payment of one shilling. Internal spaces laid out, at present, as a botanic garden. Here stranger or townsman, sauntering at his leisure amid these vast grim venerable ruins, may persuade himself that an Abbey of St. Edmundsbury did once exist; nay there is no doubt of it: see here the ancient massive Gateway, of architecture interesting to the eye of Dilettantism; and farther on, that other ancient Gateway, now about to tumble, unless Dilettantism, in these very months, can subscribe money to cramp it and prop it!

Here, sure enough, is an Abbey; beautiful in the eye of Dilettantism. Giant Pedantry also will step in, with its huge *Dugdale* and other enormous *Monasticons* under its arm, and cheerfully apprise you, That this was a very great Abbey, owner and indeed creator of St. Edmund's Town itself, owner of wide lands and revenues; nay that its lands were once a county of themselves; that indeed King Canute or Knut was very kind to it, and gave St. Edmund his own gold crown off his head, on one occasion: for the rest, that the Monks were of such and such a genus, such and such a number; that they had so many *carucates* of land in this hundred, and so many in that; and then farther that the large Tower or Belfry was built by such a one, and the smaller Belfry was built by &c. &c.—Till human nature can stand no more of it; till human nature desperately take refuge in forgetfulness, almost in flat disbelief of the whole business, Monks, Monastery, Belfries, Carucates and all! Alas, what mountains of dead ashes, wreck and burnt bones, does assiduous Pedantry dig up from the Past Time, and name it History, and Philosophy of History; till, as we say, the human soul sinks wearied and bewildered; till the Past Time seems all one infinite incredible gray void, without sun, stars, hearth-fires, or candle-light; dim offensive dust-whirlwinds filling universal Nature; and over your Historical Library, it is as if all the *Titans* had written for themselves: DRY RUBBISH SHOT HERE!

And yet these grim old walls are not a dilettantism and dubiety; they are an earnest fact. It was a most real and serious purpose they were built for! Yes, another world it was, when these black ruins, white in their new mortar and fresh chiselling, first saw the sun as walls, long ago. Gauge not, with thy dilettante compasses, with that placid dilettante sim-

Sir William Dugdale (1605-1686), accompanied
K. Charles I. during civil war; made herald;
his chief work, written in conjunction
with Roger Juckeworth, was the "Monasticon Anglicanum"

a hundred was
a division of a county
in Eng. supposed
originally to have con-
tained 100 families
or tithemen.

per, the Heaven's-Watchtower of our Fathers, the fallen God's-Houses, the Golgotha of true Souls departed!

Their architecture, belfries, land-carucates? Yes,—and that is but a small item of the matter. Does it never give thee pause, this other strange item of it, that men then had a *soul*,—not by hearsay alone, and as a figure of speech; but as a truth that they *knew*, and practically went upon! Verily it was another world then. Their Missals have become incredible, a sheer platitude, sayest thou? Yes, a most poor platitude; and even, if thou wilt, an idolatry and blasphemy, should any one persuade *thee* to believe them, to pretend praying by them. But yet it is pity we had lost tidings of our souls:—actually we shall have to go in quest of them again, or worse in all ways will befall! A certain degree of soul, as Ben Jonson reminds us, is indispensable to keep the very body from destruction of the frightfullest sort; to 'save us,' says he, 'the expense of *salt*.' Ben has known men who had soul enough to keep their body and five senses from becoming carrion, and save salt:—men, and also Nations. You may look in Manchester Hunger-mobs and Corn-law Commons Houses, and various other quarters, and say whether either soul or else salt is not somewhat wanted at present!—

Another world, truly: and this present poor distressed world might get some profit by looking wisely into it, instead of foolishly. But at lowest, O dilettante friend, let us know always that it *was* a world, and not a void infinite of gray haze with fantasmis swimming in it. These old St. Edmundsbury walls, I say, were not peopled with fantasmis; but with men of flesh and blood, made altogether as we are. Had thou and I then been, who knows but we ourselves had taken refuge from an evil Time, and fled to dwell here, and meditate on an Eternity, in such fashion as we could? Alas, how like an old osseous fragment, a broken blackened shin-bone of the old dead Ages, this black ruin looks out, not yet covered by the soil; still indicating what a once gigantic Life lies buried there! It is dead now, and dumb; but was alive once, and spake. For twenty generations, here was the earthly arena where painful living men worked out their life-wrestle,—looked at by Earth, by Heaven and Hell. Bells tolled to prayers; and men, of many humours, various thoughts, chanted vespers, matins;—and round the little islet of their life rolled forever (as round ours

because salt is put in, or rubbed into meals &c. so that they may not become rotten; it is to preserve them

a fine simile

still rolls, though we are blind and deaf) the illimitable Ocean, tinting all things with *its* eternal hues and reflexes ; making strange prophetic music ! How silent now ; all departed, clean gone. The World-Dramaturgist has written : *Exeunt*. The devouring Time-Demons have made away with it all : and in its stead, there is either nothing ; or what is worse, offensive universal dust-clouds, and gray eclipse of Earth and Heaven, from 'dry rubbish shot here !'—

a beautiful
metaphor

Truly it is no easy matter to get across the chasm of Seven Centuries, filled with such material. But here, of all helps, is not a Boswell the welcomest ; even a small Boswell ? Veracity, true simplicity of heart, how valuable are these always ! He that speaks what is really in him, will find men to listen, though under never such impediments. Even gossip, springing free and cheery from a human heart, this too is a kind of veracity and *speech* ;—much preferable to pedantry and inane gray haze ! Jocelin is weak and garrulous, but he is human. Through the thin watery gossip of our Jocelin, we do get some glimpses of that deep-buried Time ; discern veritably, though in a fitful intermittent manner, these antique figures and their life-method, face to face ! Beautifully, in our earnest loving glance, the old centuries melt from opaque to partially translucent, transparent here and there ; and the void black Night, one finds, is but the summing-up of innumerable peopled luminous *Days*. Not parchment Chartularies, Doctrines of the Constitution, O Dry-asdust ; not altogether, my erudite friend !—

a fine
metaphor

a beautiful
thought

Readers who please to go along with us into this poor *Jocelin's Chronica* shall wander inconveniently enough, as in wintry twilight, through some poor stript hazel-grove, rustling with foolish noises, and perpetually hindering the eyesight ; but across which, here and there, some real human figure is seen moving : very strange ; whom we could hail if he would answer ;—and we look into a pair of eyes deep as our own, *imaging* our own, but all unconscious of us ; to whom we, for the time, are become as spirits and invisible !

CHAPTER III.

LANDLORD EDMUND.

SOME three centuries or so had elapsed since *Beodric's worth*¹ became St. Edmund's *Stow*, St. Edmund's *Town* and Monastery, before Jocelin entered himself a Novice there. 'It was,' says he, 'the year after the Flemings were defeated at *Fornham St. Genevieve*.'

Much passes away into oblivion: this glorious victory over the Flemings at Fornham has, at the present date, greatly dimmed itself out of the minds of men. A victory and battle nevertheless it was, in its time: some thrice-renowned *Earl of Leicester*, not of the *De Montfort* breed (as may be read in *Philosophical* and other *Histories*, could any human memory retain such things), had quarrelled with his sovereign, Henry Second of the name; had been worsted, it is like, and maltreated, and obliged to fly to foreign parts; but had rallied there into new vigour; and so, in the year 1173, returns across the German Sea with a vengeful army of Flemings. Returns, to the coast of Suffolk; to Framlingham Castle, where he is welcomed; westward towards St. Edmundsbury and Fornham Church, where he is met by the constituted authorities with *posse comitatus*; and swiftly cut in pieces, he and his, or laid by the heels; on the right bank of the obscure river Lark,—as traces still existing will verify.

For the river Lark, though not very discoverably, still runs or stagnates in that country; and the battle-ground is there; serving at present as a pleasure-ground to his Grace of North-

¹ Dryasdust puzzles and pokes for some biography of this Beodric; and repugns to consider him a mere East-Anglian Person of Condition, not in need of a biography,—whose peopð, *weorth* or *worth*, that is to say, *Growth*, *Increase*, or as we should now name it, *Estate*, that same Hamlet and wood Mansion, now St. Edmund's Bury, originally was. For, adds our erudite Friend, the Saxon peopðan, equivalent to the German *werden*, means to *grow*, to *become*; traces of which old vocable are still found in the North-country dialects; as, 'What is *word* of him?' meaning, 'What is *become* of him?' and the like. Nay we in modern English still say, 'Woe *worth* the hour' (Woe *befall* the hour), and speak of the '*Weird* Sisters;' not to mention the innumerable other names of places still ending in *weorth* or *worth*. And indeed, our common noun *worth*, in the sense of *value*, does not this mean simply, What a thing has *grown* to, What a man has *grown* to, How much he amounts to,—by the Threadneedle-street standard or another!

umberland. Copper pennies of Henry II. are still found there; —rotted out from the pouches of poor slain soldiers, who had not had time to buy liquor with them. In the river Lark itself was fished up, within man's memory, an antique gold ring; which fond Dilettantism can almost believe may have been the very ring Countess Leicester threw away, in her flight, into that same Lark river or ditch.² Nay, few years ago, in tearing out an enormous superannuated ash-tree, now grown quite corpulent, bursten, superfluous, but long a fixture in the soil, and not to be dislodged without revolution,—there was laid bare, under its roots, 'a circular mound of skeletons wonderfully complete,' all radiating from a centre, faces upwards, feet inwards; a 'radiation' not of Light, but of the Nether Darkness rather; and evidently the fruit of battle; for 'many of the heads were cleft, or had arrow-holes in them.' The Battle of Fornham, therefore, is a fact, though a forgotten one; no less obscure than undeniable,—like so many other facts.

Sarcasm.

Like the St. Edmund's Monastery itself! Who can doubt, after what we have said, that there was a Monastery here at one time? No doubt at all there was a Monastery here; no doubt, some three centuries prior to this Fornham Battle, there dwelt a man in these parts of the name of Edmund, King, Landlord, Duke or whatever his title was, of the Eastern Counties; —and a very singular man and landlord he must have been.

For his tenants, it would appear, did not in the least complain of him; his labourers did not think of burning his wheat-stacks, breaking into his game-preserves; very far the reverse of all that. Clear evidence, satisfactory even to my friend Dryasdust, exists that, on the contrary, they honoured, loved, admired this ancient Landlord to a quite astonishing degree,—and indeed at last to an immeasurable and inexpressible degree; for, finding no limits or utterable words for their sense of his worth, they took to beatifying and adoring him! 'Infinite admiration,' we are taught, 'means worship.'

irony

Very singular,—could we discover it! What Edmund's specific duties were; above all, what his method of discharging them with such results was, would surely be interesting to know; but are *not* very discoverable now. His Life has become a poetic, nay a religious *Mythus*; though, undeniably enough, it

² Lyttelton's *History of Henry II.* (2d edition), v. 169, &c.

breeches. was once a prose Fact, as our poor lives are ; and even a very rugged unmanageable one. This landlord Edmund did go about in leather shoes, with *femoralia* and bodycoat of some sort on him ; and daily had his breakfast to procure ; and daily had contradictory speeches, and most contradictory facts not a few, to reconcile with himself. No man becomes a Saint in his sleep. Edmund, for instance, instead of *reconciling* those same contradictory facts and speeches to himself,—which means *subduing*, and in a manlike and godlike manner conquering them to himself,—might have merely thrown new contention into them, new unwisdom into them, and so been conquered *by* them ; much the commoner case ! In that way he had proved no ‘Saint,’ or Divine-looking Man, but a mere Sinner, and unfortunate, blameable, more or less Diabolic-looking man ! No landlord Edmund becomes infinitely admirable in his sleep.

With what degree of wholesome rigour his rents were collected, we hear not. Still less by what methods he preserved his game, whether by ‘bushing’ or how,—and if the partridge-seasons were ‘excellent,’ or were indifferent. Neither do we ascertain what kind of Corn-bill he passed, or wisely-adjusted Sliding-scale :—but indeed there were few spinners in those days ; and the nuisance of spinning, and other dusty labour, was not yet so glaring a one.

How then, it may be asked, did this Edmund rise into favour ; become to such astonishing extent a recognised Farmer’s Friend ? Really, except it were by doing justly and loving mercy to an unprecedented extent, one does not know. The man, it would seem, ‘had walked,’ as they say, ‘humbly with God ;’ humbly and valiantly with God ; struggling to make the Earth heavenly as he could : instead of walking sumptuously and pridefully with Mammon, leaving the Earth to grow hellish as it liked. Not sumptuously with Mammon ? How then could he ‘encourage trade,’—cause Howel and James, and many wine-merchants, to bless him, and the tailor’s heart (though in a very short-sighted manner) to sing for joy ? Much in this Edmund’s Life is mysterious.

That he could, on occasion, do what he liked with his own, is meanwhile evident enough. Certain Heathen Physical-Force Ultra-Chartists, ‘Danes’ as they were then called, coming into his territory with their ‘five points,’ or rather with their five-and-twenty thousand *points* and edges too, of pikes namely and

battle-axes; and proposing mere Heathenism, confiscation, spoliation, and fire and sword,—Edmund answered that he would oppose to the utmost such savagery. They took him prisoner; again required his sanction to said proposals. Edmund again refused. Cannot we kill you? cried they.—Cannot I die? answered he. My life, I think, is my own to do what I like with! And he died, under barbarous tortures, refusing to the last breath; and the Ultra-Chartist Danes *lost* their propositions;—and went with their ‘points’ and other apparatus, as is supposed, to the Devil, the Father of them. Some say, indeed, these Danes were not Ultra-Chartists, but Ultra-Tories, demanding to reap where they had not sown, and live in this world without working, though all the world should starve for it; which likewise seems a possible hypothesis. Be what they might, they went, as we say, to the Devil; and Edmund doing what he liked with his own, the Earth was got cleared of them.

5 points
Danes
wished

Another version is, that Edmund on this and the like occasions stood by his order; the oldest, and indeed only true order of Nobility known under the stars, that of Just Men and Sons of God, in opposition to Unjust and Sons of Belial,—which latter indeed are *second*-oldest, but yet a very unvenerable order. This, truly, seems the likeliest hypothesis of all. Names and appearances alter so strangely, in some half-score centuries; and all fluctuates chameleon-like, taking now this hue, now that. Thus much is very plain, and does not change hue: Landlord Edmund was seen and felt by all men to have done verily a man’s part in this life-pilgrimage of his; and benedictions, and outflowing love and admiration from the universal heart, were his meed. Well-done! Well-done! cried the hearts of all men. They raised his slain and martyred body; washed its wounds with fast-flowing universal tears; tears of endless pity, and yet of a sacred joy and triumph. The beautifullest kind of tears,—indeed perhaps the beautifullest kind of thing: like a sky all flashing diamonds and prismatic radiance; all weeping, yet shone on by the everlasting Sun:—and *this* is not a sky, it is a Soul and living Face! Nothing liker the *Temple of the Highest*, bright with some real effulgence of the Highest, is seen in this world.

an incarnation
of iniquity, and
son of perdition.

Oh, if all Yankee-land follow a small good ‘Schnüspel the distinguished Novelist’ with blazing torches, dinner-invitations,

Charles Dickens

universal hep-hep-hurrah, feeling that he, though small, *is* something; how might all Angle-land once follow a hero-martyr and great true Son of Heaven! It is the very joy of man's heart to admire, where he can; nothing so lifts him from all his mean imprisonments, were it but for moments, as true admiration. Thus it has been said, 'all men, especially all women, are born worshippers;' and will worship, if it be but possible. Possible to worship a Something, even a small one; not so possible a mere loud-blaring Nothing! What sight is more pathetic than that of poor multitudes of persons met to gaze at Kings' Progresses, Lord Mayors' Shows, and other gilt-gingerbread phenomena of the worshipful sort, in these times; each so eager to worship; each, with a dim fatal sense of disappointment, finding that he cannot rightly here! These be thy gods, O Israel? And thou art so *willing* to worship,—poor Israel!

In this manner, however, did the men of the Eastern Counties take up the slain body of their Edmund, where it lay cast forth in the village of Hoxne; seek out the severed head, and reverently reunite the same. They embalmed him with myrrh and sweet spices, with love, pity, and all high and awful thoughts; consecrating him with a very storm of melodious adoring admiration, and sun-dyed showers of tears;—joyfully, yet with awe (as all deep joy has something of the awful in it), commemorating his noble deeds and godlike walk and conversation while on Earth. Till, at length, the very Pope and Cardinals at Rome were forced to hear of it; and they, summing up as correctly as they well could, with *Advocatus-Diaboli* pleadings and their other forms of process, the general verdict of mankind, declared: That he had, in very fact, led a hero's life in this world; and being now *gone*, was gone, as they conceived, to God above, and reaping his reward *there*. Such, they said, was the best judgment they could form of the case;—and truly not a bad judgment. Acquiesced in, zealously adopted, with full assent of 'private judgment,' by all mortals.

The rest of St. Edmund's history, for the reader sees he has now become a *Saint*, is easily conceivable. Pious munificence provided him a *loculus*, a *feretrum* or shrine; built for him a wooden chapel, a stone temple, ever widening and growing by new pious gifts;—such the overflowing heart feels it a

blessedness to solace itself by giving. St. Edmund's Shrine glitters now with diamond flowerages, with a plating of wrought gold. The wooden chapel, as we say, has become a stone temple. Stately masonries, long-drawn arches, cloisters, sounding aisles buttress it, begirdle it far and wide. Regimented companies of men, of whom our Jocelin is one, devote themselves, in every generation, to meditate here on man's Nobleness and Awfulness, and celebrate and show forth the same, as they best can,—thinking they will do it better here, in presence of God the Maker, and of the so Awful and so Noble made by Him. In one word, St. Edmund's Body has raised a Monastery round it. To such length, in such manner, has the Spirit of the Time visibly taken body, and crystallised itself here. New gifts, houses, farms, *katala*³—come ever in. King Knut, whom men call Canute, whom the Oceantide would not be forbidden to wet,—we heard already of this wise King, with his crown and gifts; but of many others, Kings, Queens, wise men and noble loyal women, let Dryasdust and divine Silence be the record! Beodric's-Worth has become St. Edmund's *Bury*;—and lasts visible to this hour. All this that thou now seest, and namest Bury Town, is properly the Funeral Monument of Saint or Landlord Edmund. The present respectable Mayor of Bury may be said, like a Fakeer (little as he thinks of it), to have his dwelling in the extensive, many-sculptured Tombstone of St. Edmund; in one of the brick niches thereof dwells the present respectable Mayor of Bury.

Certain Times do crystallise themselves in a magnificent manner; and others, perhaps, are like to do it in rather a shabby one!—But Richard Arkwright too will have his Monument, a thousand years hence: all Lancashire and Yorkshire, and how many other shires and countries, with their machineries and industries, for his monument! A true *pyramid* or '*flame-mountain*,' flaming with steam fires and useful labour over wide continents, usefully towards the Stars, to a certain height;—how much grander than your foolish Cheops Pyramids or Sak-hara clay ones! Let us withal be hopeful, be content or patient.

³ Goods, properties; what we now call *chattels*, and still more singularly *cattle*, says my erudite friend!

*etymologic
al explanation*

CHAPTER IV.

ABBOT HUGO.

It is true all things have two faces, a light one and a dark. It is true, in three centuries much imperfection accumulates; many an Ideal, monastic or other, shooting forth into practice as it can, grows to a strange enough Reality; and we have to ask with amazement, Is this your Ideal! For, alas, the Ideal always has to grow in the Real, and to seek out its bed and board there, often in a very sorry way. No beautifullest Poet is a Bird-of-Paradise, living on perfumes; sleeping in the æther with outspread wings. The Heroic, *independent* of bed and board, is found in Drury-Lane Theatre only; to avoid disappointments, let us bear this in mind.

By the law of Nature, too, all manner of Ideals have their fatal limits and lot; their appointed periods, of youth, of maturity or perfection, of decline, degradation, and final death and disappearance. There is nothing born but has to die. Ideal monasteries, once grown real, do seek bed and board in this world; do find it more and more successfully; do get at length too intent on finding it, exclusively intent on that. They are then like diseased corpulent bodies fallen idiotic, which merely eat and sleep; *ready* for 'dissolution,' by a Henry the Eighth or some other. Jocelin's St. Edmundsbury is still far from this last dreadful state: but here too the reader will prepare himself to see an Ideal not sleeping in the æther like a bird-of-paradise, but roosting as the common wood-fowl do, in an imperfect, uncomfortable, more or less contemptible manner!—

Abbot Hugo, as Jocelin, breaking at once into the heart of the business, apprises us, had in those days grown old, grown rather blind, and his eyes were somewhat darkened, *aliquantulum caligaverunt oculi ejus*. He dwelt apart very much, in his *Talamus* or peculiar Chamber; got into the hands of flatterers, a set of mealy-mouthed persons who strove to make the passing hour easy for him,—for him easy, and for themselves profitable; accumulating in the distance mere mountains of confusion. Old Dominus Hugo sat inaccessible in this way, far in the interior, wrapt in his warm flannels and delusions;