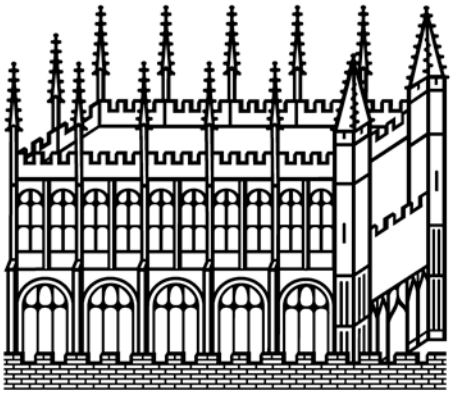

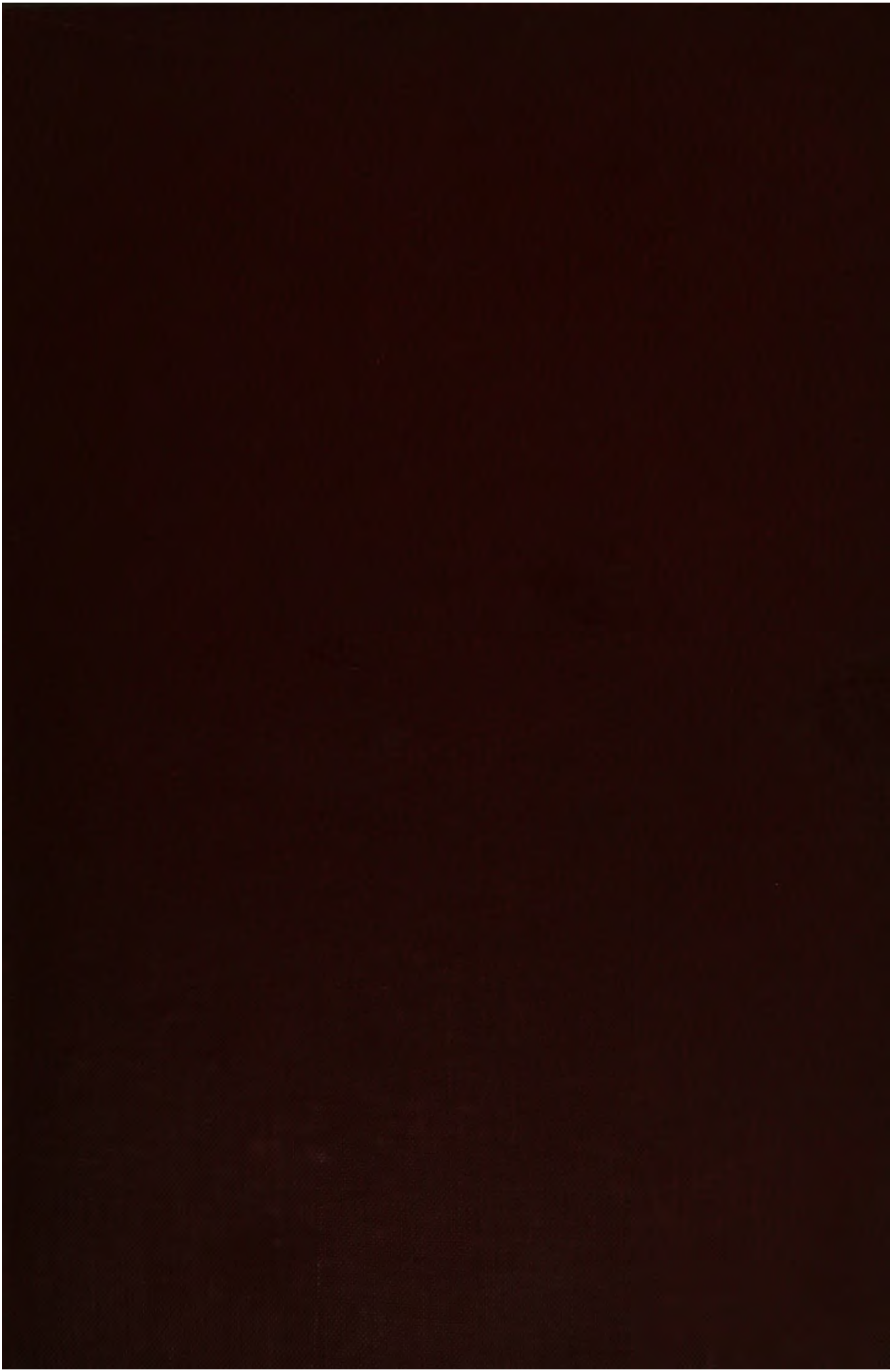




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MARTIN LUTHER.

GERMAN STUDENT LIFE.

POETRY.

PUBLISHED BY

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# MARTIN LUTHER.

# GERMAN STUDENT LIFE.

# POETRY.

*FROM THE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE LATE*

WILLIAM B. ROBERTSON, D.D.,
IRVINE.

GLASGOW:
JAMES MACLEHOSE & SONS,
Publishers to the University.
1891.

To

DAVID M'COWAN Esq.

THE FRIEND

OF

W. B. ROBERTSON,

THIS VOLUME

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.

# PREFACE.

THIS little volume does not profess to give the lectures indicated on the title-page in all the completeness with which they were delivered. The improvisings, which were so characteristic a feature in the oral lecture, cannot be reproduced, and consequently much of the charm is lost, as well as considerable wealth of illustration. But in the manuscripts which contain at least all the germs of the thought, if not the fully expanded flower, so much has been found which seems worthy of preservation, that, at the urgent request of many friends, this volume is now offered, though somewhat timidly, to the public.

"German Student Life" was originally delivered more than thirty years ago;

"Martin Luther" and "Poetry," several years later; and although their freshness was maintained by frequent re-delivery down to a more recent period, they may be regarded, in some of their allusions, as out of date, by the present-day reader; but if there is nothing in them that contributes to the special demands of modern inquiry, they may not be wanting in historical interest, not only in their descriptive elements, but as recording—especially in "German Student Life"—moods and phases of philosophy and religious thought that have in large measure passed away.

In the work of editing, care has been taken to adhere strictly to the manuscripts, and where these were found to be illegible, the omissions have been indicated. If, in a few instances, the style be felt to be irregular and conversational, the sentences unwieldy, and the thought incomplete, it must be remembered that the lectures were not written for publication, and are given now in the hope that the reader will be

generous in his criticism, and will attribute whatever is defective to the disadvantages under which the work has been done.

Many who read this volume will sadly miss the hand of Dr. James Brown, who, it was hoped, would have edited it, and whose touch would have set it before the public in worthy form. But he has gone, and the tender grace and literary power which he would have brought into the work have gone with him.

Thanks are warmly rendered to the Rev. Principal Cairns and the Rev. Andrew Carter for valuable counsel in looking over the manuscripts and proofs.

J. A. R.

*November*, 1891.

# CONTENTS.

# MARTIN LUTHER.

THE bells have tolled eleven on St. Martin's Eve, in the little Saxon town of Eisleben. It is a dark November night—the 10th November, 1483, the watchman singing under the windows,—

"Hört Ihr Leute und lasst euch sagen
Es hat die Glocke eilf geschlagen,—"

"Hear, good people, and let me tell,
Eleven has struck on the old church bell,
Eleven apostles went there forth
Preaching truth through all the earth."

Just then was heard in a small room in this Eisleben town, the first faint crying of a voice that afterwards was destined to take up the truth of the Eleven, and shout it with a sound like thunder through the earth. It was the infant voice of Martin Luther.

His mother Margaret, or "Greta," was a peasant's daughter from the neighbouring woodlands of Thuringia: his father Hans, or John, a miner from the copper mines of Mansfeldt, six miles up the road to the Hartz, and, ever since the day when Hans had taken the woman "Greta" to be his wife, they had lived and loved together in the miner's hut, and had served God according to their light—he, digging in the mines, she, darning the miner's dress, and doing other household work—until that day, that fair at Martinmas, when they went down to Eisleben, to make their winter market, and when, a little unexpectedly as it would seem, their famous son was born. "My father was a peasant, Philip," Luther would say in after times when talking with Melancthon about astronomy and the stars, "my father was a peasant first, a miner afterwards; and grandfather and great-grandfather, all of them were peasants, Philip. That I should afterwards

become a Doctor of Divinity and all what not, was surely never written in the stars. How everybody was surprised when I turned monk, and still more when I turned something else, and got to pulling the Pope about by the hair of the head, and married a runaway nun! These things, Philip, were surely never written in the stars!" No, Martin Luther, no; for as thou knowest very well there is One above the stars that worketh all things in His own mysterious way, and never illuminated the celestial windows with a star device that men could read, saving once at Bethlehem—as thou knowest too, very well—on the occasion of the marriage of the Royallest of Princes to the lowly daughter of our humanity, and on the occasion of a birth as humble in its way as that at Eisleben!

And yet, although not written in the stars, the early life of Martin was not without some presage of his future destiny, as we may see more clearly now when

reading that life backwards as we do. For as the name of Luther in old German has the meaning *pure*, so father Hans, immediately the boy was born, prayed God that he would make him "*Lutte*," *pure*, and make him too the means of propagating "*Lutte Wahrheit*," or *pure truth*. And then next morning, which is St. Martin's Day, he is carried to the church and is baptized as *Martin* Luther, and as St. Martin in the legend, giving away loaves to the poor from underneath his mantle, is the type of generosity, it may be that St. Martin's mantle in some way has dropped upon the boy, as the runaway nun may come to know to her cost after she has married him, when he insists on giving away the household loaves to the poor beggars at the door.

At Mansfeldt, to which Greta carries home her boy up the hill road—at Mansfeldt he is early sent to school, a mining village school of rudest type, where he gets

flogged, he tells us, fifteen times in one day by the savage schoolmaster to make him learn the Ten Commandments and his 'Paternoster'—ten floggings for the Commandments, and five for the Paternoster—and even at home he gets whipped too sometimes for very trifles, sometimes till the blood came. Rough usage certainly, but it betokens an outcome of strong will in the boy that would not yield even to paternal rule, and that shall bring him into sorer trouble yet, when he shall come to struggle with that strict schoolmaster God's law, beneath the rod of discipline.

And then we see him, the little Martin Luther, carrying faggots at his mother's heels to light the miner's smelting furnaces; no far off picture, some may think, of carrying fuel to another fire in which the social life of Christendom is yet to be smelted and recast, "because," as Carlyle truly says, "that hardship's rigorous necessity was the poor boy's companion, that

so he might be made acquainted with realities, not with the ornamentation and the show of things; his mission being to bring back the real truth to the world."

And then those scenes of terror, and those shapes of horror haunting him in early manhood, when his conscience was awakened in the convent, they seem to us the reproduction in the spiritual sphere—the sublimated reproduction — of those very scenes and shapes with which the miner's boy of Mansfeldt must have been familiar, the charred and cheerless wastes that stretch around the town, those hill-side caverns in which grim troops of miners disappeared, those roaring furnaces that glare all night through dark pine woods with black and spectral figures gliding to and fro about the scarlet fire! Be sure all that will come back to his mind when in the convent he shall struggle with the terrors of the law, the "Dies Iræ" and the "Everlasting burnings"; and that he shall remember too the tales

of hideous goblins, hideous yet grotesque, not gentlemanly classical forms at all, and still less "midsummer night dreams" of ethereal elves or fairies, but coarse, strong, stupid, blind goblins of the giant type, with which the peasant literature of Germany is full, especially upon its northern Scandinavian borders, and most of all among the miners and the charcoal burners in Thuringian woods. Think how the miner's boy would listen in his childhood to the legends of that grim but yet grotesque *Teufelchen* that haunted the dark woods. Think how the school-boy Martin with satchel in his hand, and whistling aloud to keep his courage up in passing through the darkening woods at dusk, would hear the sound of something purring at his heels, something that never was a classical form of evil, and still less an ethereal elf or fairy, but always some coarse, strong, stupid, blind Orson of the woods. And you may wonder less that in his after life the devil that Luther battled

with, the devil that the Holy Scripture had revealed to him, was not so much the fallen archangel of "Paradise Lost," or the Mephistopheles of Goethe's "Faust," but rather the vulgar horned devil with the hoof and with the tail, that required to be vanquished, not only by Scripture, but by scorn, not only by faith, but by downright physical fighting, and not only by prayer, but by pitching the inkstand at his head.

And lastly, the very fact that he was born and bred a peasant rather than a prince, belongs to the prognostication of his future fame, for—not to speak here of a certain Son of a carpenter to whom in lowliness of birth the miner's son was not unlike, and who has wreathed the crown of roses round the brow of manual toil, and made the symbols of rude labour on the waggon and the plough as honourable as the insignia of royalty emblazoned on the chariot and the throne—the labouring life of Germany and of all Europe was then struggling for emancipation from its

feudal vassalage. In the cities it was already free, and had shaken off the yoke—in Ghent, for example, where the 80,000 Flemings had marched away with "the pin of the beam and with the web,"—but the "Samson Agonistes" of the fields and mines, the "Samson Agonistes" of the rural districts was now struggling after them for liberty, refusing to grind corn any longer to the feudal lords, feeling about for the pillars of feudal tyranny to throw them down, the peasants and miners groaning for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage; and it only needed that some one from among them should arise and be their leader, and the hero of their exodus. And that man was Martin Luther, who fought the battle and who won it too, —and that without even drawing a sword, —when standing on the floor at Worms, the peasant among princes, the miner's son against the mightiest of the world; he standing on the floor, they sitting on the form of Church and State; he by his very

attitude affirming what since has proved the word of freedom all the world over, and as a poet of our own has put it—a peasant, a Scotch peasant too, and one who bore to Luther much resemblance—

> "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man's the gowd for a' that."

If the boyhood of Luther had its bitterness, it had its sweetenings too. And these were mainly his mother's love; for God's own love he did not know as yet, excepting through its highest natural exponent in the holy priesthood of a mother's love, the Urim and the Thummim on a mother's breast. He had a strong, robust constitution, a heritage from peasant ancestry, and something too that does not always come with that—a strong love for the beautiful—that haunted him like a passion all his days. And though the cradle of the German Reformation was not hung, like the Genevan, among Alpine mountains with their tinted snows and lapis-lazuli lake, where the face of

the most beautiful mother nature might bend itself over the cradled babe; though it was rather swung in German mists and Scandinavian storms, yet here too there were always brilliant sunsets on the crimson woods, and sapphire night with its emblazonry of golden stars, at which the soul of the young Luther, thirsting for the beautiful, might drink; where, like the boy in Wordsworth's sonnet, hunting owls at dusk among the woods, and having mimicked their strange hooting well, and listening for the response in anxious pain of expectancy, the beauty of the dewy night was carried far into his heart.

And there were choruses of Mansfeldt miners too, predicting in their rude, chaotic harmony the grand creations of the Lutheran chorales! And something that aye comes with this strong passion for the beautiful, there was a certain pensive sadness, a certain nameless melancholy, a certain longing *Sehnsucht* as the Germans call it, a yearning after lost

ideals, that often filled young Luther's eyes with tears, though these again were dashed away by the roving, rollicking humour that was in him, and that would burst out in frolic and in fun, though that again was sobered down into a sterner sadness by the terrors that were always haunting him, the terrors of God's law, of the "Dies Iræ" and the "Everlasting burnings."

For such, or something such, was that young composite of varied and alternate passion and emotion that rose and fell in mystic and alternate play in the young Luther's life, not yet compacted into one harmonious whole through peace with God, not yet consolidated by the *δικαιοσύνη*, the "righteousness of God," which shows, upon the objective or outward side, the blending of that wrath and love—that terrible and tender in the heart of God—of which our own alternate fears and hopes and griefs and joys are the subjective or inward poles, and which, and which alone,

can blend and reconcile them into one, as mysticism by its inward stirrings and outcome of emotion never could do,—that δικαιοσύνη, that "righteousness of God" revealed to faith, that harmonist of discord in the soul—the reconciling δικαιοσύνη!

To this then the young Luther is journeying on, through school at Magdeburg, and school at Eisenach, and singing through the streets of Eisenach as a poor begging school boy, when, with his flute-toned voice, he wins his way into the home and heart of that good Shunammite, the Madame Cotta, who gives him his table, and his bed, and his chamber on the wall, and brings him nearer, from the hardships of his youth and the stern world outside, into the love of God, of which she also in her measure is a priestess, with the Urim and the Thummim on her breast.

Meantime the mines at Mansfeldt have produced some gold, and the furnaces are burning cheerily. They have made father

Hans a councillor, an "*Ober-Rath*," "*Geheim-Rath*," or some other kind of "*Rath*," in short a sort of "Bailie Nicol Jarvie," in the Saltmarket of Mansfeldt, and nothing will please him, now that he can well afford it, but that Martin must go to the college at Erfurt, and develop his young genius before the German public, through the grandeur of the "*Rathhaus*" and the study of the law.

But God has quite a different road for Martin, and it lies through a thunderstorm and a convent, to the blessed knowledge of the δικαιοσύνη, and the brave battle with the Pope and the Devil.

His studies at the University of Erfurt develop both his genius and his fame. The "Corpus Juris" truly is too dry and dusty for his taste, and so too are the barren subtleties of Scotus and Aquinas and the schoolmen. More to his mind is the classical Latinity of Cicero and Virgil; still more, the literature of gay romance, of minne-singers and trouba-

dours, the mystic books of Tauler and Teutonic Knights; or rather, most of all he studies music,—the only one of the studies that he held on to love to the last, for he himself had a most pleasant voice, and could play well upon an instrument.

Nevertheless he studies conscientiously at "Corpus Juris," and the schoolmen too, and brings himself down even to death's door with sore study, from which however he comes up again to be capped as doctor, and gowned as professor at the early age of twenty-two, and serenaded with a brilliant torch procession, through the Erfurt streets, as the first man, the most famous of his university.

All this is very pleasing to his father Hans, and mother Greta too. He visits them in their grim Mansfeldt village in the holidays. But there is something brooding over his brow, some trouble that he cannot or will not explain, the consequence perhaps of his sore study and his recent illness, and what is it?

The fact is, he has found in Erfurt library a certain rare old Latin book, the Vulgate, and that Vulgate is a Latin version of the Bible, and he has read and read, and has been reading at it day and night, and it has showed him this, that there is more of God's Word in the world than he had wist, and more than priests seemed to wish men to know,—a troubling thought for young Martin this, but not without its comforts too.

He is returning through the woods to Erfurt, the thunder rolling over the Thuringian woods, on a hot and sultry summer day, and the riddle of this painful life—the question of the awful sphinx that sits so sternly dumb at the gates of the opening temple of maturing manhood, the question every one is asking but cannot solve—presses itself more powerfully than ever on his mind. "What am I? Where am I? Whither am I going? 'Going to hell,' the priests said, 'to the Dies Iræ and the Everlasting burnings,'

unless saved somehow; and the old Latin book has said the same; and how then saved? 'By fasting and by prayers' the priests have said—St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose and St. Austen all have said 'By fasting and by prayers,' and the old Latin book has said the same. 'St. Anna served God by fasting and by prayers.'"

The road to heaven lies through the monastery; but that is a dreary road, and a sore sounding of bells to young Martin Luther! But, on the other hand, what says the book? Yes, the old Latin book that has asked "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?"—and what a rattling peal of thunder shakes the trees, and echoes over the Thuringian woods, like some unseen spirit sounding the "Dies Iræ"—

> "Rolling trumpets, shatt'ring thunder,
> Rending realms of tombs asunder,
> Driving all the Great Throne under"—

and lightning—blazing—dazzling—glittering round thee, like shining feet of the

descending Judge! and what if the next thunderbolt should strike thee dead! Were it not better after all to resolve to be a monk and save thy soul "by fasting and by prayers," for see! the thunder cloud grows dark again! comes nearer! stoops over thee! and from its bosom, its black bosom, leaps the blaze of the thunderbolt and strikes? no,—does not strike him down,—but tears the very ground up at his feet. "Help! Help! St. Anna! and I'll be a monk! God speaks to me, and I'll be a monk! to save my soul by fasting and by prayers!"—and so the vow is sworn, is sworn beneath God's glittering thunderstorm, and Luther vows to be a monk and to go into a monastery.

St. Paul had something of the same experience upon the high road to Damascus, but it did not conduct *him* to the monastery, or to what Pharisaic institutions in these days may have represented it. It led him by a shorter and directer road to God's peace and δικαιοσύνη!

But now it is evening, and the lamps are lighted in the young Professor's rooms, and student guests he has invited in are laughing and singing, eating and drinking, and making merry, when suddenly Luther announces his intention of retiring to the cloister. They are confounded! they will not believe him! But so indeed it is, and not many nights after, when the compline bell is ringing, he knocks at the low door of the Augustinian convent. The old monk, with his night-cap on, takes him in. The door, upon its grating iron hinges, is slammed to behind him, and he is separated from the world, and when his young friends enquire for him, he is not to be seen—"he is dead to the world" he says, "and they may go to him, but he shall not return to them."

And now begin those struggles to be saved, and that deliverance, that have rehearsed within four convent walls, and in the experience of a single soul, the whole

of the succeeding drama of the Reformation.

The new-made monk submits determinedly to all the drudgery of the novitiate, sweeps the cell floors, opens and shuts the church, winds up the clock, and, with the monastery sack upon his back, goes forth into the Erfurt streets to beg. "If ever monk was saved by monkery," he says, "it ought to have been Martin Luther. If St. Augustine went to heaven by cloister walls, I should have done so too. I fasted, I watched, I prayed, I mortified, I observed all the Cenobite austerities, till I had literally nearly killed myself." For he would fast for four days on a stretch, or even more. And now when weak with fasting, and when worn out with prayer, the terrors of the "Dies Iræ" are upon him, and all the Mansfeldt furnaces are burning in his soul. No "Gloria" can he sing, but only piteous "Miserere mei's," and when the "Miserere" is singing in the Mass, he starts as

if some frightful figure were about to seize him, he starts and shrieks, "It is not I," and then he disappears for a whole week, and when they seek him, he is found within his bolted cell—of which the door has to be broken open—and stretched upon the stone floor before a crucifix, pale, haggard, motionless, to all appearance dead, until at length he is revived by music, heavenly music. It brought him back even from the gates of death. The chanting of a band of youthful choristers, around that marble image of despair, recalled him from his death-like swoon.

But something more was needed here than music to charm away the misery that was within his soul. That something more he found in the old Latin book, he found in the prophet's word, "The just shall live by faith," in the teaching of the old monk Staupitz, who explained to him the "Credo," "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," and explained

the δικαιοσύνη, the "righteousness of God," that it was not the wrath of God for the destruction of the sinner, but God's grace and justice blended in the blood propitiatory of the Cross for his salvation. The δικαιοσύνη is not the fury of the "Dies Iræ." The Furies have been put to sleep in the temple of peace beneath the altar of atonement, whence Grace looks forth through holy beauty and the sprinkled blood to save, so that God is just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly.

In short, as Carlyle says, "I hope that as a sinner Luther found that souls are saved, not by singing masses, but by the infinite grace of God, a more credible hypothesis"; and "this," says Luther, "was the opening of the gates of Paradise to me. I ceased from monkish working, and entered through believing into righteousness and rest. All those texts of terror that had pounced upon me like so many furies hitherto, they leaped and

danced and sang for very gladness round me now."

And so there was rehearsed within four convent walls, and the experience of a single soul, the whole of the succeeding drama of the Reformation. For if it be inquired what was the principle, the leading thought and key-note of the German Reformation, it seems to me there is but one reply—it was the doctrine of "justification by faith" alone.

As distinguished from the Swiss Reformation whose principle and leading thought was, "The word of God alone," the German Reformation for its principle and starting point took rather this, "Justification by faith" alone; but the one you will see is only the objective of that of which the other, the German, is the subjective, and the two, when worked out into practice, become eventually the same.

. . . . . .

"I had not known Christ hitherto," says Luther, "I only knew Him as the crucified,

dead Christ, or as the little babe in Virgin Mother's arms. I did not know Him as the living personal Saviour." For they had two Christs in the mediæval time—the one, the crucified, dead Christ that men had murdered, and that was coming back in the day of wrath to take most terrible vengeance unless they crucified the flesh—in confession at His feet—as He Himself was crucified; and the other was the baby Christ, the child in Virgin Mother's arms—the one, Christ the avenger, the other, Christ the comforter. But the two could not be made to harmonize, because the "Crucified" proclaimed only doom, and because the "Babe" had made no atonement, and so they knelt alternately with trembling hope around the cradle, and with terrible agony around the Cross, and found no peace.

But betwixt the two, and uniting both, there is a living personal Saviour that liveth and was dead, and who by His agony and bloody sweat, by His cross

and passion, by His death and burial, and by His resurrection and ascension has shut up hell and opened the kingdom of heaven, and this was He—the personal living Saviour who came and knocked at the door of the Augustinian convent, and Luther heard His voice and opened the door, and He came in and dwelt and supped with him.

It is true that Luther's doctrine was at first exceedingly defective. Nor was it until some years afterwards when climbing Pilate's stairs upon his knees, no longer to do penance for his sins—but still, he thought, to mortify the flesh and purify his soul—it suddenly flashed in on him what that text meant, "The just shall live by faith," and he leapt up on the stairs shouting, "I have found it. Souls are not only justified by faith alone but sanctified, purified by faith alone as well,"—and so he found the deepest meaning of that favourite text of his, and the circle of the Lutheran theology became complete.

But this conducts us to another chapter of the history of Luther: for to his faith, he now adds virtue,—bravery,—he adds to his faith the bold confession of the truth.

The scene now shifts to Wittemberg upon the flats of Upper Saxony; Wittemberg the Medina of the Reformation, as Eisleben was its Mecca. A somewhat longish, narrow, old-walled town this Wittemberg, consisting mainly of a single street that stretches from the Castle Church at the western gate to the Market Church at the centre, and then past the tall house with its peaked gables in which Melancthon studies, and the belfried monastery of Augustine, retired within a gate and convent where Luther comes to live, on to the Elster gate, where the Papal Bull is to be burnt under the oak, and the frogs in the Elster ditch are croaking—for Luther has not excommunicated *them* yet —and where the windows in the town wall

open to the sunrise. For such, or something such, was Wittemberg, when, in the eighth year of the sixteenth century, the good Elector Friedrich of Saxony made it the seat of a Saxon University, with Dr. Martin Pollich for the Rector, and Dr. Martin Luther on the professorial staff.

The sandalled monk stands in his lecture room; no dilettante teacher this! but a John Baptist rather in his leathern girdle—the schoolmen to the dogs!—he lectures on repentance and the remission of sins, Paul's Epistles, and David's penitential Psalms. And Rector Pollich says, "This monk of ours will puzzle all our doctors yet, he brings new doctrines out of God's old word,"—no doubt he will, Herr Rector! wait and see.

And there in Luther's lecture room are students from all European nations: Spaniards from the Alhambra and the kindling of Inquisitorial fires; Italians from the tomb of Savonarola; Waldenses

from their Alpine native glens; Swiss from the cradle of Genevan and Bernese Reformation; Frenchmen from the feet of Reuchlin; Dutchmen from the feet of Erasmus; Englishmen and Scotchmen from the land of Wicliffe, and standing side by side with these, countrymen of Hamlet the Dane—thoughtful Hamlet—whom Shakespeare sends to study at that time in Wittemberg.

Luther is standing there at the centre,—the centre of a mighty wheel that streams its radii through the whole circle of the European nations, and he speaks boldly as he ought to speak—there in the focus of the widest spiritual influence, for his is not a nature of the Hamlet type of subtle speculation and weak will. He is full of fire, of energy, of resolution and of force of character, or, not to use here any "general or ethical form of expression," the man "*is not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.*"

And then from the professor's chair

he passes to the pulpit, from the pupils in the class-room to people crowding in the old Market Church. The pulpit, the carved oak pulpit, he always entered with fear and trembling, with an oppressive sense of great responsibility, though speaking with a voice that thundered, like our own John Knox, of whom it is told that in his latter days he always went to preach "in trumle and fear, but afore that he was dune he was likin' to ding the poopit in blads,"—for Luther was no nice simpering dilettante preacher, none of your empty things that "mount the rostrum with a skip and then skip down again," that seek to save souls on the principles of grammar, rather than of gospel, and of rhetoric rather than of righteousness by faith. Not such at all this miner's son, this strong one, Martin Luther. Homely, terse, and vigorous, nay even coarse and vulgar, in his style, the "common people" all the rather "hear him gladly." But then Melancthon is always in his audience too,

and Bugenhagen and the rest, and the good Elector Friedrich frequently, and Luke Cranach, the painter, in some corner sketching in his mind a picture of Luther preaching—one of the many pictures of Luther that we have seen and that always have reminded us of two remarkable Scotchmen—Dr. Chalmers and Robert Burns,—of Dr. Chalmers with his powerful features and his dreamy eye, that swims in the ethereal light; and Robert Burns, such as he might have been, could he by any possibility have "ta'en a thocht to men'," and brought into the pulpit that rude, that rich, that rare, that mighty genius that raised the dance of witches in "Auld Alloway Kirk"!

But Luther's work and way must broaden still. Next into the picture comes the friar —the Dominican friar Tetzel—with his huckster stall at Jüterbock for the sale of indulgences. On the border of Saxony, some six miles east of Wittemberg, immediately outside the grounds of Friedrich—

who does not permit him to enter—stands forward Tetzel, an old villain, in his monk's dress, with the red Papal Cross above his head, and his counter and money box before him, rattling his drum, "Come and buy."

A word here in explanation of indulgences. The then Pope, Leo X.—a lion in the way to any man less brave than Martin Luther, but yet a most accomplished gentlemanly lion was this Leo, though there was no more real religion in the man than there was in his coarse agent, the rude Tetzel,—this "elegant Pagan Pope," as Carlyle so truly calls him, was then building his great Church of St. Peter, restoring the Vatican Basilica after the design of Michael Angelo, and doing so, we come to think, in very wretched taste, with all respect to Michael Angelo and the illustrious house of the Medici, which he represented then. But the question here is not one of æsthetics, but of morals. And so this

Leo is building his big church, and as the funds are coming very slowly in, he naturally thinks of having a bazaar; for which bazaar the saints and saintesses of all past ages shall be set to work. For being rich in merit and good works, and having more of that commodity than was required for their personal salvation, they might properly contribute the remainder, the works of supererogation, to the Pope's bazaar. St. Peter, for example, might contribute a sword; St. Paul, a tent; St. Martha, a table; St. Mary, a prayer or two; St. Magdalene, a vial of tears; St. Dorcas, coats and garments for the poor; which, not to speak of the wounds of St. Francis, and the pillars of St. Stylites and the arrows of St. Sebastian, and so forth, would constitute a stock of merit and good works, to be sold out for the remission of the buyer's sins—sins already committed or yet to be committed; sins of the living and sins of the dead, merit by the ounce, good works by the penny-

worth, leave to lie for a groschen, to steal for a dollar, to kill for a pound. For such, in sober earnest, was the real principle of the Pope Leo's great bazaar. Leo was the Aladdin of his time, the owner of the wonderful magical lamp of Popery, and even St. Peter was his slave to work for this bazaar, he and the other slaves of the lamp.

The impious absurdity of all this is obvious to us at once. But it was not so, generally speaking, to the people of those times. For already they believed that the merit of the saints was marketable, and could be bought by them for the remission of their sins, if not by pence yet by pilgrimages, if not by pounds yet by putting peas in their shoes; and then, whereas the pence and the pounds were much more profitable unto Leo than the pilgrimages and the peas, it really made but little difference (a modern satire has well observed) for actual getting of the pardon of their sins

thereby, "it really made no difference at all whether they paid down the pence and the pounds, or made the pilgrimages with the peas in their shoes."

So these indulgences were paper-pardons—a sort of papal bank-note, issued from the Central Bank at Rome, with its great capital of millions of merit *in specie*—and ordered to be cashed by all provincial agents throughout Christendom, *i.e.*, by all the priests in the confessional, who must give absolution to the holders of the bank-notes of the paper-pardons. It does not seem to have occurred to Leo that any of his priests, or his provincial agents would refuse to cash the notes, and so threaten to break down the bank.

But there was one man who refused to do it, and that man was Martin Luther.

So there is Tetzel at Jüterbock, drumming his pardons, "Come and buy! Come and buy!"

"Sin for a sixpence, saved for a pound,
Thefts and murders and cheating cheap,
Remission from Purgatory for a few pence.
Soon as the money clinks in my box,
Straightway St. Peter the gate unlocks,
Straightway the spirit departeth thence,
And in half an hour or three-quarters at most,
He's up in the skies like a blessed ghost!"

Among the crowds of buyers out at Tetzel's stall at Jüterbock were Wittemberg shopkeepers as well—some baker, for instance, of that time, who has resolved on cheating his customers with light bread to the extent of 100 dollars, and buys a pardon for doing so for 20, bringing a clear profit of 80 dollars by the transaction. But when said baker comes to the Confessional in the old Market Church to get the absolution from his sin, Luther is sitting there within the fretted screen, and Luther will not give him absolution from such sin. "Why, father, here's my pardon duly bought, signed, and sealed!" "Baker, who gave you that?" "Why, Friar

Tetzel certainly, drumming his pardons there at Jüterbock!" "Drumming! Drumming!" cries Luther, "God helping me, *I'll beat a hole in his drum!*" And he did it too.

It is the festival of All Saints, and crowds of pilgrims from all quarters are in Wittemberg to view the famous relics in the Castle Church. Emerging from his belfried monastery, down the street, on through the crowd, with hammer in one hand and with his scroll of theses in the other, Luther makes up to the church door to nail the theses in the old oak panelling, theses he will defend against all disputants, and shoals of earnest eyes float round as he unrolls the scroll, and read—those that can read—such words as these, that "men receive pardon for their sins through faith alone; that only true repentance gets God's pardon, and if that is not gotten, indulgences are nothing worth."

And now he hammers in the nails—son of the miner, strike! The Son of the carpenter is behind thee. Knock! That is the first blow at the Papacy. Knock! it is the knocking at the door of a new church of reformation. Knock! the hole is knocked in Tetzel's drum, for "he would knock a hole in it," he said, and he has kept his word.

The good Elector Friedrich is in the town of Wittemberg that day among the crowd in the Castle Church which he has so lavishly adorned, and as he rides home in his princely *Wagen* to his *Scheinitz Schloss*, some six leagues off, he thinks much on the way about Bohemian Huss, who had been burned a hundred years before, and who had said when they were burning him, "To-day you burn a goose" ["Huss" means "goose"] "but in a hundred years hence there shall a swan arise that you will not be able to burn." And, being home, the weary Friedrich falls

asleep and dreams, and in his dream he sees Monk Luther writing on the door of his Castle Church, and writing words so large as can be read at *Scheinitz* all the way, and as he writes, his pen expands and grows, and he enquires where he has got that pen, and the monk says that he "plucked it from the wing of a Bohemian goose!" and still as he is writing, the pen grows—and grows—and grows,—until it stretches into Rome, and touches the Pope's tiara and knocks it from his brow! The "goose" is burned, the "swan" is risen, and let us see whether they will burn *him* or no!

But it has never been the policy of Rome to drive dissenters out of her communion, but rather to embrace within herself all possible varieties and shades of movement and of thought, "as the ocean," says Michelet, "embraces all the rivers, and as the sky embraces all the stars," or rather we should say, as did

the witches' cauldron (in Macbeth) embrace all diverse elements—

"Black spirits and white, blue spirits and grey
Mingle, mingle, mingle, ye that mingle may,"

so black friars and white, brown friars and grey, "mingle, mingle, mingle." And Leo really did not believe that Luther's escapade was serious at all. He said "This Martin Luther is a genius. Bring him to Rome, and I will put all right. It is all monkish jealousy between the Dominicans and Augustinians," and Leo thought no more about the matter, but went on building his big church, and worshipping his goddess Venus on old Sevres porcelain and old Dresden china cups, yet begging Lady Mary and the lady saintesses of Christendom to send some more of their good works as articles of sale at his bazaar. But Wittemberg and the Elector Friedrich remember too well the burnt goose to have no dread of Luther being sent to Rome, and they insist on his being dealt with on German

soil. So Cardinal Cajetan meets him at Augsburg, Karl von Miltitz meets him at Homberg, and lastly, Dr. Eckius at Leipsic.

But it was all in vain, for Luther has got to see that the Pope is Antichrist, so Leo's eyes are opened at the last, and all the lion in the Leo roused, and forth from Rome there comes the famous bull—the bull of excommunication—against Martin Luther.

"A Bull," roared Luther, "came to Wittemberg through Leipsic by permission of Duke George. A Bull! *I'll roast his Bull; I will!* Fire and faggots to the Elster gate!" And there the faggots are piled up, and the fire kindled; and in the midst of a vast concourse of spectators, Luther stands and drops the scroll —the papal Bull—into the fire. "As thou hast troubled us, so do thou perish in devouring fire." A shout from the assembled multitude applauds the brave thing he has done.

That shout is heard at Worms, to which the scene now shifts. For now the die is cast—the Rubicon is past. The work and way of Luther broaden still, and bring us next to Worms—the last act of this stirring part of the historic drama.

At Worms—the merry red-tiled Worms, that stands across in the west, in the beautiful Rheinland, beautiful in the green sunlight of spring—the young Emperor Charles—Charles the Fifth, who, a month or so before, came to his kingdom—assembles the first grand convocation of the empire, the famous "Diet of Worms."

Still very young—some twenty years of age—and much fonder of discussing his dinner than discussing questions in theology, Charles has no idea of the importance of the crisis. Inclined enough to favour the ecclesiastics, through that superstitious bias of mind that ulti-

mately made him turn a monk himself, and retire to the cloister (when, indeed, he was so gorged with gluttony, that fasting for the rest of his life might do some good to his body, if it did none for his soul), inclined enough to favour the ecclesiastics, yet, on the other hand, he owes his crown to the Elector Friedrich, who, in his favour, had resigned his right to it; nor can he altogether set aside the urgent pleading of the valiant German knights, Franz von Sickengen and Ulrich von Hütten, that beseech him to throw overboard the ultra-montane priests, and put himself at the head of a great, united, and a most devoted German Empire.

This much at least is gained, that Martin Luther shall not be condemned till he is heard; so the imperial herald is despatched to Wittemberg for Luther, and the ringing hoofs, in the haste of a royal messenger, have echoed through the portal at the Castle Church.

But the arrival and the message put

all Wittemberg in tears. Melancthon, Bugenhagen, Luke Cranach, and all the rest of them entreat their Luther not to go. "*I'll go,*" said Luther. "If I cannot go *well,* carry me *sick.* Expect anything from me except two things—except retractation, except flight."

And now it is a silent April morning, a budding, melodious, soft-dropping, green Spring morning, and the Cuckoo shouting in the woods round Wittemberg—"*Cuckoo!*"

The same old world goes on from spring to spring, from century to century —"*Cuckoo!*"

And there is nothing new beneath the sun, but aye the tears of them that are oppressed, and on the side of their oppressors power, and they have no comforter—"*Cuckoo!*"

The same old world goes on from spring to spring, from century to century —"*Cuckoo!*"

They burnt the goose a hundred years ago, and now they'll burn the swan—"*Cuckoo!*"

They gave a safe conduct to Huss; they've given the same to Luther now—"*Cuckoo!*" Whir-r-r!—evil-omened bird! it's off to some other tree! but its most sad evangel was believed by all the Wittembergers on that sweet April morning!

Luther's parting with Melancthon was affecting. "O my brother, if they should put me to death, preach Christ to the Wittembergers; preach Christ, Philip! never think of me, Martin Luther, at all!"

Amsdorf and Schurf and Justus Jonas are to go along with him in the carriage—the car provided for the journey by the town of Wittemberg, which starts with its grim hangings and its slow horses from the belfried monastery—the imperial herald riding off before, arrayed in his insignia of office—and it rattles

with a hollow, hearse-like sound through the West Port at the Castle Church, away from the weeping Wittemberg.

Outside, the roads are crowded with spectators; but the procession takes a somewhat gayer aspect as it winds along through the *Dörflein* and the villages and the towns, when, at the inns and hostelries where halt is made, Bauer and Burgher gather in to drink his health and cry *Bravo!*

For what went they out to see? a reed shaken with the wind? Nay, truly, but the bravest man alive!

At Naumberg, a priest confronts him, —holding up a picture of Savonarola, and, when he sees that Luther does not shrink, says, "Stand by God, monk, and God will stand by thee."

At Weimar, the imperial messengers are posting edicts on the walls, demanding Luther's books to be surrendered to be burnt. "And will you still go on?" the herald turns and asks, "Does not

that frighten you?" "I will go on," says Luther, "though they made a fire to stretch from Wittemberg to Worms, and rise from earth to heaven."

At Erfurt, dear old Erfurt, with its memories of convent and of college life, amid the tears of the living and the tombs of the dead, he halts to preach Christ to assembled thousands.

At Eisenach, dear old Eisenach too, scenes of his schoolboy's singing days and Madame Cotta's kindness, he falls dangerously sick, but rallies in a little while and goes—undaunted—on to Frankfort, where it is attempted to draw him off to Ehrenberg to have an interview with the Imperial confessor. If the Imperial confessor wants to speak with Luther, Luther tells him to go to Worms. It is to Worms Luther is summoned, and to Worms Luther goes.

On then, along by the old *Landstrasse* to Heidelberg, with its "red fortress firm," and thence turning down the

valley of the Neckar into the pleasant *Wohnungen*, the region of the *Niebelungen-Lied*, where red-tiled Worms is standing among the green leaves in the valley of the Rhine, and here he is as brave as Siegfried going to the slaughter of the Dragon; for here in sight of Worms his friends most earnestly entreat him to return. "I will go on," he says, "though there were as many devils set against me as there are red tiles on yon houses."

Then presently his progress takes the form of a triumph, for a host of knights and noblemen in armour have ridden out to escort him in, and throw their ringing cordon round him as a body guard. And as the glittering phalanx moves along through green arcades, in ruddy morning light, beneath the rookeries in the old oaks, through which the towers of red-tiled Worms rise close at hand—uprising in the carriage Luther says, "A firm fortress is God our Lord," and the response rises like a shout of thunder

from a hundred manly voices that, with the ringing of the armour and the prancing of the steeds, have frightened quite the rooks in the old oaks, so that they fly up screaming in the air.

And a thousand at the gate, a thousand in the street are waiting his arrival, so that he has to be conducted by back lanes and hidden ways to his hotel in the *Deutscher-Hof*, where a thousand more are waiting his arrival, and where his room is thronged with knights and noblemen till late at night, when in the silence and the darkness he is left alone.

Alone—yet not alone—but pacing to and fro across the room with clasped hands and upturned eyes, he exclaims "Eternal God! Stand by me now! The cause is Thine, it is not mine, Eternal God! Stand by me then—stand by me, God, to-morrow!"

And on the morrow, the Imperial Charles with great pomp, like that Roman Agrippa of old who came down

"with great pomp" into the judgment hall of Cæsarea, and "commanded Paul to be brought forth"—like him, but with much greater pomp, with prelates, princes, chivalry and trumpet, this successor of the Roman Cæsar is come down into the Diet Hall at Worms, and commands the monk Luther to be brought forth.

The Bells of afternoon are ringing four from the Cathedral towers.

The westering sun is streaming in through the arched windows of the mediæval diet-hall, and touching the fretted roof with gleams of red and golden fire; and there upon an elevated throne sits Charles—by far the grandest of the monarchs of his time—three mitred electors on his right hand, three helmeted electors on his left, three with their ermine and their shouldered crosiers, and three with their armour and their sheathed swords, and Charles in the centre with his regal purple, sceptred, crowned.

The amphitheatre on either side is filled with princes and with prelates of the empire—arranged on benches like banks of rowers in some grand old Roman barge, the emperor at the helm—a hundred princes, margraves, barons, knights, and noblemen, with ambassadors from the provinces and deputies from far kingdoms on the one side, and, over against them on the other, another hundred cardinals and bishops and inferior priests. And as the westering sun streams in upon the many coloured scene—the red robes of the cardinals, the yellow silk of the mantled Spaniards, the violet robes of the bishops, the dark tunics of the primates' deputies, the sombre black of the priests, and the purple and gold of the electors and of the throne,—it reveals a scene of grandeur and magnificence, of bedizening emblems of worldly greatness and power, such as has rarely, if ever, been seen upon this planet, and, poor monk Martin Luther, he must face it all!

And there, before the throne and behind the table covered with the books of Luther that had been condemned, stands Dr. Eckius, the papal nuncio and public prosecutor for the church, and then the hall is crowded—crowded to the door, at which the Spanish sentinels are standing, and Luther is expected to enter.

Outside the herald's trumpet sounds along the streets. Up from the *Deutscher-Hof* the streets are crowded, every window filled, and all the red-tiled roofs are covered with spectators. The herald has to cut a road for Luther with his spear through the crowd. The vestibule is crowded, and every stair and niche and alcove floating with seas of faces and with shoals of eyes. Knight Freundesberg—the bravest soldier of the day—stands by the door, holds back the crowd, and lays his hand on Luther's shoulder as he enters and says, "*Mönchlein*, I have fought in many a dreadful battle-field, but never such as thou art entering here. But

God will help the right. On! little monk!"

And now the doors are opened. Luther enters, and passes up to the table with head uncovered, pale and emaciated from his recent illness, and the eyes of centuries of royalty and centuries of priesthood are upon him, and what wonder if he feels bewildered at first? and, in the hush ensuing on his entrance, Dr. Eckius stands forth, and, pointing to the books upon the table, asks, "These are thy books, Martin Luther. Dost thou retract or no?"

It needs not here to describe the scene that followed—the long discussion lasting through two days, in which the question evermore repeats itself, "These are thy books! Dost thou retract or no?"

But Luther stands immovable as a rock, and only rises into more heroic grandeur as the discussion and the days move on, until finally it all revolves on that culminating question, "These are thy books! Dost thou retract or no?" and Luther

says, "Since you require a simple and direct reply, I give it. I never will submit to popes and councils when they are manifestly in the wrong. But I'll submit to the Scripture God has given me, and to the conscience that is in me *here*."

Brave words, though commonplace enough they seem to us. But they have startled that assembly like a peal of thunder; and from a hundred swords and crosiers the lightning of defiance flashes back, and there are muttering thunders of Huss and of martyrdom by fire! and once more Dr. Eckius stands forth, "These are thy books! Dost thou retract or no?"

A moment's pause as if he had faltered, but he does not, for he is praying.

Speak, monk! the empire and the church are listening for thy word!

Speak, monk! the nations struggling to be free are listening!

Speak, monk! the nations yet unborn are listening too!

Speak, monk! even blinded revolutionary

France amid her blindness lifts her head and listens!

Speak, monk! nobles from England, from Whitehall, and Cromwell's Ironsides, and pilgrims from voyages across the deep, and negro slaves in the nineteenth century are listening!

And who knows what beyond? *all* listening for thy word!

And from above, the noble army of martyrs are bending down and listening!

But Luther sees not these. Luther sees his "fortress firm"—the Lord his God—and rests on Him, and says, "Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders, so hilf mir Gott!"—"Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, so help me God!"

It may seem scarcely possible that moral bravery should go beyond this. But there was something bolder still (it seems to me) in Luther in the castle of Wartburg and the battle with the devil.

For when the Worms Diet is dissolved

and old Duke Eric in the *Deutscher-Hof* has treated Luther to a silver jug of beer, of frothy beer, which he much needs and greatly relishes, and the young Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, has rode into the courtyard of the inn, and leaping from his horse has saluted Luther very cordially,—with characteristic humbleness of mind this greatest man, undoubtedly the greatest hero of his day, is off to visit his humble relations amongst the peasantry of Mœrha in the woodlands of Thuringia, and being seized at some turn of the woods by the vizored knights of Friedrich (who was greatly more careful of his safety than he was himself) as the prophets of old were hid in a cave from the wrath of Ahab and of Jezebel, so Luther is conveyed to the castle of Wartburg, the grim fortress crowning the hill behind Eisenach, and overlooking, miles on miles around, the sable forests of Thuringia.

Here disguised as "Junker Georg," a

rather fast young German gentleman, moustached, with feathered cap and green slashed doublet, and a sword,—as we have seen him pictured often in Luke Cranach's portraits of the "Master George"—he follows the huntsmen in the summer woods, the gay green huntsmen with their bugled halloo, and the melodious murmur of the hounds; and were it not for his womanly tenderness when poor Puss is worried, or Reynard run down, and the comparison he continuously insists on making of poor Puss to the Church, and the huntsmen and hounds to the Pope and the Devil, no one might ever suspect that gay young count, this "Master George," was the monk of Wittemberg at all!

And now the autumn is past, and summer ended, and dreary winter is coming on—and here in his "Patmos," as he calls it, in his castle in the clouds, in his nest among the birds of the air, he is engaged in translating the Bible—making that admirable version, which

like our own, and Diodati's, springing from the period when the language had the bloom and freshness of its youthful vigour on it, can never I believe be superseded.[1]

[1] "'I am here,' writes Luther, 'at once the idlest and busiest of mortals. I study the Hebrew and Greek Bible, and write without interruption, while the master of the castle treats me with a distinction far above my merit.' The translation of the Bible was the greatest, the most meritorious, the most blessed of all Luther's works, and he actually finished the *New Testament* before leaving his Patmos. The belief that the translation of the Bible was the fruit of Luther's imprisonment is so general that the castle of the Wartburg and the German Bible are almost identified in the minds of the people ; and it is indeed remarkable that a castle which, as the scene of the celebrated conflict of the Minne-singers, or troubadours, contributed to form an important epoch in German poetry, should likewise have been the cradle of a work, which may justly be regarded as the foundation of the present German prose."—*Life of Luther*, by Gustavus Pfizer, translated from the German.

"'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock,
Tu whit, tu whoo."

For there are owls about that Wartburg *Schloss*—there were and are still, as I know—and kennelled dogs too underneath the rock, and moonlight walkers like the shrouded ladies on the hearse-like woods that surge and roar for many leagues around, and under whose awful shadow Doctor Dietrich leads his midnight hunt.

A dreary eerie place this Wartburg is—with dismal legends clinging to its narrow stair, and swords at midnight clashing in its armoury, and moans of murderers pacing through the Romanesque arcades and rising shrieking to the windows of the tower, till skeleton fingers rattle and clatter in the night blast on the window panes.

And there is Luther up in the north-west angle of the building sitting by his midnight lamp translating the Bible.

He comes to a passage that refuses, as the Germans say, to let itself translate His Hebrew is at fault. The 70 Greeks. of Alexandria cannot help him. The Vulgate is too Popish to be pure. It is possible that his brain is somewhat touched; his nerves at least are sorely shattered, and his digestive organs sadly out of tone, so that the melody of health in him is very flat, and he is troubled every night with horrible night mare.

One night, when he has gone to bed and put out the light in his small sleeping room, a sack of nuts that he has left behind him in the study, a present of some friend — and of which he has possibly eaten quite as many as he should—this sack of nuts begins to stir and rattle, and dance into the sleeping room and up to his bedside, and Luther knew it was *Satanas*. "So thou art there, art thou? I commend myself to my Lord Christ"; and he composed himself to sleep again. But presently

there came a thundering roll as if a hundred barrels had been tumbled down the stairs, and as the doors were iron, and all fastened with chains, this could be no other than Satan, who had come in through them. For even at Erfurt he had heard him once making a noise behind the stove and grunting like a pig, and once he had come to him in the night and said, "Luther, thou art a great sinner!" "Hast thou nothing new to tell me?" said Luther, "but since it is so, *holy Satan, pray for me!*" and then he went away, for there's nothing Satan dislikes so much as scorn.

So with his firm faith in a *visible* devil Luther is sitting translating the Bible. Again he tries the Greek and the Hebrew and the Vulgate, but it will not do. It must be Satan biting at God's word, it breaks his teeth, and they leave their marks on it. Ho! something comes between him and the light! What can it be? It looks like a moth—perhaps out

of the old oak wainscot—or beetle wending its sullen form! No! foolish people, nothing of the kind! *It is Satan!* See there he is, standing black at the white plaster wall, and Luther seizes on the inkstand and dashes it at his head!

The black besprinkled spots are still on that white plaster wall, and it is very easy laughing at all this, as those of us who have seen them may have done, but yet it seems to me there is something here far different from deserving to be laughed at, there is a moral heroism that rises to the sublime.

For what is here especially to be observed is this, that Luther believed it was the devil that he had to do with, and yet he did not fear him in the least; believed it was that very devil that had defied Almighty God, deceived, had it been possible, the unfallen angels; believed all that, and yet this man, this monk, this miner's son, dares to defy him and dash the inkstand at his head!

Transcendent bravery, we repeat, trans-

cending even that desperate fight at Worms. For him the field of battle broadens from the earth into the Universe, and when this man has overcome this world of ours, he does not then sit down and weep that he has no more worlds to conquer, but marches forth amongst the mightiest giants of the other worlds outside, defies the Goliath of Eternity, and dares to dash the inkstand at his head!

Write Luther's name then in the foremost list of heroes that "by faith waxed valiant in fight," for it *was* faith that made him brave, faith in the "fortress firm" in the "Lord his God."

And now he opens the casement, and looks out upon the night, and on the surging woods, and above to the blue vault of immensity, and says, "My God! the heavens do not fall, although there are no pillars to support them! The firmamental arch of stars falls not, for Thou dost hold it up, and shall I not trust Thee?" And then he closes the window and begins to sing,

for "Satan," he says, "is a gloomy spirit that hates music, and God loves music"; and so he sings Him a little song:—

"And were the world all devils o'er,
And watching to devour us,
We lay it not to heart so sore,
We know they can't o'erpower us;
And let the prince of ill
Look grim as e'er he will,
He harms us not a whit;
For why? his doom is writ,
God's word shall quickly slay him."

Here we must drop the chain of narrative and draw on to a close.

But the picture of Luther would be very imperfect without some notice of—

I. His tenderness and sociality. Because the common notion certainly is this, that Luther was a boorish, bearish sort of fellow, a sort of sanctified prize fighter, an evangelical Heenan, or Tom Sayers, or Great Bear, the Ursa Major of the firmament ecclesiastical, growling at the Orion of Popery across the sky, that

he had nothing of the lamb-like, or the milk of human kindness in him, beneath his shaggy and hirsute exterior, and nothing of that gentlemanly grace and chivalrous courtesy with which the high born knights in tilting court, or on the battle field, could deal the deadliest blow from jewelled cuirass, and with scale-mailed lily hands.

How wholly false this notion is, his "Tischreden" or "Table Talk," that has displayed his private and domestic life so fully, best shows.

True, he was coarse. He was a miner's son, and Mansfeldt miners called a spade a *spade*, and did not bandy honied phrases when they fought like navvies in the mines, nor drink reconciliation beer in dilettante tea cups like Pope Leo. For the stern work that Luther had to do could never have been done so well—could never have been done at all by any *virtuoso* such as Leo, with his religious worship of the Venus

de Medici, and Sevres porcelain and Dresden china. It needed something made of sterner stuff to do this Luther's work.

Yet there were fountains too of beauty in his soul, from which a Raphael or a Correggio might have drawn, and the Madonna of the Sistine and the frescoes of Pavia would have been none the worse of it, though Luther's taste for the beautiful was more natural and fresh, or more pre-Raphaelite, as we should say, than theirs, and rose beyond their ruled ideals, to the real beauty in the trees, and stars, and woman's eyes. From his tenderness and sociality of disposition, it seems that he was all the more complete a man, that he was in the first place a monk—which is a torso or mutilated man, that through the straight gate of the monastery he passed into the broadest and sanest style of life in which the whole man found development; so in his later years we find him back at Wittemberg, a husband, and a father, and

a very genial, social friend, with many a sunny nook, and verdant vale, and sparkling fountain, in the cleft of that strong, rugged rock, that had withstood the storm at Worms and Wartburg,—that had withstood the shock of both the Pope and the Devil.

I wish there were time for his marriage with the Katherine de Bora, the runaway nun, and the simple courtship that preceded it, and the singular elopement that preceded both, the elopement of the runaway nuns from the Nimptschen Convent, a rare adventure, in which real religion and romance do somewhat oddly meet. When Leonard Koppi, Burgher of Torgau, knighted for the nonce by royal Luther,—this honest chivalrous Sir Leonard was as brave a knight as ever stormed a giant's castle for the rescue of distressed damsels, —this Sir Leonard drove his waggon filled with nine herring barrels right through the dominions of Duke George; and there in the moonlight, all the nine, the sacred nine,

the pretty Eva von Schönfeldt and Kate and all the rest of them, went out from Kate's window by a ladder down to the court, "softly, softly" they went over the court—where Kate in her haste, like another Cinderella, loses her slipper—"softly, softly" over the wall, and dropped into the brawny arms of Sir Leonard! One,—two,—three,—all the nine are over, and are stowed away in the herring barrels, and Sir Leonard drives off again straight back through the dominion of Duke George. "Abend, Koppi! what hast thou there in that waggon?" "Herring barrels, Herr Huntsman." "Barrels of herrings you mean?" "*Ja, Ja.*" *That* was a narrow escape, for that was a huntsman of Duke George.

And so in safety they are brought to Torgau, and in safety to Wittemberg. But Luther is sorely puzzled what to do with the poor girls; their parents disown them, and will have nothing to do with the runaway nuns.

Shut out from the sanctuary of their girlhood and home, they naturally think —(poor nuns, the human heart, the trusting, loving, hoping, yearning human heart, has not been crushed out of them yet, and dreams of bridegrooms and of marriage bells did hunt them wickedly, even in the cloister, poor daughters of Jephthah!) now when the gates of sweet and happy life have suddenly re-opened—they naturally think of the higher sanctuary of marriage, and so the pretty Eva does get married presently to a young physician at the Prince's Court, and by-and-by—though not without some swineherds in the way, for Luther certainly would have preferred the beautiful and careless Eva had he thought of it in time; and there is one Baumengarten to whom Katherine it would seem had plighted vows, and to whom Luther now writes to come without delay and take his Kate or he would lose her altogether,—as the things go, the marriage bells are ringing in the

Castle Church, the bridal pair is blessed by Dr. Bugenhagen, the Elector sends in venison, the Wittembergers silver goblets of beer and wine, and to the belfried monastery where Cranach, Melancthon, and the other wedding guests are assembled, Luther brings home his bride.

That Protestants should find fault with Luther for this marriage seems to me something strange.

No doubt it was a breach of his monastic vows, and from the Roman Catholic point of view it behoved him rather to have acted like St. Dunstan, who, when the beautiful lady poked her nose betwixt the bars of his cell, seized it with the tongs, so that she roared and bellowed like a fury, which showed what the fair tempter really was—no lady at all, but Satan.

But, seriously, it seems to me the very thing, above all others, that Luther should have done was to marry a runaway nun, and that not only on such grounds as

these; that it is not good for man to be alone; that marriage is a sacred ordinance; that he was now on the wrong side of forty and quite able to choose for himself, and that Caleb shunning matrimony because of its inconvenience is (as Luther himself says) like "one who runs into a river to escape a shower of rain"—not only on such general grounds as these is Luther's marriage to be vindicated, but also on the very special ground that it was needed to bear witness that his teaching on the subject was sincere, that human life has not been consecrated in two halves, but consecrated as a whole; and that the wisest, best, and holiest way to heaven is not the one half through the monastery and the other through the nunnery, or asunder, but that of both together, and both "in the Lord." This Luther taught, and to show his teaching was sincere, he married the runaway nun, and I am sure that through restoring social life to its proper condition, not in

the convent, but in the house and in the home, Luther by his marriage struck one of the hardest blows at Papacy; and the ringing of his marriage bells, and the soft kiss of his Katherine inaugurated a new and better era for the social life of Christendom, and was as dreadful thunder as the Pope had heard as yet.

In mediæval times,
If maiden loved the cross,
It proved most heavy loss;
For ne'er could marriage chimes
Ring in her bridal morn,
But she, with heart all torn,
Deep-veiled in convent cell must hide,
As holy nun—ne'er happy bride.

But she, my plighted love,
Heaven's own betrothed and mine,
Needs ne'er in convent pine,
Though she that world above
And Mary's part hath chosen,
Her heart needs not be frozen;
Bride of my heart and heaven in one,
Both happy bride and holy nun.

Kate's beauty on her marriage day (her twenty-sixth summer) was nothing very wonderful to see, though Erasmus has praised it, and Holbein has painted it, and Cranach too, in very pleasing pictures, with full round blooming German face, blue Saxon eyes, and golden hair. But Luther was vastly pleased with it himself, and thought it an unanswerable argument against the celibacy of the clergy; and though no doubt Kate had a will of her own, she seems to have made him an excellent spouse, and though no doubt she had her trials with the doctor too, as when he insisted on giving away all the bread to the poor, or pawning silver cups to raise money for poor students, he was certainly one of the best of husbands.

How playfully he calls her, "My rib Kate," "Dearest Kate," "Empress Kate," or "My Lord Kate."

When she would sit beside him in his study—and having nothing else to say,

say something silly enough—he would say, "Kate, did you say your Paternoster ere you began that sermon?" When she would nurse him sick, he would say, "Dear Kate, do not distress yourself—God could always make a hundred Dr. Martins, though the old doctor were to drown himself in the Saale!" and as the "Empress Kate" moves away to do her household work, he murmurs after her, what he had learned from Madame Cotta long ago in Eisenach, "There is nothing in this world so excellent as a good woman's love."

II.—But what rare drollery there is in Luther! Hear! "God made the priest; the devil tried to make one too, but made the tonsure too large, and so made a monk!"

A priest having fallen behind in his devotion to the Virgin, Luther commends a mode of making up lee-way. "Holy Virgin, there are all the letters of the

alphabet to you, and you can put them together to please yourself!"

His Boswellian reporter (who has given the "Tischreden") taking notes one day at dinner, Luther threw him a spoonful of soup, saying, "You had better take that too!" and so he did.

An ignorant conceited fellow seeking to dispute with him on predestination, "My good lad," said he, "hadn't we better dispute over a can of beer?"

Melancthon having preached, some stupid people did not understand him. Luther said, "Once upon a time the lion made a feast, and invited all the lower animals, and every delicacy was provided. But among the guests came also swine, and they went about grunting and grumbling —'Lion! have you no *turnips?*'"

All his drollery, although it has nothing in it of the subtilty and polish of the wit of Erasmus, shows he was a real man, with no airs of sanctity about him, no piety put on. All the Reformers—

Calvin, Knox, and all of them—seem to have been extraordinarily fond of fun in its own place; they knew that true religion interpenetrates all life, and that he who would weave a broad web of life on the loom of his experience, must have broad woof of laughter as well as warp of tears.

To his six children in the belfried monastery, he makes a most affectionate father. Of babe "Johnnie" in his mother's arms, he says, "This little babe is hated by Duke George, the Pope, and the devil. But *he* does not care, poor little fellow! but crows and capers, and lets them rage as they like." It is to this "Johnnie," when six years old, that he writes his celebrated letter:—

"Grace and peace be unto thee, dear little boy! I am glad to hear that you learn your lessons and say your prayers, and when I come home, I will bring you your fairing. I know a beautiful garden,

full of children in golden dresses, who run about under the trees, eating apples and pears and cherries and plums. They jump and sing, and have pretty little horses, with golden bridles and silver saddles; and I said to the man who kept the garden, 'What children, sir, are these?' and he said, 'These are the good children that learn their lessons and say their prayers'; and I said, 'Dear sir, I have a little boy called Johnnie Luther; may he come to this garden and eat apples and pears, and ride on the pretty little horses?' and the man said, 'Yes, if he is very good and gets his lessons and says his prayers, he may come, and bring Philip and James with him too'" —and so on—the very model of a letter for a little child. How different from all that trashy literature for children in which it is essayed to draw their young hopes heavenward, by pictures of a heaven in modes of thought with which they cannot in the smallest sympathize! Luther

knew that when "Johnnie" was a child, he would think, speak, and understand as a child. And what indeed are all of us but children in relation to the manhood of Eternity? and what is heaven practically to any one of us, but just the outcome of his own desires? The heaven of the sufferer has no pain; of the dying, no death; of the struggling, victory; and of the weary, rest. The heaven of the Frau Martha is to sit all day in a clean white apron and sing psalms, and the heaven of the Bannockburn weaver is the desire to be owner of twelve looms, and the heaven of little "Johnnie Luther" is a garden, with pretty little horses with golden bridles and silver saddles. What, seriously, is the heaven of Scripture and of God Himself, as it is revealed to us, but just a series of dissolving views that are all different, and all grouped together into one? For now it is a garden with flowers blooming in the sun, now it is a city with pearly gates and "streams

that make glad the city of our God," and now the views dissolve into festival, and chorus, and golden lyres; they dissolve and pass away, and what it is we really cannot tell, but only this, that if we follow on to know the Lord, here it is a heaven begun, a peep of "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Up to this heaven—this real heaven, wherever that may be—to see with her young eyes what eye hath not yet seen, and to hear with her young ears what ear hath not yet heard, God takes up Luther's little daughter Magdalene,—a maiden of twelve, with her mother's blue eyes and golden hair,—this daughter of the ruler of the synagogue; and never, surely never, had a father's grief such strong, yet subdued, submissive utterance as Luther's, at the death-bed and burial of little Magdalene, as it is simply given in "Table Talk," and so artlessly.

When she was very ill, he said, "I love her! oh, I love her! yet if it be

Thy will to take her hence, Thy will be done!" "Dear little Lena, thou wouldst stay with thy father, or go to thy other Father if it be His will?" "Yes, father, as God shall please." "Dear little girl,"—and he walked up and down the room and said, "Well, whether she live or die, she is the Lord's, so courage, Doctor!" In the afternoon she died, falling asleep in his arms, and when they put her in the coffin he said, "Dear Lena, thou wilt rise again and shine as a star, ay, like the sun!" and at the burial service in the church, when they were singing, "Lord, remember not the sins of my youth," "No," he said, "nor those of riper years, for truly the scandalous evil of the Mass still exists," and then the man that stood immovable as a rock at Worms and the Wartburg now bends and weeps with all the tenderness of a child, over the coffin of his little Magdalene! Yet his grief, even the strong grief of the parent, was a

blast of his indignation at the Mass and Popery.

And now the book of his grand life is closing. Revolving upon Eisleben, where he was born, here also comes his time to die. Gone thither on a mission of peacemaking to the Counts of Mansfeldt, the gates were opened to him into the town of Eternal Peace. They opened somewhat suddenly. *Angina pectoris* had seized him at eleven at night, and there were hurrying to and fro and gleaming lights, in the very town where he was born, but the birth this time is into heaven. They gathered round him, and he said, "I'm dying, friends, pray for the Church,—for the Pope and the Devil menace it sadly! Into Thy hands I commit my spirit"—and then he swooned away.

One asked, "Do you die in the faith of the truth that you have preached to us?" He opened his eyes with a

lustrous stare, and said, "Yes"—and the gates are opened and the bells are ringing, and the grandest man on earth is gone to heaven! And four days afterward, the funeral is at the west gate of Wittemberg, and the Elector Friedrich there, and Bugenhagen, and Melancthon, and all the town of Wittemberg there, and Widow Katherine and her little orphan family; and the leaden coffin, covered with the velvet pall, is carried in with singing of the anthems, and buried by the wall at the right hand of the pulpit, and the doors are closed, and the book of his great life is closed, till "the judgment is set, and the books are opened."

## LECTURE II.

### GERMAN STUDENT LIFE.

IN the Scottish manse of the Rev. Mr. Burgher and Mrs. Burgher his good spouse (present on the occasion an old Uncle Anti-Burgher), it has become a grave and serious question whether Mr. Burgher's son John, student in theology, should be allowed to go to Germany to prosecute his studies. Mr. Burgher, whose own theology is "Boston's fourfold state," with the "Catechisms Larger and Shorter," has a dreadful horror of the Rationalism of Germany and the Broad School theology of England, and the Uncle Anti-Burgher has a dreadful horror of that "negative theology," as it is called, understanding by that, simply

whatever is contrary to his own; while Mrs. Burgher has stolen a glimpse into a book, which she found lying on John's bedroom table, called "Howitt's Student Life in Germany," from which it seems to her that German students must be a race of savages recently imported from Fiji, that each of them resembles a baboon with broad face and long hair, who fights a duel every morning before breakfast, and smokes and sings and drinks beer the whole day after, if he happen to survive the morning exercises; and so there seems little chance that John will get with their consent to Germany. Nevertheless, John stands resolutely to his point. He argues with the Rev. Mr. Burgher that Patrick Hamilton, the first and bravest of the Scottish martyrs and confessors, was educated in the universities of Germany, and brought home truth itself from Lutherland; and argues too that Broad School errors should be met and neutralized by Broad

School truths—argues moreover with the Uncle Anti-Burgher that "negative theology" may possibly be that which denies the possibility of any theology beyond itself—argues with both of them that when the enemy comes in—German Rationalism or whatever it is—like a flood, the Church, in the spirit of boldness, should lift up a standard against it, not retreating coward-like, but fearlessly meeting in the open field an enemy anywhere; that she should even send her younger sons, as Jesse sent his David to visit his brethren in a foreign camp where the Goliath was rolling out his defiant words; and so, whether or not the question of to go or not to go was decided in John's favour, certain it is that many students have gone from the Established Church, the Free Church, and the United Presbyterian Church; and as I plead guilty to having been one of the number, it behoves me to give some account of it.

We shall set out then for Germany through dreamland, and for "cloudland," as Richter calls it; and as Christian says to Hopeful, as they enter the enchanted ground, "to prevent drowsiness in this place, brother, let us fall into good discourse."

Observe how things have gone in Lutherland since the Reformation era. On sailing from the Scylla, or the rock of Popery, the Protestant stood right, somewhere, between that and the Charybdis, or the whirlpool of infidelity. It was so in Geneva and in Germany too. The Pope had been deposed from his assumed supremacy over the Bible. But now philosophy, by the help of which they deposed him, had got exalted to the chair of pontiff; and for my part, if I were to choose between the two, I would rather have Pio Nono for my pontiff, than that mad, modern, pantheistic philosophy.

In "Æsop's Fables," the horse called the man to assist him in driving the enemy

from the field, and so the man bridled him, saddled him, and mounted on his back; but after the enemy was driven from the field, the man refused to come down again. Popery is the enemy, Protestantism is the horse, and Philosophy the man who has got up upon his back.

. . . . . .

And what a fearful ride Philosophy has had in Germany!—an easy amble truly at the first through some two centuries, but then a swifter and more daring pace, like that John Gilpin rode through merry Islington, till more recently it shoots off like a racer for the sweepstake of St. Leger's; and not the headless horseman thundering through Sleepy Hollow, and not the phantom rider dashing over the bridges, and not the Erl King that has come and strode through the moonlit woods of Thuringia, and not our own Scotch "Tam," "through mud and mirk to Alloway Kirk and Alloway Brig"—not any or not all of them have ridden such an

appalling ride as that! Now,—far beyond all "kirks," and far beyond all "brigs," and far beyond the region of reality and common sense—away with wild whoop and halloo, away with clattering echoes of ringing hoofs, away with struggling human hopes, away into the darkness and the dreamland and the region of the Absolute and "the Everlasting No!"

To illustrate what I mean by saying that I would rather have Pio Nono for my pontiff than this mad, modern, pantheistic philosophy, I will tell you of a fellow-student of my own—a pantheist—a Hegelian of the extreme left, with whom some years ago I crossed a mountain pass of the high Alps with lofty mountains and jagged pinnacles, covered with eternal snow on either side of us, and skirted by the dark pine woods out of which run the rivers of ice, the deep blue glaciers, down to meadows that, with their sheep-folds, and their watch huts, and the cattle with their tinkling bells, lined on either side the

mountain torrent up whose steep course we were climbing, all bathed as it was that morning in the yellow mists of the sunrise behind us, and the dark purple of a thunderstorm before. In such a scene, whatever be the cause, the personality of God—not only His being which the atheist denies, but His personality which the pantheist denies, His distinct and separate personality from His created universe —becomes most vividly revealed to the conscious soul. One gets to feel amid these Alpine solitudes and silences, broken only by the scream of the eagle and the shot of the chamois-hunter, and the ringing song of the herd-boy down in the valley and over the hills—one gets to feel as Moses may have felt in the solitude of Midian; till every hill becomes a Horeb, and every bush is burning with God's presence, and every place is holy ground, where you must put your shoes from off your feet, and commune with the Living Presence and the Voice that speaks to you

out of the burning glory, saying, "I AM THAT I AM."

The thunder utters it along the mountains, and the voice comes down the valleys and talks with you,—"I AM"; and after a brief pause in which you hear again the rushing of torrents and the music of the pine woods, and the tinkling of the cattle bells; from afar over the same mountains the distant echoes of the thunder answer, and the roar of avalanches, with the fading reverberation of the thunder, seem to answer to the voice, "I AM," and cry in grand antiphony, "Yea God, Thou art!"

For you may remember Coleridge's magnificent hymn at sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni—

"God! let the torrents like the shout of nations
Answer! and let the ice plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow streams with gladsome voice,
Ye pine groves with your soft and soul-like sounds;
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow!
. . . . . .

Who in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!
Thou too, hoar Mount! rise, ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth,
And tell the stars and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God."

It was in such a scene as this that I was walking with the pantheist, with the denier of the personality of God, and as we went along, I asked him, "Vanslow, did you ever pray?" "Pray!" said he, "what's that? Pray to God! What's God? That cloud is God, yon rising sun is God, that ground there"—kicking it with his feet—"is God, and I am made of that, and so I am God! there is no God but that!" and he laughed, and I shuddered, and we went on in silence.

And the thunder pealed along the cliffs and called, "I AM," and the reverberation of the distant mountains answered, "Yea, Thou art!"

After a little time we had a narrow escape from a considerable danger, for the Alpine waggon, heavily loaded with

timber and dragging up the steep zigzag terraces above by a team of nineteen horses, suddenly broke the traces, and came down with a terrific crash close by where we were; and I said, "Vanslow, if you had been killed, where, think you, would your soul have gone?" "My soul gone, where? gone to the Absolute, relapsed into the All, mingled with the elements, and melted like a snowflake in the ocean; melted into wind and rain and sunshine; gone to feed the flowers I suppose, the worms perhaps"; and he laughed, and I shuddered, and we went on in silence.

And the thunder pealed along the cliffs again,—"I AM," and the reverberation of the distant mountains answered, "Yea, Thou art!"

And after a little it came on to rain heavily, and we had no shelter and no view through the curtain of cloud and mist, and Vanslow was very angry, and lifting his dark face to heaven, he spat

into the cloud, and said, "If there be any God above us, it is thus that I would treat him!" and he laughed wildly, and I shuddered lest the lightning should leap from the cloud and smite down the blasphemer; but the thunder-cloud passed and all was silent, and nothing was heard but the tinkling of the cattle bells, and the rushing of the torrents, and the deep music of the pine woods, "the silent majesty of nature and her God." I tell you, I turned to get near to the Alpine waggoners, rude Roman Catholics though they were; I turned, and kindly, to the hooded monks who had come down begging from the mountain "hospice"; I turned with unutterable relief to the Alpine woodman, who greeted you as he passed with "Praised be the Lord Jesus Christ," expecting you to answer, "For ever, Amen." To these, rude Roman Catholics though they were, I felt myself a thousand times nearer, than to that dreadful

blaspheming pantheist, and this may explain to you what I said, that I would rather have Pio Nono for my pontiff, than that mad, modern, German philosophy.

But we must go on, and take our student with us, to Halle. Halle is called the philosophical menagerie of Germany. Among its fifty-three professors, and well nigh a thousand students, every variety of opinion is represented, from the wildest owl-eyed scepticism to the gentlest dove-like faith, so that it was the very place a thoughtful Hamlet might have selected for studying the problem of "to be" or "not to be," or, as the Germans call it, the *seyn* or the *nicht seyn.* We bring our student then to Halle, and we prefer bringing him from some German manse or *Pfarrhaus* to the south of it, such as that described by Richter in his "Village Schoolmaster," "the painted cottage in the village cluster,

screened by trees, upon the broad floor of the many coloured fields"; the pastor sitting at the window committing his Sunday's sermon; the children carrying him his coffee and moving from cup to cup to pick the sugar from the bottom; mother and maids in the adjoining kitchen, and sturdy bovine and feathered cattle collected outside till darksome night sets in, and the vesper chimes are ringing from the village belfry, when the household is assembled for the singing of the evening Chorale, after which comes the candle lighting, and the shutting and bolting of the doors and windows to keep out the goblins—the terror of the children. A somewhat different sort of parsonage this is from the Scottish hill manse of Mr. Burgher, still more from the vicarage of some English rector, with "long hedgerows and hillocks green." But hence comes our Bursch. Having received the paternal benediction, and if possible the requisite number of thalers,

and the maternal kiss not unmoistened with a tear; when the "screen of leaves is falling" and revealing a wider and deeper sky around the earth, the Bursch is on his way to Halle. He comes along the Leipsic road—a broad flat avenue lined on either side with poplar trees,—dressed in a velveteen coat gaily embroidered, with knapsack on his back; and from his small blue cap his Saxon hair floating over his shoulders; and with limbs encased in a pair of monster walking-boots, on he comes swinging his stick and singing, "What comes there from the hill?" It is "a little fox" that happens to be "coming from the hill." But our Bursch is not a "fox," *i.e.*, a "freshman" of the first year, but he is rather a merry-headed "Altes Haus," and so you will find he knows some things. He knows, for instance, all the best beersellers in the towns and villages he has passed through, when he chanted his song to the tune of "Uhland"—

"Frau Wirthin, have you good beer and wine?
And where is that lovely daughter of thine?"

And now he meets the boors and the peasantry returning from the fields in their light wicker carts drawn by slow horses. "Good evening," they say. And now, listening to the creaking of those wind-mills in the dark, the giant goblins of the Fatherland, that toss out their long arms as the wind sways trees in a storm, those "Aiken Drums" of Germany; and now, seeking to solve upon the realistic scale the Bursch's transcendental question of "to be" or "not to be," the *seyn* or the *nicht seyn*; and now, as he approaches the town that rests like a vessel at anchor on a sea of sand, it tolls the vesper bell, and presently he discerns the figure of the "watch" ascending to the turrets of the Market Church to blow the trumpet of the evening Chorale; and as its sweet tones echo over the plain, he enters through the Leipsic gate, showing his

passport to the guardsman, and along the dingy narrow Leipsic street, its mud pavement fringed with hard stones, and ropes bestrode across from roof to roof for hanging lanterns to light the streets, on to the "Kirche" and the market place where possibly he has his lodging.

For the Bursch may lodge where he pleases—in respect of permission where he pleases, in respect of payment where he can—for there are no apartments in the University for students or professors either, in this respect resembling more our Scottish Colleges than those of England or America. Perhaps for health's sake, physical and moral both, the system of a residence within the college walls should be preferred, but certainly the other is the manlier of the two, and the young *men*, that German students are, would hardly at their time of life submit to a *surveillance* from which Oxford and Cambridge men are not yet so free as the red-gowned youths of Glasgow.

But now that we have brought him to the University, what kind of Bursch is he?

1. A handsome Bursch. Louisa on the Promenade thinks so, and dreams sonnets about his floating tresses, and dark velveteen, and walking boots, as if they were the appurtenances of a very Apollo. No doubt his face is somewhat broad and his figure by no means elegant, still in each country "handsome are all lads in its own daughters' eyes"; so, for Louisa's sake at least, we shall say he is a handsome Bursch.

2. He is an honest Bursch, yes, honest in the very look of him, yet if he should ask you for the loan of a few thalers, you need not be too ready! You understand?

3. He is a humorous Bursch, with nothing of what Carlyle has called *wit*, and with no power at all of making a vile pun. He could not see a pun in Punch though it be three-fifths of the

whole, and cannot comprehend at all the "Cockney," or the Irish "Bull," or the Yankee "Wag" who has grown so tall of late that he had to go up a ladder to take off his hat! With all that sort of thing the Bursch has little or no sympathy. But that broad genial humour that has heart and soul in it, the humour of Richter and Shakespeare and Robert Burns he can well appreciate. Then, too, he has a fine *abandon* in his nature, which keeps him wonderfully easy amidst the want of thalers.

"It's all one, it's all one,
If I have money or I have none;
He that has money can on oysters sup,
He that has none can eat the shells up;
He that has money with his sweetheart goes,
He that has none, some one else does:
So it's all one, it's all one,
To have money or to have none."

But, seriously, what kind of Bursch is he? 4. A high-minded Bursch. The Burschen are a sort of aristocracy, a

privileged order, amenable only to university law. Their matriculation cards are a sort of patent of nobility that pass them freely through the gates, that prevent arrest by the ordinary police though they commit a murder. They call each other *du*, and peer and peasant meeting in the holidays and recognizing each other as "Brother-Burschen," carry each other's knapsacks quite familiarly. If you would distinguish between academic Burschen and Burschen of the lower classes, or the "Philistines" as they are called, you will find the hard-working Bursch, or travelling apprentice, sketched in "Murray's Guide Book." With his pipe in his mouth, staff in hand, enormous knapsack on his back, old boots projecting from the sides thereof, blouse or smockfrock over his dress, oilskin on his hat, and with a dash of care and weariness on his face, he possibly asks you for charity.

These are the "*Wilhelm Meisters*" in

their *Wanderjahre*, a different sort of wanderer from the "tramp" of our own country when out of work. Each of them has his *Wanderbuch* from the *Chor* he belongs to, and in his *Wanderbuch* he has his passport and keeps his diary. He journeys on from spot to spot, demanding employment of the masters of his trade, earning enough money to carry him on to the next stage, till, being perfected in his craft, he returns and sets up in his native town and likely marries his first master's daughter, if he can. How often we have pored over these *Wanderburschen*, and followed them into the *Herberge* or haunts in every town! We have traced them from Hamburg to Halle, and from Saarburg to the Baltic. For they spread like a network over the continent, and it is a network through which revolution runs, as it did in 1848, with an electrical rapidity.

But though they are often mistaken

for the academic Burschen, they are totally dissimilar, although, no doubt, in the revolutionary movements of young Germany, when the young Burschen's long hair had floated as the standard on the barricade, the *Handwerker* fought beside them and along with them. But so soon as the battle is over, the bond of sympathy that has united them is broken, the trumpet of peace revives the hereditary feud, and the Bursch has no more dealings with the "Philistines." He is a high-minded Bursch.

And yet what kind of Bursch is he? 5. A heroic Bursch. I do not mean in fighting duels. The Bursch's duel is not very deadly, and is more of a gymnastic exercise than anything else. The Quaker Howitt might have even fought the most of them without giving much scandal to the "Friends," for though being at the University that was reported the most bloody, and hearing now and again of students supposed to be slain

in duels, somehow they always came alive again; and as, generally speaking, those who fought them were not believers in miracles, it is to be doubted if they had been really dead at all. Certain it is that they were fonder of fighting with rapiers than with pistols, and fonder of fighting with beer jugs than with either, the duel taking the form of a drunken problem which admits of more humid solution, the question becoming which of the combatants shall drink most rapidly a *Seidel* of beer; for since the Prussian Government ordered that none should be admitted to their pulpits with sabre wounds on their faces, young theologians have become more peaceable. But let the curtain drop on this foolish episode in Burschen life. For the Burschen can be heroic, and are generally loyal too. The "Lyre and Sword" of Körner has not lost its power, and the beautiful Queen Louise, the same who wept at Tilsit at the feet of Napoleon, and with

her fair hands lifted Prussia from the ground after the decisive battle of Jena, this beautiful queen is the object of the Bursch's almost idolatrous adoration. Louise is his "Helen," his "Madonna," that can rouse him to any deed of bravery. Her exquisite statue in marble, sculptured by Rauch, and slumbering in the church at Potsdam, is the shrine of the Bursch's true devotion.

Finally, the Bursch is a hard student, a hard-working student, eating the bread of knowledge in the sweat of his brow. This arises partly from the plodding, persevering nature of the Teutonic mind, which seems in the fourfold Cherubim of Intellect to form the face of an ox rather than of a man, or a lion, or a flying eagle; arises also from the need of study, if not so much at the beginning of the course yet all the more as it draws on toward the end of it, when the examination for the Doctorate comes on. Besides, it will usually be found

that these young men that German students are, are not so much disposed to trifle with their studies as younger students are wont to do, and that the riddle of this painful earth that calls upon philosophy for its solution must press itself more powerfully on young men of twenty years or thereby than on younger students of thirteen or fourteen, that had probably better stay at some Jericho of a gymnasium until the higher faculties in them that deal with the transcendental mysteries shall be more maturely developed.

And so the Bursch is really a hard student. Knock at his chamber door, to which you gain admittance from the street without consulting his good "Philistine." "*Herein*," he answers, "Open sesame," and there he sits—stands rather—at his writing desk, enwrapped in his long *Schlafrock*, and with the long pipe depending from his lips to near the ground,

with books and scribbled papers before him on the desk underneath the dim oil lamp, a tall black stove emblazoned with fantastic figures behind, cap and books and rapier littered on the sofa or on the polished wooden floor, busts and pictures round the wainscot terminating on the one side in the curtained window that opens the closed sashes inwards, and terminating on the other in a little room or alcove, where, on his low bedstead the Bursch throws himself when quite tired out—a picture for a Rembrandt, or a draughtsman such as Retzsch. There is one sketch of Retzsch's most appropriate here,—it is Satan playing chess with a young man, and the deep stake is that young man's immortal soul.

It is well known that the greatest of German poems is the "Faust" of Goethe, and "Faust" is a Bursch. He is a student, or professor rather, seeking for the double fount of wisdom and happiness—like Solomon, the hero of Ecclesiastes—and

tempted withal of the devil by divine permission—like the hero of that first and finest of all dramas, the book of Job. He is the German Prometheus who has stolen fire from heaven and is condemned for doing so to be chained to the rock of misery and devoured by the vulture of despair. He has eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and is driven out from the presence of the Lord. He then seeks happiness by plunging deep into sin, but he cannot find it; visions of the true and the beautiful haunt him and will not let him rest; the mire of sensuality into which he has dashed is hot as hell to him, for he cannot choose but lift up his eyes in torment and see the beautiful heaven far away. In short the problem of the "Faust" is just the grand problem of human existence stated in the terms and displayed upon the stage of German Burschen life.

It has been often asked, "Do German

students really study quite as much as they get credit for?" So far as I have seen they really do. Till I had witnessed them, I must confess the herculean effort of sixteen or eighteen hours a day seemed quite incredible. I well remember studying logic in the Glasgow College, and being cheered through weary nights of study in the mysteries of syllogistic moods and figures by the music of the night-waits underneath the window. But what is exception here seems rather there to be the rule. For there he is, always standing at his writing desk, while the watchman is singing under the window, "*Hört ihr Herren und lasst euch sagen*,"—and so on till eleven or twelve, and far on into the night. There he still stands, clasping his hot hand on his cold forehead, or drinking strong coffee, or tying moist bandages around his brow to keep the sleep out of his weary eyes, and when he does sleep, he'll be up again at five, when the matin bell is ringing; and

hence comes not always wisdom and great learning, but often folly, often sorrow, often death. For I remember well poor Schrœner, and his weary wasted student life, poring half-blinded over misty pages of philosophy and MSS. of Sanscrit night after night, till sickness came, and his breast ached and his brain ached, and still with aching breast and aching brain he stood and studied; till melancholy came and filled his eyes with tears, and still with tear-filled eyes he stood and studied; till black death came and spread his saffron veil over his sickly face, and scattered all his learning in the dust. Poor Schrœner! he confessed so bitterly when he was dying that he believed God had dealt very hardly with him; and I am afraid he died as a fool dieth after all, even with all his Sanscrit and philosophy, and his was a dreary funeral that dark March day in the *Friedhof*. "So I returned and saw this evil that is done under the sun, a man labouring

for wisdom and finding a grave in sorrow. This also is vanity and a sore evil."

But now our Bursch is up again at five. His *Stiefelputzer*, or boot-cleaner, has awaked him, and already his good *Frau* "Philistine" has his coffee simmering on the stove, and the matin bell is ringing, and the cock is crowing, summoning him to resume his devotion at the altar of sore study. So there he stands again with pipe depending from his lips and coffee in his hand; extract from *Puff* alternating with extract from *Puffendorf;* extract from *Koffee* alternating with extract from Kant, or Fichte, or Schelling, or Hegel, or other deep cup of philosophy, till the morning is fairly up and the day well aired, when he goes out to hear the lectures. Exchanging his pipe for a cigar, his dressing-gown for his velveteen, his slippers for his boots, with a portfolio under his arm, and a good stick in his hand, he sallies forth to hear the lectures. And we'll

go with him, if you please, up through the Flesher's Lane if the hour has struck, or round by the promenade, where Louisa walks, if there be time for it.

Let it only be observed in passing, with respect to German philosophy, that the age at which the Bursch prosecutes his studies may account in some measure for an essential difference between his philosophy and ours. That difference lies very much between the Understanding and the Reason (*Verstand und Vernunft*); the former being that lower faculty that deals at most with concrete truths, that devises measures for the dimensions of space and the relations of time and the physical movements that are included within them; the latter that faculty which apprehends those subtle and wide-stretching relations with which God has bound the universe together and which gazes directly on the true, the good, the beautiful, and the

eternal. The distinction was first expressed to us many years ago by Coleridge in his "Aids to Reflection"; it has been developed in scores of later treatises, and has now so thoroughly interpenetrated all literature that every poetaster, forsooth, and penny critic must talk of his "intuition," "inspiration," "instincts," and so forth, in the language of the transcendental. But the higher faculty referred to is seldom or never developed at that early age at which lads go to the Glasgow College. The eye of the mental vision that grasps the unseen and eternal is not yet couched, their wisdom teeth with which to crack the nuts of German metaphysics are not yet cut, they have not leapt the chasm, as yet, between the sensuous and the supersensuous, and the higher problems of the mystery of being, with which the German student deals, are quite beyond their cognizance.

"There are more things twixt earth and heaven
Than they dream of in their philosophy."

But we must hasten to the University. It is a Greek-looking building, related more in its architecture to the students of the Grecian porch than to the monks of the mediæval cloister, and standing among flower-pots and shrubbery, it is really elegant. The entrance hall is filled with students dressed *à la Bursch*, and round this hall and round the corresponding platform upstairs the lecture rooms are ranged and running off; and you may *hospitate*, as it is called, though you are not a Bursch. So let us listen and hear the conflict of opinions and the strife of tongues that are raging here.

In No. 1, first door right hand, Gesenius is lecturing. (This is Halle as it *was* rather than as it *is*.) A dungeon of Oriental learning is this Gesenius, and master-planter too of Hebrew roots on British soil. Enwrapped in warm furs, and with a somewhat old and withered

face, lighted up with a sardonic smile, he lectures upon Genesis. . . .

But he is too much the slave of the old lamp of Rationalism, and labours to demolish the grand temple of God's Word, that he may build some pig-stye on its ruins, he and the other slaves of the lamp!

Another such is Wegscheider in No. 4, not learned like Gesenius, but speculative, philosophical, aspiring to become the architect of said pig-stye on plans like Voltaire's and Tom Paine's. Poor old Wegscheider! his day is past, his students have forsaken him, and his thin voice in the empty class-room is talking to its own echo.

In No. 6, Prof. Erdmann lectures—a tall and gentlemanly-looking man. He enters, as all the professors do, at a quarter past the hour, and his numerous students are waiting for him, sitting with their portfolios spread out, with pen in hand and ink-horn pierced into the

benches. As he begins to speak, a rustle of swift writing is heard like a sudden shower of hail. He is the expounder of the Hegelian philosophy, and leader of its right side or better tendency. He says that "logic is no mere art of reasoning or proving one thing from another; that logic is itself the thinker thinking; that the whole universe is just God, or God thinking; that the law of gravitation in external nature and the law of gravitation in the mind of a Sir Isaac Newton are the same, and both the same with God, who lies unconscious in external nature, and comes to consciousness in human minds, and so one cannot say God *is*, but God *is becoming always*, and the whole universe proceeds upon this wise, in God's eternal logic, God's eternal *werden*, God's eternal process of development."

But come on to Professor Heinrich's lecture room. He is the expounder of Hegelianism too, but leader of its left

side, or its darker tendency. A somewhat vulgar-looking man this Heinrich is, and his students look not so well drilled as in Erdmann's. He says "that God is the universal, all-pervading life, and that human lives are but its transient phenomena and outcome; that God no more creates us men than the tree creates its leaves, or the ocean its waves; that God no more created us than we created Him, for the creator and the creature are both one; that man is the eternal Shekinah, is the eternal Christ in which God is perpetually incarnating and revealing and coming to consciousness of Himself; that Christ of Nazareth —if ever there was such a man—was the first who came to know that God and man are one; that our humanity is the real Christ that is continually incarnating the Deity, and working and suffering and dying, and making reconciliation between dead unconscious nature and conscious God, and rising again, ascend-

ing and judging";—and this is the evangel of philosophy for all nations! Hear, O earth! that God is all, and all is God, and all things in earth and heaven reconciled by this prophet, this revealer, this evangel that proclaims all men to be God, and God to be all in all! You here see something of this awful system—terrific blasphemy to the end.

But there is Julius Müller lecturing in No. 10, most admirable man, showing a very different doctrine of sin.

And Leo, the historian, in No. 12, showing the footsteps of the personal God in history.

But let us only glance a moment further into Dr. Tholuck's class-room, where sits a pale and earnest-looking man with the traces of sore suffering upon his countenance, and an almost heavenly light upon it too, which tells how he had struggled up through sorrow into peace and joy. He says with deep-toned voice and the tears upon his

cheeks, "Young men! God's Bible is the true philosophy! Truth is no mere abstraction for intellect or philosophy to deal with. Truth is a Living Person whom our hearts must love, but whom philosophy and the men of the world have always crucified, but who, thank God, still lives, in spite of them, and reigns, and He must reign till all enemies are put under His feet. What a difference this is between resting our spirits in their agony upon cold abstract propositions, and resting them on a warm Living bosom. Young men! believe Him who has said, 'I am the way, the *truth*, and the life.'" Gifted author of "Guido and Julius!" that "Anxious Inquirer" of German students, that "Consecration of the doubter." Tholuck used to be laughed at in those days, but his words had God's prophetic power in them, and he has lived to see them coming true.

But we must close our glimpse at the interior of the University, for enough

may be said to show the battle of opinion and the strife of tongues that rage or have raged within its walls.

Our student has now added all this to his notes as materials for study by the morning lamp, and as preparation for his thesis at the close of his third year's curriculum. His note-book folded under his arm, he does not go directly home; for he must first dine somewhere, though it is not yet mid-day, and will probably execute that pleasant task with the Burschen of his *Chor* at some *Kneipe* in the neighbourhood, where they will give him a daily portion of something better than *Sauer-kraut* at the rate of some five or six thalers monthly.

Dining through a succession of courses is usually a long process in Germany. But the Bursch's dinner is quickly despatched. If he wants recreation in the afternoon, he can go to Schmitz's garden, where, for a groschen or two, he can have coffee and music in the open air

or across the *Saale* to the village of *Giebichenstein*, where the Frau Martha will treat him to beer and pancakes under the beech trees at her own vine-wreathen porch. But likely he reserves what time he can spare for the evening, when the *Burschenschaften* meet for drinking, smoking, and arranging for duels.

These *Burschenschaften* are associations of the students of a district or a principality, after the manner of the "Nations" in Glasgow College, instituted, I believe—whatever other ends in revolutionary times they may have served — for no deeper purpose than those of social mirth and *gaudeamus igitur*. But as their duelling is not very deadly, so their drinking is not very drunken. In fact it is less in body than in mind that German Burschen get intoxicated, it is less from cups of beer and wine than from cups of abounding philosophy. For if you will only remember what it is they are taught, and what it is they really

believe, what is, in fact, the very alphabet and starting point of their philosophy as differing from our own, viz. that all that is without is nothing but the outcome of that which is within, is nothing but the "objectivity of the subject," as they say, nothing but the "projection of ourselves, our moods and feelings upon time and space"; that "Orion," as Emerson says, "is not up in the heavens, but down in himself"; or "what does it matter which? what difference does it make?"—when you remember this, you will agree that the song even of a drunken Bursch agrees with his philosophy right well—

"Just from the inn my departure I took,
Street! thou hast surely a marvellous look,
Right side and left side are both out of place,
Street! thou art tipsy, a very clear case.

"Moon! what a comical face thou dost make!
One of thine eyes asleep, t'other awake,
Thou too art tipsy I plainly can see;
Shame! my old comrade, shame upon thee!

"Look at the lamp-posts too! here is a sight,
Not one among them can now stand upright,
Flick'ring and flashing to right and to left,
Sure they all seem of their senses bereft.

"All things around me are whirling about,
One sober man alone! dare I come out?
That seems too venturesome, almost a sin,
I think I had better go back to the inn!"

This man you see makes "objectivity" his "subject," "projects his own moods and feelings upon time and space," and so becomes the Poet Laureate of "subjective idealism!"

But if you enquire after the *religious* education of the Bursch, that is really but indifferently provided for, and Satan has great odds against him in the desperate game that he is playing with him for his soul. Individually, the Bursch may go sometimes to church, and so, if you please, we will go with him and see what it is like.

On Sabbath morning, when the bells are ringing between six and seven—

sweet Sabbath morning bells that make the student in "Faust" put down the poison cup that he has lifted to his lips, while choirs of youthful voices seem to sing to him out of the ringing of the bells—

"Now is Christ risen and gone on high,
Out of the grave's dark prison,"

in answer to the dirge of women singing,

"Now with sweet spices a grave they made,
And there, heavy-hearted, they laid Him,
Wrapped in fine linen all around;
And now when they seek Him, He cannot be found—
Not here, not here, the bells reply:
He is risen! He is risen! and gone on high."

And so in the ringing of the Sabbath morning bells, the Bursch is on his way to church—dressed as he usually is in going to the lecture—to the *Dom Kirche*, or Cathedral Church, where Dr. Tholuck usually preaches, a Gothic building, old and grim and cold, with entrances from

the sunny southern side, where the sacristan hands to him a broad sheet containing the hymns for the morning service. And there in the east is the altar under the pointed windows, over which the name of "Jah" in gold letters stands emblazoned; and there in the west is the organ gallery, with the choristers and trumpeters; and there, between the two, is the pulpit, on the central pillar of the north colonnade, and the worshippers around, the women sitting, and the men standing on a cold brick pavement; and pictures too upon the walls and pillars, and tiny cherubs holding drapery and blowing trumpets in the corners, and chattering sparrows in the empty galleries and the dim arches of the vaulted roof.

But the prayers are over ere the Bursch arrives, and Tholuck, in Genevan gown and bands, is in the pulpit, and speaking in the deepest earnestness. . . . . And then what singing after!—

the trumpets leading the melody, which is sung by the whole congregation, and the organ supporting it with the rich harmony of the Chorale, till after the softest benediction from the preacher with up-lifted hands, suddenly, with outburst of a "Gloria in Excelsis" from the choristers, the congregation is dismissed, and the Bursch is out again upon the sunny morning streets.

But except these and such like possibilities of Bible hours and conversations in the *Sprech Stunde* of the good professors, there is a melancholy lack of good and guiding influence for the Bursch, and so I say again that Satan has great odds against him in the desperate game that he is playing with him for his soul. For you will hardly rank among good and guiding influences, his going to the theatre that same Sunday evening—as he is pretty sure to do—or even his going to the theatre at any time, though "Faust" be there to show him the

treachery of Mephistopheles, and the ruin of the gentle Margaret who walks among the hags on the Brocken with the red circlet of murder on her neck, or even although our own Shakespeare should be there, wondering through his Hamlet "in that sleep of death what dreams may come," or preaching Him whose "blessed feet were nailed so many hundred years ago for our advantage to the bitter cross!"; or the Antigone of Sophocles, that we have often seen enacted after the antique under direction of the professors. Sublime Antigone! flashing her marble yet frail arm against resistless fate, and prophesying of a "friend who loveth, and who sticketh closer than a brother." But even if these be good and guiding influences for the Bursch, better still, perhaps, are the well-appointed concerts now and then in the Museum, where he may hear Mozart's weird requiem sung with intensest pathos to the words of the "Dies Iræ"—

"Weary seeking me wast Thou,
And in death didst deign to bow,
Let Thy pain avail me now";

or better still, perhaps, the oratorios in St. Ulrich's Church, when Mendelssohn, in his "Elijah," shall call on him to "Rest in the Lord," or when Sebastian Bach, in his 11th Mass, shall show him the way through the sharpness of death in the mellifluous song of the Resurrection, resolving the awful discord of the tomb in a musical thunder that shall shake the old Ulrich Church, as we have heard it shaken in the choruses of the Burschen of the *Sing Verein*, when the professor's fair daughter was the *prima donna*, and our good landlady "Philistine" had taken her Bible, and her folded white handkerchief, and gone as piously to worship at the oratorio, as if it were—as certainly it was—a very blessed *Gottesdienst.*

But yet, perhaps, more powerful than all these, and healing to the wounded

and weary spirit of the Bursch—now that he has come to struggle with the depths of a philosophy that has opened an aching, impalpable, ghastly wound—the very best of good and guiding influences for the Bursch may be the memories of home, and of a mother's soft kisses in his childhood, ay, and of a new love too that has been rising in his heart, for has he not his "Louisa" who lives in the white house, and walks on the promenade? and did they not get betrothed by moonlight under the linden trees? and I am breaking no faith in telling all about it, for the betrothal (Hermann and Louisa's) was duly announced next morning in the *Anzeige* which is the *Mail* or *Hallescher* of the town.

Now, I do not mean to say that Louisa is more gifted than her German sisters usually are, but what I mean to say is, that Louisa is a playful, laughing, loving, simple-hearted German girl, and

that she too has her influence for good upon the Bursch, and here we find them sitting of an evening under the lindens, and perhaps you would like to hear what they are saying.

"Explain to me Hegelianism, Hermann."

"You could not understand it, Louisa."

"Nay, say rather that you are not able to explain it, for it seems to me that what one understands himself he ought to be able to explain to another."

"Yes, to one who can also understand. I could not explain it, for instance, to a crow!"

"But one crow could explain it to another crow, if he understood it himself. They seem to understand each other's cawing, when their college meets in the ploughed fields."

"Well then, listen, I'll tell it as a story. You know the *Waisenhaus* in our own Halle town. You know how

it was built by Hermann Francke, and every stone of it was built by prayer. The building of that orphan house, Louisa, is as beautiful a romance of prayer as ever was written. But Francke was not a deep thinker, though he was a very pious man. He was the leader of the Pietists."

"Go on, Hermann."

"In the same town and University of Halle, there was a fellow-professor of Francke's named Wolff. Wolff thought that he could do great service to the Church by proving the doctrines of the creed in the same sort of way as mathematicians prove that the 'angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles,' or in the same sort of way as syllogistic reasoners prove that one man is mortal, viz.—by taking it for granted that all men are mortal, which is what needs to be proved and a great deal more."

"I do not like syllogisms, Hermann

What is the use of killing the whole race to prove that one man is mortal? It reminds me of a story we read from the English of Charles Lamb, of burning a whole farm in order to get roast pig."

"Good, Louisa. You'll find no logic of that kind in Hegel any way. Nevertheless, Wolff wrote his book, and proved the Augsburg Confession by Euclid and Aristotle, and it was thought —especially by himself—to be the cleverest defence of Christian doctrine that ever was written."

"But Wolff, it seems to me, Hermann, was somewhat of a wolf in sheep's clothing. For, if the doctrines he believed rested for the proof of them on the creed and not upon the Bible, then not the Bible but the creed becomes the tribunal of appeal."

"And so thought Francke too, and so the theologian of Halle appealed against Wolff to the king. The then king was that miserable wretch"—

"O Hermann! speak not evil of dignities. He's dead long since; speak softly of the dead."

"Well then, the king was Frederic William, son of the strange old Fritz, whose beautiful tomb to his dogs we visited in the palace of *Sans Souci*, whose greatest ambition was to be master of the tallest regiment in Europe. The front rank of his regiment of giants was more than seven feet high. It was reinforced at any price, from any quarter of the world where giants could be found, and it was the greatest delight of his poor royal life to review the regiment of Titans daily, as Voltaire has described him, with his cane, and the old blue coat and the copper buttons down to his boots; and he was such a miser, this Fritz William, that when he got a new coat the copper buttons of the old one had to be taken off and sewed on to the new."

"Of course, Hermann, he had to

save the groschen to buy the giants. But what has all this to do with Wolff?"

"As he was one day reviewing his regiment of grenadiers, the Commissioners from Halle arrived. They complained of the mischief Wolff was working. The king could not see it. *It* was not seven feet high! 'But,' said the Commissioners, 'Wolff says the evil was fore-ordained, and so it must go on, as it is bidden, and it follows that if any of your Majesty's grenadiers should desert, it would be no sin to them,' whereat the king fell into a great rage and cried, 'Tell that fellow Wolff, that if he is not forth from my kingdom within twenty-four hours, he will certainly be hanged!' But though one Wolff was driven forth, there was a pack of much worse wolves behind him. For if you cross to Rheinsberg, you'll find the young Prince Frederic getting drunk every other night

with his literary associates. Perhaps because he had an English mother, his tastes were something higher than his father's, and so when Frederic William dies, the regiment of giants is disbanded, and the new king seeks for giants intellectually tall. Voltaire, the cleverest writer of the day, is brought to Berlin by the promise of flattery and florins, is sumptuously lodged in the state apartments at *Sans Souci*, and becomes Grand Vizier of the kingdom of thought to King Frederic the second. It is only necessary to remember what Voltaire was,—how 'Scripture was his jest book,'—to know that this was a great step in the progress of German infidelity, and now if I should add the names of deistical writers translated from the English, and the names of others who have worked in the same direction, this, or something like this, would be the history of German rationalism."

"That is not Hegelianism, is it?"

"No, Hegelianism German rationalism never was. There never was any rationalism in Germany but what was shipped in England and came round by France. The dress was German, but the thing itself was foreign. The hands were Esau's hands, but the voice was the voice of Jacob. And then it was a short-lived mushroom thing. Almost the same generation saw it in its cradle and in its shroud, and though some mourning and surviving friends, like our own Wegscheider, may still go about the streets, yet I believe its mass is sung, its knell is rung, and it has gone to the oblivion and the dust and the darkness of the *Friedhof*, and the 'Everlasting No.' But in the meantime a very different, a real intellectual giant appeared at Königsberg. His name was Immanuel Kant. Kant! Louisa, I had always trembled at the very name of Kant, that giant of metaphysics, and was greatly relieved, on reading his life lately,

to find that he was particularly fond of bread and cheese."

"And what was it Kant did?"

"Kant showed that there is something higher in a man than the understanding, on the low platform of which the battles of Truth had hitherto been fought. Kant couched the eye that gazes on the Absolute, on the Eternal Real. Kant showed that the powers of our nature develop into good, the highest in order coming out last. For first there comes sensation, and then memory, and then the understanding, and then reason, or the eye that gazes on the transcendental. Kant showed that there are mysteries that cannot be comprehended by the intellect but only by the heart; that the heart is above the intellect, that the understanding looks through the eye that gazes out of the narrow windows of space and time, while the Eternal temple of Truth opens only to the holy, to 'him who has clean

hands and a pure heart!' You understand?"

"Yes, Hermann, go on."

"Then these ideals which the eye beholds are the Eternal Reals, and all besides are the mere phantoms of space and time; that the ideal Christ is the real Christ, and God beholds us in His ideal, not as we actually are, but as we ought to be; and after Kant cam Fichte, and Fichte said, 'There were no external realities at all, that they were the mere objectivity of the subject or creations of the inward eye'; and after Fichte came Schelling, and Schelling said, 'Then this creating eye is God's own eye'; and after Schelling came Hegel, and Hegel said that 'God and man are one, and God all men, and all men God, and the whole universe God, eternally thinking in the process of development,' and that, or something like that, Louisa, is Hegelianism."

"You surely do not believe such blasphemous nonsense, Hermann?"

"No, Louisa, and yet I feel, in studying this philosophy, as Baron Humboldt says he felt when he experienced the first shock of an earthquake. I feel a dreadful sense of restlessness and insecurity. The ground seems to give way beneath, and the Earth and the Heaven to dissolve, the Universe becomes a dream, a myth, a wind that bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. I seem to hear eternal songstresses weaving continually at their own shroud, with woof of good and warp of evil, with woof of laughter and with warp of tears, and I am part of the shroud, and I am part of the song! I grasp your hand, Louisa, to know if I am real or only phantasmal, but how should my hand tell me? for *it* may be phantasmal and I myself only a phantom, and gliding through a little churchyard

moonshine between two black walls of two eternities—the eternity of darkness I have glided from, and the eternity of darkness I am gliding into!"

"Hermann! studies like these will turn your brain."

"No fear of that; I think that I see my way through them to the reconciling of the dreadful puzzle of predestination and free will. The difficulty vanishes when there are no *two* in the universe, no subjective and objective, no *ego* and *non-ego,* no creator and creature, but only *one*—one universal all-pervading life."

"O Hermann! the truth must surely lie on some other road than that. Do you remember little sister Frederika with her golden hair? and how she died on Christmas Eve,—when they were lighting the lamps on the Christmas trees,—singing 'Baby Jesus, come and save me,' and what did she know of all your transcendentalism?"

"And yet, Louisa, I must follow the

truth, whithersoever she leads, although she should beckon me over the deep dark floods. God grant that *she* may not be a phantom too! But come, sing me a song. It does me good to hear you singing." And Louisa sings—

"I cannot tell what it meaneth,
That I am so sad to-day—
A legend of time departed
Will not from my brain away;
The air is cool and it darkens,
And quickly flows the Rhine,
While over the mountain summits
The evening sunbeams shine.

"A maiden of peerless beauty
Is wondrously sitting there;
They sparkle—her golden jewels;
She combeth her golden hair,
With a comb of gold she combs it,
And a song too singeth she,
The song hath a wondrous ringing
Of powerful melody.

"The boatman in yonder shallop
Is seized with a wild delight,

He looketh not on the breakers,
His gaze is towards the height :
I ween the waves will have swallowed
Boatman and barque ere long,
And 'tis Lorelei who has done it,
With the might of her magic song.

" For it boils and it bubbles, it hisses and seethes,
As when water with fire doth vie ;
Towards heaven a feathery column breathes,
And wave on wave rolls eternally ;
And with sound like the distant thunder's roar,
The waters leap upwards to air once more."

" Thank you, Louisa, but the boatman's fate will not be mine. I shall be like Schiller's diver that brings the goblet from the bottom of the sea—

" And they see from the dashing breakers' foam
A swan-like object glide,
An arm and a shoulder upward come,
Swift and steadily stemming the tide ;
'Tis he ! and behold in his left hand high
He waves the goblet triumphantly ! "

" Yes, but the ballad does not end that way, Hermann. It ends by his

being drowned when he dives for the goblet the second time."

We must now dismiss our student from the University. There are two doors to go out by. The first is the door of doctorship, of which we will not stay to speak. The second is the door of death, the door poor Schrœner went out by, the door of death. For the Bursch too may die. He too may drink the cup of deep suffering, and exchange the laurel wreaths of life for the cypress of the tomb. Perhaps the *Frau* mother comes by the *Post Wagen* to wait on him in his last illness. No doubt the betrothed Louisa will also do so, and waste herself to a very shadow with watching and grief, a shadow that shall flit on with noiseless footsteps after the Bursch's grave is green.

The Halle Churchyard, where the Bursch is buried, lies off Leipsic Street—a broad, green cemetery walled round, the *Fried-*

*hof*, "City of Peace," as it is beautifully called, or *Gottes-acker*, the "Field of God," where seed is sowing for the harvest of the Resurrection, and there are no death-heads and cross bones, but marble pictures of mortal slumber, and angels with folded wings.

The Bursch's funeral takes place before sunrise, or at any hour, or, if he has been much renowned among his fellow-Burschen, the permission of the Government may be obtained, and the funeral conducted with a *Fackel-zug* or torch procession. It is a strange, wild thing that *Fackel-zug*. When the hour has struck, and the great bell of the Market Church is tolling, and announcing the outset of the train, you look from the window and behold a crowding and rushing of people in the streets still dark. But presently you hear the wail of the trumpets coming nearer and nearer, till you can also discern the softer accompaniments of other instruments in the "Dead

March" in "Samson" or in "Saul," and then the breakings of red light, which grow brighter and brighter; and behind the musicians comes the torch train—of scores of students with lighted torches in the one hand, and flashing swords in the other—flowing betwixt the black masses of the crowd in a stream of fire, horsemen riding along the banks to keep them clear, every window thronged with curious faces, which the light brings into view, and then comes the hearse, drawn by black horses wreathed with flowers, an open bier on which the richly-mounted coffin is displayed, with wreaths of flowers, and amongst them *hers*, that wreath of white roses from the widowed bride! At the grave there is a funeral oration, and when the coffin has been lowered, "ashes to ashes," the torches revealing the darkness of the hour, the Requiem is sung, and the procession returns to the Market Place, where speedily it changes to a ring, and the torches are thrown

into the centre, and round the blazing pile that glares up luridly against the dark sky, they sing again some wild, weird requiem.

And so the Bursch is buried.

A few words in conclusion.

Hermann has said that there is scarcely any rationalism now in Germany, and what is usually so called is not German at all. Now, this is true. Rationalism is not a native product of German minds, any more than German clocks made in America, or German sausages in the Grassmarket. It was the infidelity that was among ourselves last century, and the infidelity of Voltaire and the French encyclopedists, which, migrating to Germany, assumed the Burschen dress, drank beer, smoked meerschaums, and fed on *Sauer-kraut*, and so became transferred into German rationalism. But the thing itself is not German, only the dress, the beer, the meerschaum, and the *Sauer-*

*kraut.* But what is really German is that strange philosophy of Pantheism, that dreadful outgrowth of the German mind, that "tree" that grows up almost in a night and stretches its branches over England, France and North America, so that, on either side of the rolling ocean stands the fatal tree, bearing all manner of deadly fruit, and whose leaves are for the ruin of the nations. How it has fallen away again in its own native Germany we cannot describe. How first came Schleiermacher (magnificent man) affirming that the heart and not the head at all, that the feeling and not the intellect at all, were the expounders of the True, so laying the "axe at the root of the tree," and after came another in the same direction, and yet a greater even than he—the German apostle of his time—Dr. Augustus Neander. But the most deadly blow of all it seems to me was dealt by Strauss himself, who showed men by his works what gross absurdity

the system necessarily led to, and by that bloody tragedy in 1848 when Pantheism took the sword and perished with the sword.

Since then the Germans have been finding out that not the head alone, though the head of the philosopher, and not the heart alone, though the loving heart of a Schleiermacher and Neander, but the hand too as truly, the working hand, that does good deeds of charity, opens the way into the temple of the True; and so they have set themselves to build schools and institute missions, and feed the hungry and clothe the naked and do other blessed charitable work; and so the "Lost Church" of Uhlands has begun to *do*, like the Minster hidden in the depths of the forest, whose bells the sacristan heard ringing, but which could never be found. The lost Christianity has begun to re-appear to the hewers of wood in the forest, though hidden from the learned in the colleges and

even from the loving in their homes; it has begun to re-appear to the labourers in the wood, doing the work that God has given them to do. No fear have we for the Church or Christianity. She has battled with the philosophy of Plato and conquered it, and with the philosophy of the school men, and she can battle with this philosophy also, and yet approve of all that is good in it, for even Pantheism as opposed to Deism has truth in it, for Deism dissociates God from His works, and places Him far away from us, whereas the Pantheism of Scripture and the Pantheism of St. Paul affirm that "He is not far from every one of us," "that in Him we live and move and have our being," and to this Evangelical Pantheism even Germany may help to bring us back.

As the fashion in philosophy changes, the philosophy from which it has been derived must needs change too, but Truth itself is eternal and unchanging;

and though the philosophic dress that human hands have woven and thrown around it may be torn and trodden in the dust, I am not one of those that would mourn over Joseph's bloody coat when Joseph himself is alive. The grave clothes and the napkin that was about the head are not the Christ Himself, for Christ is risen and gone forth in new robes. . . .

In Botany there have been many systems, but the flowers have always blossomed in the same fashion.

In Music there have been many systems, but the songs remain sweet as ever.

In Astronomy there have been many systems, but the stars shine on with the same brightness; and so in Theology, so far as it is form and not substance, "it shall perish," but the Truth and Love of our Lord Jesus never shall. And never let us lose hold on that central Rock in the midst of the great billows of exist-

ence, and with this word I conclude—That as the prince of German students, the most illustrious late Prince Albert, wedded to our British Queen (God save the Queen), displayed as perfect and as beautiful a life perhaps as any that the age has seen, and died in royal manhood holding on to that "Cleft Rock of Ages," so what is best in German thought needs only to be joined with British practical activity, and the one shall be the complement and the perfection of the other, and then the *two in one* shall form a new and beautiful and higher form of life amongst us here, while we never lose our faith in the "Cleft Rock," in that Eternal Love to whom our dying Prince has cried—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

# LECTURE III.

## POETRY.

WHAT is poetry?

"Pale Melancholy sat retired."

Thank you, William Collins. That *is* poetry. Any other line of your exquisite Passion-ode might have done as well, but this will serve our purpose in the meantime.

"Pale Melancholy sat retired."

You give it to Dr. Syntax and the metrical measure, and Dr. Syntax and the metrical measure try it by their rules of syntax and prosody, and pronounce it quite correct. But there is obviously something here with which Dr. Syntax and the metrical measure have nothing to do and cannot touch, a sad, beautiful, saintly thing, called Poetry.

You might give it to a sculptor like Canova, and he would put it into marble for you, realizing the fable of the Niobe that wept with grief till she was turned into stone. The marble would melt away among his fingers as he transfused the sorrow into it, and when the statue was finished it might be placed away on some monumental tomb, and in sepulchral crypt, in marble paleness and in darkest shadow, "Pale Melancholy sits retired," and it is still poetry—poetry in marble.

You might give it to a painter like Correggio, and he would put it upon canvas for you, drawing a lovely face and figure, like that of his famous "Magdalene of the Desert," subordinating the earthly beauty to the diviner beauty of sadness, and he would find you a peculiar tint of paleness, not the glistening paleness of the lily, nor the heavenly paleness of the Madonna, nor the ghastly paleness of the dead, but that peculiar tint of paleness that haunts him from the faces of the woe-begone, and that

he puts upon his "Penseroso"; and the whole toned down in a light darkened still further by curtains of shadow; then again in a picture, "with eyes upraised as one inspired," "Pale Melancholy sits retired," and it is still poetry—poetry on canvas.

You might give it to a musician like Beethoven, and he would put it into music for you, not adapting it to music like some country precentor, who finds that it would "sing" to the first line of "French"; not setting it to music like some musical tinker who takes a bit of one tune and a bit of another, and solders them together and consoles himself that his tune combines the excellencies of both and must be the best of the three; not arranging it syllabically with Melancholy "sitting" on a seat between the bars and "retiring" in *diminuendo*. Not at all in this way would Beethoven go to work. He would not imitate the words, but he would represent the feeling they embody. He would find

you a little phrase of musical sadness, and would repeat it over and over till it made *you* sad, and then when it seemed about to burst into a wail of anguish, he would soothe it down with other music, and he would repeat it in widening circles that would sweep through all the zodiac of poetic grief, and then perhaps he would sound a merry bugle in the distance with bright ringing music, and through the changing of the key lift the curtain, where, sadder than ever for the contrast, "Pale Melancholy sits retired," and it is still poetry—poetry in sound.

And once more, you might give it to a mediæval architect like William of Wykeham (if good William were not dead half a thousand years ago), and in some way that can hardly be understood by us, in this age of cotton and machinery, good William would put clasped hands into the arches, and repose into the pillars, and upward eyes into the ascending lines, and so tone down the whole with deep-

ening shadows and with tinted lights, that, somehow, as you entered the side chapel of the minster, it would seem as if the very stones cried out, "Pale Melancholy sits retired," and still it would be poetry—poetry in stone; so that you have four kinds of poetry—in statuary, in painting, in music, and in architecture.

And last of all, you might come back to William Collins himself and find him sitting in a darkened room with a deep melancholy on his countenance; and that is poetry incarnated in real life, only that William has a book in his hand and that is the New Testament, and I hope he reads in it of the better land, where "God shall wipe away all tears from his eyes," when the mystic figure of sorrow that has run through all the arts and all departments of human life shall be ended, and "Melancholy," that has sat like Mary at the feet of Jesus, shall no longer "sit retired."

Now these various arts of sculpture,

painting, music, architecture, are just so many different ways of writing poetry. And the poetry that is written in any one of them might be translated into any other; the cathedral, so to speak, dissolving into the oratorio, or the oratorio returning into the cathedral. For "architecture" (it has been said) "is frozen music and music, architecture melted into sound"; and though this thought is pitched on a high scale of abstraction, which all may not be able easily to climb to, yet I can never forget the thrill of delight that went through me when first it was revealed to me by the teaching of a gifted friend,[1] one whose step is no more on this green earth, but who I hope is this night in the nightless world, dissolving the architecture of the heavens, and the panoramic memories of earth and time, into the music of the song for ever new unto God and to the Lamb.

So, then, there are five ways at least

[1] Dr. Samuel Brown.

of writing poetry—architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and books or words or poetry proper. Of these five I call the first three the fixed arts, and the remaining two the flowing arts.

I call the first fixed arts, because they have no medium or transition, lifting the mind from the lower to a higher frame or mood, as poetry proper and music do, and because they cannot travel to and fro as poetry and music do. Cologne Cathedral cannot come here to preach to us its sermons in stone, whatever it may do on the banks of the Rhine. The marble prophets of Michael Angelo and the pictured Madonnas of Raphael make no visits out of doors. But it is not so with poetry and music. Beethoven comes with his symphonies into our drawing-rooms, and Handel with his choruses into our churches, and Mozart and Mendelssohn may still walk our streets and cheer us with their songs. Luther writes his song in the Wartburg, and it is reproduced as

fresh and beautiful as ever, three hundred years after, by the singers of the Evangelical Alliance in the Royal Gardens at Sans Souci. Moses writes a song on the banks of the Red Sea, and Moses' song is read three thousand years after, in the synagogue every Sabbath day. And so architecture, sculpture, painting, the fixed arts, when employed in the service of religion, tend to localize religion and make it a mere matter of geography; but on the wheels of poetry and music the chariot of the everlasting Gospel has gone abroad. "Her line is gone out through all the earth, and her words to the end of the world."

The Reformation distinguished between the fixed arts and the flowing arts, rejecting in great measure the former, but retaining the latter in the service of the Church, and in fact the fixed arts seem to have passed their best, and to be now on the decline. Men do not now build cathedrals or paint Madonnas; they cannot, and

it is better that they should not. We have left these things behind us in the modern march of the Church's progress. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." The tinted glass through which the mediævals saw darkly has been broken, and we see face to face. The fixed arts have dissolved into the flowing arts—poetry and music.

So I have seen a glacier on the Swiss mountains, with its beautiful fretted aisles, and tinted lights, and snow-white statuary, and ruby and crimson colouring in fresco on the icy walls — it was cold, frozen, dead; but there was sunshine streaming on it from above, that would melt it a little further down, and there was water flowing underneath, into which it would ere long dissolve. Such was the mediæval age of fine art, and the sunshine streaming above was the light of God's truth in the Gospel, and the water flowing underneath was the under current of mediæval poetry

and music, and the sunshine melted it at the Reformation. Architecture, sculpture, painting—the fixed arts—dissolved into the flowing arts—poetry and music; and the ice-bound stream, dissolved, has flowed down through the valleys, and, watering them, broadens as it flows to the eternal ocean.

So much for the identity of poetry and fine art, and the difference among the ways of writing it.

Let us now take up the question, What is poetry?

1. *Poetry is not mere rhyme and rhythm* (metre and measure). These twins that usually go together are very helpful to the memory, but nothing more. I would never remember the days of the month, if the hard lesson had not been dissolved for us in childhood into a solution of rhyme and rhythm, so—

> "Thirty days hath September,
> April, June, and November," etc.

And now since I have learned Mr. Chiff-

ney's art of horsemanship (without paying the half guinea), I shall never more fear to ride upon a horse.

"Your head and your heart keep boldly up,
Your hands and your heels keep down,
Your legs keep close to your horse's sides
And your elbows close to your own!"

And so rhyme and rhythm help the memory.

It would seem, too, that at a certain elevated pitch of feeling, poetry must necessarily run into rhyme and rhythm, that at a certain elevated temperature (if I may so express it), it must boil up into these; and the reason of this lies deep in our constitution, in some mysterious harmony between the movements of passion and thought and the pulsations of human hearts and brains. Down in the hidden depths the reason lies, that we shall not endeavour to explain; as when joy, for instance, when greatly excited, cannot stay down in the dull parlour of prose, but must presently go up into the drawing-

room of music, and the ante-room of rhyme and rhythm.

It would seem that the greater poets are always the most melodious rhymers. Language somehow seems to melt away among their fingers, like ice on the white fingers of the sun, and flow away in fluent streams of melody, floating out the ships of their imagination, while minor poets must be content to hammer and tinker together the bits of ice, and make as best they can a kind of "causey" for their coaches and their carts.

Contrast here James Montgomery, and Lord Byron who certainly in this respect is the higher genius of the two.

Let us take Montgomery, because his versification is far above the average—

"Ye tow'ring Alps, tremendous scene,
Ye rocks with honour crowned,
With cloud and vapour girded round,
What devastation spreads the plain
When from your tyrant heads you throw
Yon diadem of solid snow!"

Very good; but let Byron float out the same thought and see how musically it flows—

"Mount Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crowned him long ago,
On a throne of rocks—in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow!"

Nevertheless, rhyme and rhythm are not essential to poetry. They are her handmaids when she wants to dance and sing, but they are not the queen herself. No rhyme in "Paradise Lost," though there is rhythm in a most majestic march. No rhyme in Southey's "Thalaba," though there is music of the richest kind, and there is neither rhyme nor rhythm in the Hebrew Psalter, which, we come to think, is the finest poetry in the world; and though Francis Rous has rhymed the Psalter for us Scotchmen, some may doubt if it is much improved thereby. For how could he, or Tate, or Sternhold, or any other man, succeed in discoursing the

varied and ever-changing music of the many-stringed lyre of inspiration on the solitary string of a quatrain stanza? Raphael's cartoons represented in woodcuts, Handel's "Messiah" cut down into psalm tunes, or Solomon's temple modelled in clay, might, in this respect, be something like the great Hebrew Psalter cut down into little lines of 8s. and 6s. For there is a dramatic breadth of background in these psalms, and there is an essential duality in all Hebrew psalmody that comes out in the distich and its parallel, in voice and echo, question and response, or solo and chorus, and that does not "sing" well to a psalm tune that is evermore repeating itself; and altogether there is such a breadth in the artistic scale on which the Hebrew Psalter is projected, that it is unfairly dealt with, I think, when the noble waving willow on which David's harp was hung is cut down into little rods of 8s. and 6s., and piled up on the pages in the packing boxes of metre!

Well then, rhyme and rhythm are not essential to poetry. Rhythm has come to us from the classics, and rhyme from the monks of the middle ages (to whom we owe also our modern harmony in church music), but it is not essential that the divine line of poetry should be tipped with silver rhyme or rhythm. It is not essential that sentiment should walk in splendour, or dance on dainty feet along the garden walks of poetry, ringing the bell of rhyme at every turn; it is not essential that heroes should march along continually in what is called heroic verse—viz., to sing ten steps or syllables (a short and long alternately), with a rhyme to round off the tune, and this, I think, ought to be very comforting to many of our poetasters, who, I am sure, must often have great difficulty in counting off the exact number of steps or syllables for the heroic march —eight for the fingers and two more for the thumbs!

"Why," asks Professor Masson, "why is prose so very hardly dealt with? Why may not one in prose chase forest nymphs, and see small green-eyed elves? and delight in pæonies and musk roses, and invoke the stars and roll mist about the hills, and watch the seas thundering through caverns and dashing against promontories? Is prose made of iron? Must it never weep? Must it never laugh? never linger to look at a buttercup, or ride at a gallop over the downs? always at a steady trot, and leaving all vaulting and beautiful evolution of fancy to its sister, verse?"

No, certainly. Thanks to our modern poets who have written in prose, and are the first class poets of the present day. Thanks to Christopher North, who has given us in prose his inimitable "Fairie's Funeral." Thanks to Thomas De Quincey, who has given us his three mysterious "Ladies of Sorrow," floating out before our view on the soft breath

of his "Suspiria de profundis." Thanks to Jean Paul Richter who has given us in prose the grandest and most awful dream that mortal man has ever dreamt; in which the universe is pictured without God, and man in agony is seeking Him through rain and darkness and eternal storm, and finds no throbbing heart, no healing hand, no Infinite Father, till he gradually awakes—awakes in the golden autumn morning with the hum of insect life and the prattle of little children around him, to *feel* the presence of the loving Father whom he sought. And thanks, (let us say it with all reverence,) thanks above all to that God who has given us poetry in forests and in storms and in stars, in the pictured forests, in the ringing storms, and in the architecture of the heavens, for what is all creation but a mighty poem—a *ποίημα*, that has its rhythmical movement in the roll of uncounted ages; but yet, with all its grandeur and magnificence, is only as

a little lyric song at midnight at a tomb, or some little hum of midnight breath to Him with whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

2. *Poetry is not mere imitation, not mere copying after Nature.* It was defined so by the old Greek, Aristotle, but Aristotle's theory would not suffice. It may suffice for narrative and descriptive poetry with which Greek literature specially abounded, but it will not agree with other kinds of poetry. This theory of Aristotle's soon breaks down, for presently we meet with griffins, fairies, and elves, with gorgons and hydras and "chimeras dire," with Ariels and Calibans and witches and naiads—most wonderful creations of poetic genius, but the like of which were never seen in Nature, and never sat for their pictures to Shakespeare or to any other.

We must abandon then the theory of Aristotle, and revert upon the higher

theory of Lord Bacon. "Poetry," says Bacon, "is feigned history, and the use of this feigned history is to give the mind of man some shadow of satisfaction in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being inferior to the soul, and because there is agreeable to the mind a more and more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things. Wherefore poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and delectation, and hath always been thought to have in it a participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind, whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind to the nature of things."

Nevertheless, there is a poetry of imitation, or of copying exactly after Nature, and excellent poetry too in its own way; and let me here give some examples of

this kind of poetry, and such as you shall all be able to verify.

First, "A Heron," by Thomas Hood—

"The moping heron, motionless and stiff,
That on a stone as silently and slily
Stood an apparent sentinel, as if
To guard the water lily."

Next, "A Spider," by the same, from the "Haunted House," and all the better painted that we get glimpses through its coil into the human heart—

"The subtle spider, that from overhead
Hung like a spy on human guilt and error,
Suddenly turned, and up its slender thread
Ran with a nimble terror."

Next, "A Rabbit," by Thomas Hood also—

"The coney from the sandy bank
Has run a rapid race,
Through thistle, bent, and tangled fern,
To seek the open space,
And on its haunches sits erect
To clean its furry face."

I am sure you have all seen that very

rabbit. Landseer or Rosa Bonheur could not have painted it better, and how poor Cowper would have rejoiced in a rabbit like that!

Next, "An Owl," by Sir Humphry Davy—Davy, the chemist, who was no minor poet, and would have been still better than he was if he had not been the greatest chemist of his day, if Pluto had not seized on him gathering flowers and carried him down into the gloomy regions of the laboratory. But hear two lines of the "Owl"—

"The owl that, sitting on the barn,
*Sees the mouse creeping in the corn*," etc.

And again for a picture on a higher range, a picture in Greek style by Coleridge, encircled by a tissue of leaves, of a ship becalmed at sea—

"Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be,
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

"All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun at noon
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean."

And once more for a "group," and such a group as you must all have seen, by our famous Thomas Aird—

"A rainy day,
And children kept from school when, sick of slates,
And books and toys, they take their listless stand
At the dull window, and their noses squeeze,
Flattened till they be white, against the pane
Washed by the streaming, weltering drench without;
If hen, high lifting her unwilling feet,
Run dripping by, or random, waddling duck
Half swimming, slabber with her bill engulfed
In the grim pool—oh! not unwelcome they,
They give an object to the weary eye."

Now, it would be the easiest thing in the world for us, and not unprofitable either, to enlarge the picture gallery, to

add, for instance, a "parson" from Chaucer, a "prude" from Cowper, a "cuckoo" from Wordsworth, a "rainbow" from Vaughan, a "pony" from Dickens, a "landscape" from Thomson,—or still better from the author of "Paul and Virginia,"—a "battle" from Homer, a "star" from Virgil, a "mediæval church" from Ruskin, and a "sunset" from Dr. Guthrie.

These are about the best word-painters we have known, and there is scarcely anything in a picture that words cannot render, and the word-painting is often the better of the two.

3. *Poetry is fictitious creation.* Not mere rhyme and rhythm, not only imitation of nature, it is in the highest departments at least, and we say it with all reverence, *creation.*

The poet is literally the creator, and though it was in Greece that they baptized him so, from classic urn and with Castilian dew, it is no mere heathen baptism that has bestowed upon him such a name. If

Socrates may have held the basin, and Plato stood godfather at the font, the Apostle Paul might have preached the sermon on the occasion of such a baptism as that, for it is a great truth, if we would only think of it, that God has gifted man with the creating power, a power of making creatures for himself; that in this respect he has been made in the image of God, in the likeness of Him who created him. For not only has he got dominion over the world and all God's creatures in it, but he has got the power of making other and ideal worlds for himself, and peopling them with creatures of his own imagination, and the possession of this power it is—the possession of it in a high degree—which constitutes the poet. In this sense the poet is a creator, his works are styled creations, and this genius, the "faculty divine." And though the Fall has robbed us of so much, it has not robbed us of this power. Its heart is sad, its arm is

paralysed, and it works no longer now, as it once did, creating the beautiful only out of its heart of love and joy. It works now under sadly reversed conditions that have broadened its dominion upon the one side, while they have darkened and contracted it upon the other. For it has come true in this sad sense what Satan said, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." But still with sad heart, still with palsied arm, still through mingled merriment and tears, it goes on through the ages shaping forth its wonderful creations. For so it works in the bricks and mortar on the plains of Shinar, and utters forth its thought of proud ambition and of universal empire in a Tower of Babel. It seizes in a wild mood on the stony boulders of old Egypt and brooding over them, out comes the Sphinx! the stony image of eternal peace. It joins together the bull's body, the human head, the eagle's wings, expressing thus by

cumulative art, by aggregate of excellence, its ideal of the perfect, and lo! colossal human-headed winged bulls are standing on the marble stairs of Nineveh. And now it crosses towards Greece, and binds Prometheus on the rock of Caucasus, with the vulture preying on his heart, that always grows again and always is devoured amidst the storm and darkness; while on the other, and on the sunny side of human life, it makes Apollo touch the silver lute at sunrise, and presently a thousand nymphs and satyrs, graceful and grotesque, dance round the fountains and through the dewy woods, while rosy-fingered morn is entering through the orient gate, and leading in the white-robed hours, and Venus through the western gate is returning to heaven from a midnight marriage-supper, scented with wine and perfumed with roses. And then, again, it is in Araby the blest, working in the dark ages and the thousand and one nights, kindling its wonderful lamp

with rich emblazonry of gold and pearls, and as it carries it gleaming over the waters betwixt Africa and Europe westward from the city of Haroun Alraschid, it calls upon the Moors and all the other slaves of the lamp to build its gorgeous palaces of Arabesque and of Alhambra.

And then, again, it has gone north into the gloomy forests of Scandinavia, and as it works amid the awful shadows and the roaring thunder of its hearse-like pines,—uprise at its command, in lurid banquet room, grim and grizzly groups of warrior-gods, drinking red wine from cups of human skulls.

And now it is riding with the Erl-King through the woods of Thuringia, and the wife of the charcoal-burner in the wood-edge cottage clasps her babe closer to her bosom, and mutters a keener prayer, as she listens to the ringing echoes of the clattering hoofs in the midnight depths of the forest.

And already the convent and cathedral

bells are ringing, and long-robed monks pacing the fretted cloisters, and gay troubadours have been singing their minne-songs in the sunny trellised gardens, and black-robed priests chanting the "Canto Fermo" in processions with funeral candles; but here we must not linger, for presently it is in England—merry old England, ho! amidst its "hedgerow elms and hillocks green"; and having fixed the canopy beneath the arched and ample forehead of a lowly man from Stratford-on-Avon, forth walk upon the English stage the finest products of poetic genius, the "Hamlets," and the "Lears," and the "Desdemonas," all re-enacting, in ideal drama, the real drama of this mortal life of ours, with scenery alternating between the magnificent darkness of a "Tempest," or a "Winter's Tale," and the bright ringing merriment of a "Midsummer Night's Dream."

And finally, she comes to Scotland on a visit to her numerous family of children

the fairies, and having paid a visit to the mermaid in her sea-cave glittering with pearls, and found her tearing her yellow hair, and told her how her cousin the Greek syren is getting on,—in a ship quite of her own from Iona, the holy isle, where already she has builded her cathedral, sculptured the Reilig-Oran, and walked in white with the holy singing monks of St. Columba,—she comes sailing down the Corryvrechan, down into the Firth of Clyde, and lands on Carrick shore, and drops her mantle on the shoulders of an Ayrshire ploughman! And presently there is a fearful rider up! galloping through mirk and midnight towards Alloway Kirk, a rider all the more fearful, for the bursts of drunken merriment with which he is surrounded, for the unearthly eyes that gaze upon this Scottish Gilpin, this rider of that dreadful race, and for the troubled lights, the awful *chiaroscuro* of the picture that vanishes beyond the dance of witches, and beyond the "brig," into a darkness

more mysterious and a silence more profound!

Such are some of the works, such are some of the creations, good and evil, of this remarkable power with which God hath gifted man.

And now concerning this power, I shall observe three things: 1st, it is life-giving; 2nd, it is lawful; 3rd, it is limited.

1. It is life-giving. It is like music in the masque of Comus that can create a soul under the ribs of death. Of course it is not *real* life that it creates, it is *ideal* life.

It is not man's prerogative to make real life. As "Donald" said, when, after seeing the sights of Glasgow and walking down High Street, he paused opposite a tobacconist's, and stood gazing at the painted bust over the door with a pipe in its mouth, "Na, but they be puir hauns at makin' mans." And so, if any one would dare to speak of man's creation as real life, or dare to put the

statues of Phidias, the "Madonnas" of Raphael, or any other creation of poetic genius, upon a level of comparison with the meanest brother, in poverty and rags, that *breathes*, we cannot reason with such a person, but can only refer him in our scorn to the sarcasm of "Donald,"—"Na, but they be puir hauns at makin' mans."

And yet there is a kind of life that your poetic genius creates, and though not real life, it has a marvellous influence for good or evil in it; and here comes an affecting thought, the contrast between the mortality of man himself, and the immortality of some of his creations. Raphael is dead, but Raphael's "Madonnas" still live, shedding their wonderful beauty into the eyes of thousands. Dante is dead, but Dante's "Beatrice" still lives, lovely Beatrice walking through heaven. Spencer is dead, but not his heavenly "Una" with milk-white lamb. Milton is dead, but not Milton's "Eve," the mother of all living creations of the kind since then. Shakespeare is

dead, but Shakespeare's "Hamlet" is still talking to the grave-digger, and shall hold on to talk so long as there are graves to dig and sheeted dead to lay in them, and thoughtful men to stand beside them, and to wonder "in that sleep of death what dreams may come."

And so, too, Burns is dead, and buried in Dumfries Churchyard; and we, for our part, are most willing that the memory of his wretched life be buried with him, and that we tread softly on his dust; but then the serious thing is this,—that dreadful rider "Tam" still lives, and rides his fearful ride to Alloway Kirk. No man can murder "Tam," no scorn of aristocrats can break or chafe "Tam's" spirit, no drink can send "Tam" to Dumfries Kirkyard. Sprung, full-equipped, from the teeming brain of genius, there he rides, and will hold on to ride, so long as this strange life of ours can sport with its own misery, and blaze out rockets of wild, drunken laughter upon the very

night of its own terrible despair; and here, too, comes a very serious thought, when we remember that these "mighty poets in their misery dead," are not dead but living still, that they have gone through darkness and oblivion and kirkyards to give account of the genius God has given them, and the use on earth that they have made of it. When we contrast that real immortality of theirs with the ideal immortality that they have given to their creations that survive them on the earth, it becomes a very serious question, what shall become of those who abuse that gift of genius and send forth moral *Frankensteins* upon the world, working wreck and ruin, when it is beyond their power to stay it? I do not stay to press this point, but I am old-fashioned enough to think it is a very sad one, and when others have held festivals over the dead, I have retired into my chamber in silence and in sorrow. But let us hope in the mercy of the God of the

"Cottar's Saturday Night," drop a silent tear, and pass on.

The poet then, we see, gives life, ideal life, to his creations. He gives life, it is said, to death itself. For what is death? a mere nonentity? mere negation of existence? "absolved into the all" as some metaphysicians would have it? Who ever thinks of death after this fashion? Is it not rather the Serpent with the sting, or the Mower with the scythe, or the King of Terrors with his sword, or the fatal Atropos with her scissors cutting the thread of mortal life, or the Angel of death with folded wing and torch inverted? For nothing rouses our feelings as the thought of death does, and, therefore, it is always represented as a person, and we can hardly persuade ourselves that it is not. And as such, Christ has vanquished it and slain it, and laid it in the sepulchre, and "death itself shall die," when, according to the legend, God shall summon Death before Him at the

judgment day, and the saints shall plead that he may be destroyed, and the wicked shall plead that he may be spared, and death shall be destroyed and cast into the lake of fire, and the saints shall shout because there is no more death, and the wicked shall wail because "neither can they die any more."

The poet gives ideal life to his creations, and then too he prepares for them a world of their own in which to live and move; and this let us illustrate from "Tam's" dreadful ride. For mark how everything on the road harmonized with the governing idea of that drunken daring which "Tam" personifies, how everything is calculated to strike terror into "Tam"—

"By this time he was 'cross the ford
Whaur in the snaw the chapman smoor'd,
And past the birks and muckle stane
Whaur drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane,

And through the whin and by the cairn
Whaur hunters fund the murder'd bairn,
And near the thorn abune the well
Whaur Mungo's mither hanged hersel'."

Now "Tam," I suppose, must have come that very road to Ayr market in the morning, but nothing of all that was there then, neither the "ford," nor the "stane," nor the "cairn," nor the "well," nothing of the kind. Why? Because "Tam" was in a very different mood in the morning; in fact he was not "Tam" at all, but just a Carrick rustic riding to the market. You must all understand this easily, for you are all poets to that extent. You all know how any mood of mind projects itself upon external nature and attunes it to itself: how, for instance, when you are very glad, all nature seems to dance and sing, "sunlights are bridesmaids," and rain is music, and all merry as a marriage bell; while, on the other hand, when you are very sad, all nature seems to put on

mourning and to move in funeral procession to the "Dead March" that is playing in your heart, with waving hearse-like woods and sighing winds, and sun and stars like pale sepulchral lamps, or, in the words of no mean poet, Gray—

"See the wretch that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost
And breathe and walk again.
The meanest flow'ret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening Paradise."

For what is outward nature but a mirror in which we see ourselves reflected, a whispering gallery that gives us back our own emotions, and the bent heavens a bell that rings for marriage or for funeral according to our own moods of mind —a thought that has been finely elaborated in Schiller's famous "Song of the Bell." And so also by Coleridge, who has turned the art of criticism into poetry—

"O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone doth Nature live;
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud."

Shakespeare illustrates this also in "Lear," whose anguish sheds its sadness over the heavens; in "Timon," whose misanthropy repeats itself in sun and moon and stars; and in "Macbeth," when meditating the murder of King Duncan, when everything around him becomes "instinct with conscience and ministers to fear"—

"The very stones prate of his whereabouts;
Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood."

And there too is Tennyson with his

"Break! Break! Break!"

You did not understand it in the least when you went down to the sea shore in a merry mood; it had only been to you as a lovely song and nothing more, till there came a death into your house, and a sweet face was sealed away in the darkness, and you were sighing for the

touch of a vanished hand, and *then* you knew what the wild waves were saying in

"Break! Break! Break!
On thy cold grey stones, O sea!
And I would that my heart could utter
The thoughts that arise in me."

Here too you may see how it was that, by projecting their own sentiments upon external nature in an age of child-like simplicity, men made what are called myths—beautiful classic Greek myths,—such as that of the "Pleiades" wandering every night in a star-cluster through the heavens seeking their lost sister "Merope"; or more beautiful Christian myths, such as that of the *Aspen tree*, that trembled when they went to take from it the wood for the Cross, and has been trembling ever since; or that of the *Red-breast*, that wounded its breast, and got it crimsoned over with blood by trying to pluck a thorn from the crown of the thorn-crowned One, and so has been ever since the friend and favourite

of man. The pious sentiments with which man's heart was full he could not choose but project in this way on external nature, the sceptic or the scientific critic not having arrived to explode these beautiful fables, with somewhat more philosophy, but possibly somewhat less piety, than those who made them. For my own part, I like the interpenetrating of all outward nature with the thought of the Cross and the Crucified One; and what if it should turn out after all that the mediæval fables had more truth in them than the cold scientific scepticism by which they are displaced? Real truth they had not, but they had ideal truth, or beauty, or life, or whatever else you may call it, and this is poetry. So much then for the life-giving power of poetic genius.

But, secondly, it is lawful; the exercise of poetic genius is lawful. A necessary observation; for some I am afraid imagine that these creations are nothing better

than the inventions that men have forged out of something worse, even the works of the devil; as, for instance, Mr. Money-maker, who is sorely vexed because his son and heir prefers words to warehouses, and poetry to pounds, shillings, and pence; sorely vexed because the youth is engrossing his soul with "Keats" and "Tennyson" rather than with "single and double entry"; and there is the good mother too, sadly distressed because her little girl prefers "Blue-beard" to the "Wee Brown's," and can never get to understand the "chief end of man," for wondering whether "Sister Ann sees any person coming"; and then comes grand old (somewhat pedantic withal) Dr. Samuel Johnson, affirming in a well known sentence that "sacred subjects are not fit for poetry!" With all respect to Johnson (when he rewrites his "Lives of the poets," and does some justice to Shakespeare, we may regard him as a better authority upon the subject), we leave him in the hands of

Christopher North, who takes his sonorous sentences on this subject to pieces in one of his happiest recreations. It is an unfortunate circumstance, and awkward for Johnson's theory, that there is such a book as the Bible, a book full of the richest poetry—

"And He upon a cherub rode,
And thereon He did fly;
Yea, on the swift wings of the wind,
His flight was from on high!"

"He made darkness His secret place, His pavilion round about Him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies."

This cannot be surpassed; and we come to think that, of all subjects, sacred ones are the *most* suitable for poetry, that in fact poetry is good just in so far as it *is* sacred, just in so far as it deals, and deals truly, with the mystery of our human life, and with the movements of that yearning, throbbing heart on which the religion of Jesus lays its healing hand.

With respect to Mr. Moneymaker, I

shall have something to say to him by-and-bye. As for the good orthodox mother (and we have much more respect for her), we would remind her that her daughter has been fashioned so, with this imaginative tendency, and "shall the thing formed say to Him who formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" We agree with her, mournfully, that her child's imagination is depraved, and needs its tastes renewed, lest, eating of the much forbidden fruit, with which our literature abounds, it should lead her to sorrow and to ruin. But yet, we would have her to consider whether she might not put into her daughter's hands such a book as Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," whether in following the noble march of the pilgrims through the most romantic scenery on to the ringing of the heavenly bells, or whether in the milder companionship of Christiana and her children, and by the help of sisters Peace and Mercy, she might not be led—through the king-

dom of poetry—into the higher kingdom of God.

I believe some think that artists are nothing else than a species of idolaters standing in false relation to the second commandment, and that poets proper are little else than a species of liars standing in equivocal relation to the ninth; and here I may refer to the paradox in "Defence of Poesy," by Sir Philip Sidney,—

"Truly I think that of all men the poet is the least lyar, for the poet he nothing affirms, and therefore he never lyeth—unless you would say that Nathan lyed in his story of the ewe-lamb, or that Æsop lyed in his fables of the beasts, which whosoever affirmeth were well worthy to be chronicled among the beasts."

Suffice it to say solemnly, that in this, as in all things else, we have one perfect example in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and did He not employ this idealizing, this creating power? Take one parable

for illustration, and let it be the parable of the rich fool. "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully." Now this man's name is not given, nor his estate, nor his residence in the city. Why? Because he had none in particular; because the parable has a higher and wider significance; because that ideal man has been living always, and is living still—living and dying too, for God says to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee;" and I have seen his funeral, and you have seen it too, when Old Moneybags was crushed down into the mould and buried out of the world as poor as he came in—dead, yet living—living in his son and successor, till to him also in turn God shall say, "Thou fool"; and this is what we have to say to Mr. Moneymaker, and persons with the same worldliness and hardness of heart, it would be "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" than for such a man to enter either into the king-

dom of poetry or the kingdom of God, for precisely the same worldliness and hardness of heart that keeps him from entering the kingdom of poetry, keeps him—and very possibly may keep him for ever—from entering the kingdom of God.

But, lastly, the poetic power is limited. It is limited in three ways—1st, by reality; 2nd, by reason; and 3rd, and especially, by revelation. 1. By reality—for the ideal is conditioned by the real, and must always rise out of the basis of the real. "Macbeth," for example, must be the real Macbeth idealized; "King Lear" must be the real King Lear idealized; and so idealized, so stripped of all merely accidental circumstances, that it shall be no simple photographic likeness, or likeness taken by some portrait-painter, line for line, who measures off the man's nose with a pair of compasses—not so—but, if you can understand the paradox, as Wordsworth said of an ideal

bust of Coleridge, that "it was much liker Coleridge than Coleridge was himself."

Now, there are two extremes to be avoided. The first is that of those who make the ideal too real, too much the likeness and reproduction of themselves.

The great transgressor on this side of poetry is Lord Byron. His "Cain," his "Manfred," his "Don Juan," and all the rest of them, are just so many Lord Byrons, just so many reproductions of himself, a wild, passionate, misanthropic, blasphemous man. All the music of his exquisite poetry is played, like Paganini fiddling, on the one string. Even our own Pollok—a very different kind of poet—has made his angels, in the "Course of Time," talk too much like students of theology, and even the grand Milton has been reproached with turning Heaven in his "Paradise Lost" into a war council of the Commonwealth, and making his saints and angels talk too much like

Puritans; and certainly his introduction of artillery and cannonading into the battles of the angels with the devil, must be felt by all to be a serious blemish in that noble poem.

This may illustrate what I mean by the ideal being made too subordinate to the real; but then there is another error on the other side—it is that of those who make the ideal too ideal, too much refined and sublimated and too far removed from human sympathy.

And here we would denounce a great army of ethereal nymphs and knights that figure in sickly, sentimental romances, and that certainly are not the likeness of anything in heaven above, and having no sort of sympathy with human things either, ought to have been banished from the kingdom of poetry long ago. Even some of Scott's heroes and heroines, when stripped of their armour and their jewelled scarfs, have very little of the human heart beneath them.

The difference between the two, betwixt the false ideal and the true, is finely represented in Fouqué's beautiful story of "Undine," in which the water nymph cold and pale as marble, receives, in the course of the story, a human heart—a heart that weeps and loves and trembles.

. . . . . .

Then listen here to Dryden's most bombastic description of "Night"—

"All things are hush'd, as Nature's self lay dead,
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head,
The little birds in dream their song repeat,
And sleeping flowers beneath the night dews sweat."

On reading this, Wordsworth exclaims, "I wonder if the man ever saw night, for certainly *that* is not the least like it."

And so too was Pope's description of night—though he had Homer to guide him—and many others of that stiff, affected, narrow school who talk of the moon—our own good, real moon—as "pale Cynthia with her golden tresses";

and so, when our poets get away from Nature, it needs pre-Raphaelism to come down upon them with its critical thunder, and demand of them that they return to Nature and to poetry, giving us nights and morns, and sun and moon, as they really are in this real world. For the truth lies betwixt the two, betwixt the realists and the idealists, betwixt the school of the imitation of the real (Aristotle's) on the one side, and the school of the creation of the ideal (Bacon's) on the other. It is Ruskin who says that "man's highest creative work is the imitation of God's work, man's ideally creating after the likeness of the real creatures that God has created and made," and this may help you better to understand what is meant when I say that the ideal is limited or bounded by the real.

Again, poetic genius is limited by reason. For God has given man the seeing eye as well as the creating hand, the eye to see

the real as well as hands to fashion the ideal; and by the real here I mean the grand realities of things unseen and eternal; for if I understand anything at all about the matter, I understand this, that the grand realities are things eternal and unseen, and that things visible and temporal are but the shifting scenery of the stage drapery. So God has given man the inner eye to see the eternal realities, and the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; neither can the hand say to the eye, I have no need of thee. The vision of eternal realities corrects and governs the work of the imagination. The good poet is also the seer, worshipping while he is waiting, possessed of both the vision and the "faculty divine." And if this eye be struck with the spirit of blindness, so that you cannot see the grand realities that lie around you, what wreck and ruin then does the imagination work! For it is only a single step from the ideal to the

idol; from creating the ideals to saying to them in the darkness, "Ye are our gods"; for something the heart of man must have to worship, and if it sees not God, what can it do but worship its own ideals in His stead? and this is the true history and theory of heathenism. It is just man himself reflected upon outward nature—it may be in a picture, or a statue, or a myth, or a fable—it is just man *ideal*ized, and then too *idol*ized. I remember De Quincey's grand description of the spectre on the Brocken in Germany, and, as I have seen it myself, I may describe it here.

Standing at sunrise on the summit of the Brocken, with the rising sun behind you and a double curtain of cloud and mist before, you see yourself reflected in gigantic lines upon that curtain of cloud and mist. You stand, and the gigantic figure stands; you move, and it moves; you pluck a flower, and it stoops and plucks a flower. Most terrible is it to see this phantom figure repeating all your

actions in gigantic shape. You tremble at it, almost feel disposed to worship it, although you know it is nothing—only the reflection of yourself. Now heathenism is just like that, for it is heaven shut and little man reflected, whereas Christianity is heaven opened and mighty God descending to unveil and show Himself in our humanity. Heathenism is the deification of the human, Christianity is the incarnation of the Divine; heathenism is man becoming God, Christianity is God becoming man; and this may show you how poetic genius becomes the secret of idolatry, when once the eye that sees God has been shut by sin.

For every man is an idolater who worships (if he worships anything at all) his ideals instead of worshipping the real and living God, and so when the real living God appears in Christ—in the sublime words of Milton—

"The oracles are dumb, no voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving."

For, when the real living God in Christ comes to the world, or to the heart of man, "the idols He will utterly abolish."

And lastly, poetic genius is limited by revelation. Let it go on creating its ideals, but they must all be such as shall be made to bow with the veiled seraphim before the Holy Throne, or such as shall exert a healthful moral influence on human life, or such as their makers shall not be ashamed of, in that day when "the judgment is set and the books are opened." For, if Christianity has limited poetic genius on the one side, it has expanded it too, and still more, on the other. It has answered its most earnest aspirations. "What," asks Julius Hare, "was the finest ancient poetry, but just an aspiration for the coming truth?" and here we find the positive side of classical mythology. Though Milton, with most admirable tact, has turned the deities of classic poetry into the devils of his "Paradise Lost," and the current of our popular theology has

always run into the entire denying of the human fables, and though they have no objective reality—which can never be too strongly urged,—nevertheless there is a subjective, positive significance, as Neander and his higher school of Christian evidence may show you, for they utter the deep longings of the human heart, longings that have been met in Him who is the "Desire of all nations." So may we find the meanings of the legends of the golden age that were utterances in poetry of that sense of something lost—of something beautiful and lost—that is lying at the hearts of all men; and the meaning of those fables of Elysian fields which were the utterances in poetry of inextinguishable human hope; for the soul of man, in all her darkness and misery, is ever haunted by the memory of what she was, and the dream of what she yet may be. So here we find the meaning of Prometheus on his rock of misery, and Glaucus sitting on his black sea-rock,

bewildered and blind, and bewailing that he could not die, and the meaning of the Greek drama that resolved the plot of the sacrifice of the noblest of the royal house. What were all these but dim unconscious yearnings after the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"? for *this* the Greek choruses were shouting though they knew it not. "By Thy Cross and passion, by Thy death and burial, by Thy resurrection and ascension," Thou hast loosed the stammering tongue of heathen poetry and made us understand what it was singing. And if even heathen poetry cried for His coming and His Cross, how much more Hebrew poetry, that had come down through the successive ages with God's own inspiration on her lips, alternating prediction and sighing for His coming, sighing in the wilderness and singing in the Temple, and sighing again in the Captivity, and touching the lyres of such as David and Isaiah by the way, and

with a picture in her hand, and in her bosom, that God Himself had given her of His well beloved, painted white and ruddy—white with the whiteness of the whitest love, and ruddy with the crimson of His bleeding sacrifice—and when she saw the Man of Sorrows in His beauty and His blood, she knew that this was He.

And yet this is not all. For, in answering the aspirations of ancient poetry, He has enriched beyond all calculation the poetry and the art of other times. For what has given the finest music, pictures, and architecture to the world but Christianity? From her despised urn, she has sprinkled baptisms of beauty wherever she has come. The Cross has opened up new regions of emotion and aspiration to the artist, and thrown around the meekness of the human the majesty of the Divine. So, through the mists of the dark ages have come floating visions of pale spiritual faces, rich with a beauty that Greek art had never known. And

so in mediæval poetry, there breathes a love of peace, a patience in suffering, a worship of purity, an honouring of poverty, a sighing for heaven, and a triumphing over death, that Pagan poetry had never known. The Greek temple, that expressed the finite and the comprehensible, is replaced by the Gothic cathedral that, with its height and vastness, points towards the Infinite, and with its dim magnificence towards the Incomprehensible, and with crossed and spirelike hands and fingers points up to heaven, to which Christ has ascended, and from which it is hoped He will come again. And what is that leading idea of mediæval romance, that prophetic idea of the patriotic prince who has been slain in battle, but whose return to his people is yet constantly expected, whether it be King Alfred at Winchester, or Arthur at the Eildon Hills, or Frederic Barbarossa, or any other prince who is "coming again"? What is it all, but just a dim and distant echo of the

Church's blessed hope of the return of her King who died for her, and who will surely come again and will not tarry? For the hope had died away from the Church's heart in the time of the music that uttered itself in the wail of the "Dies Irae," and so it took refuge in romantic poetry and uttered itself through that, till the Reformation time restored the spirit of adoption, and replaced the wailing Misereres with Halleluia Choruses, and brought back to the Church her blessed hope.

Then coming down to Milton's "Invocation Prayer" in later times—

"And chiefly Thou, O Spirit! who dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present; and with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss"—

was Milton's vision in the Temple less divine that such an invocation prayer was laid before on poet's lips?

And coming still further down to later times—

"The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that"—

could Burns have sung that, if One had not taught before that all men are equal in the eyes of the Eternal?

And come yet again to yonder midnight "Bridge of Sighs," where they are dragging the drowned body—drenched and drowned—from the dark flowing river—

"Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care.
. . . . .
Touch her not scornfully,
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly.
. . . . .
Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.
. . . . .

Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
  Over her breast;
Owning her weakness—
  Her evil behaviour,
And leaving with meekness
  Her sins to her Saviour."

Could Hood have written what is really true and tender in all this, if Christ had not conversed with the woman of Samaria at the well, or breathed forgiveness over the Magdalene at His feet?

What, in one word, is the spirit of poetry? Is it not love? Even the "Ancient Mariner," watching the water snakes, cries—

"O happy living things! no tongue
  Their beauty might declare,
A spring of love gushed from my heart
  And I blest them unaware."

Or in a higher region—

"Why loves the mother baby so?
  Because the child is fair?
Nay; beauty more from love doth grow

Than love from beauty; and a glow
Outshines from her own heart to show
Those lustrous eyes, that golden hair,
That no one else beholdeth there."

And if love be the creating power of poetry, if it be love that broods upon this chaos till it suffuses it with life and beauty, where shall we truly find it, but at the "Fountain opened," where Love Divine flows down into human hearts?

"I say to thee, do thou repeat
To any man thou mayest meet
In field, or highway, or on street,

That he and we, and all men move
Beneath one canopy of love
As broad as the blue sky above"—

or, broader yet, for Christ has gone up far beyond all heavens, has reconciled all things in earth and heaven by the blood of His Cross, has carried up the heart of human sympathy to the Eternal Throne; and the dumb tongue of Nature is loosed, so that Goethe might have heard it saying

—if he had only understood it—that "Christ is able"; and the kingdom of heaven is lying all around us in the streets and in the fields, so that everything the commonest and every act the homeliest, is steeped in the light of the richest poetry, and every bale of cotton and every spade that you handle has a heavenly light upon it, if you only had eyes to see it, and every bush is burning with a living flame that indicates the presence of the Lord. Poetry in all that, is there not? richest poetry in the religion of our Lord Christ? And if it be so, if poetry be such a debtor to Christianity, what shall we say of these poets of ours that are not Christian poets? Is it not a pity that so many of them should be like the lame man that was healed, but wist not who it was that had healed him? For we have fault to find even with the best of them. I mean not those who stain the vestal robe of purity with their impurities, but those who belong to what

may be called the negative school of poetry, who worship Christ the child, but do not worship Christ the crucified; who worship with the wise men at His cradle, but do not worship with the weeping Marys at His Cross; who reckon childhood the "Eternal Christ," as Schelling says, "that is continually being born"; who seek for paradise and immortality through "memories of childhood," like Wordsworth in his famous "Ode," and will not seek the better paradise and richer immortality by way of Gethsemane and Calvary, and whose poetry accordingly must dwindle down at best into the Hebe of childlike beauty, and can never rise into the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. Why does Wordsworth in his "Excursion" break so cruelly the heart of his poor Margaret, soothing it only with the gospel of flowers and the religion of the woods? "Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there?" And why does not Tennyson in the exquisite music of his

"In Memoriam" resolve the discord of sorrow, by transition into peace and joy, as David's lyrics might have taught him, or the "In Memoriam" of Jeremiah's "Lamentations"?

Such treatment of the subject must be false if Christ's gospel be true, and must sadly impoverish the poet's future fame, and in the meantime it makes us turn from these, in our better moments, to a melancholy man at Olney, singing, "O for a closer walk with God," or even to some little child, singing her "hosanna" to the Lord Christ.

And I wish I could show you—if I had only a thousand and one nights to do it in—how the triplet or the trinity of poetry, in the lyric, the epic and the dramatic—how it all revolves less or more remotely round the Cross, and round the Trinity of God; how the finest lyrics, *e.g.*, must needs be the outcome of the Holy Spirit in the penitential songs of the human heart; how the epic, whether it

knows it or not, is always picturing a hero, an ideal hero, that has been realized in Christ; and how the dramatic is just the dim reflection of the re-enacting, on ideal stage, of the real drama of this strange life of ours, that has found the proximate solution of its plot in the tragic sacrifice of the noblest of the royal house on our behalf, and that shall find its ultimate solution, as we trust, amid the blast of golden trumpets and the shouts of victory, when the "marriage of the Lamb is come and His bride hath made herself ready."

And, finally, let us remember that "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

For these words of Shakespeare are just the echo of the words of an inspired apostle:—"Brethren, the time is short,"—the time for the last act of the drama compressed, shut in, by His second coming; the events of ages being shut into a little night-play, as was often the case upon

the Greek stage,—and "the fashion," the stage scenery, "of this world passeth away."

THE END.

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