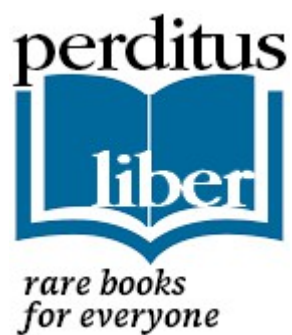


Allah Kerim

by
Edith M. Davis



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By EDITH M. DAVIS

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THE ADVENTURES OF PHOEBE ALLAN



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A STORY OF A SINGLE SOUL.
A MORTAL WITHOUT A NAME.

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“Through me, ye go into the doleful city;
Through me, ye go into eternal pain;
Through me, ye go among the lost forever;
Where thou shalt see the miserable throngs
Who mourn the loss of intellectual good.”

Dante.

PROLOGUE

“From many races, one people”

New York is America’s greatest city, and like all other great cities, it has some parts beautiful and attractive, and other parts, where the darkness of night hides from the eye, sins which lengthen the black catalogue of HELL.

Broadway is the scene of all wealth and prosperity, but you no sooner turn the corner of Worth Street out of Broadway, than you seem to have entered another sphere of existence.

As there was “Darkest England” so there is “Darkest America,” I doubt that a spot can be found that sin has not made terrible,

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or where death has not left some fearful token of its presence.

The only other city in the world that can be compared to this great citadel of sin—is Paris; its vices rise to enormous proportions; like hundred-gated Thebes, it fades away in its corruption—or like Rome—or London—it terrifies mankind by unheard of crime.

What was true of those cities—is now true of New York and Washington. In fact the whole American people are now encountering the same evils.

Civilization is a war—a war of light with darkness—a tragedy of great conflicts—where hostile passions are ever combating—MAMMON and MORALITY—and in which the final victory has thus far gone to—MAMMON!

When the republics of the Middle Ages surrounded themselves with material splendor, their liberty decayed; and again, Spartan history teaches,

how easy it is for a nation, like an individual, to misdirect its energies, to subordinate the higher to the lower.

This passion is now so consuming, that it is not only ruining the character of individuals,

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it is undermining the frame of our government, and disgracing a NATION! Year by year, the tone of public feeling is sinking lower and lower—year by year our CONGRESS and SENATE become of less account before all decent men—and year by year—the memory of THE GREAT FATHERS OF THE REVOLUTION is outraged more and more in the corrupted life of their degenerated people.

This great tide of people is as dangerous to itself, as to its enemies; trampling upon their own people, driving every obstacle away before its irresistible sweep, wielding a power that is weak even in its might; like the rush of waters when the flood gates are swept away, which roll on because they cannot stop; and what is called their force, is but drifting with the current. Thus the great tide of humanity moves on together, according to the tendency that happens to prevail, the good among them, compelled to fall in with the majority, without giving the few opportunity to make their expostulations and influence tell with the many.

When Rome was largest, Rome was weakest;

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and fell apart, limb from limb, and sank, a mass of corruption. The worldly culture of today, as once in degenerated pagan Rome, the word of Tacitus holds—good “To be corrupt, and to be corrupted, this is called the age.”

In one form or another the rich rule, who rob and tax the many for the benefit of the few; Burke says “that ambition, though it has ever the same general views, has not at all times the same means nor the same particular objects.” So far, in every race between wealth and principle, the former has won.

Ah! Cities with its sunlight—and its shadows. Its vices—and its virtues. Its love—and its hate. Its wealth—and its poverty. Its society, some in fine raiment—and some in rags. Its society which shuns all contact with the down-trodden and unfortunate—whom it creates itself—but which it beholds with a callousness of ease—treating their own flesh and blood with

the same hard inhumanity that Cicero treated the gladiators of his friend Atticus—and alas—the poor with an equal callousness of woe!

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And so the great mass toil on under heavy burdens, living in an abyss of which the rich know nothing, condemned to toil for life in the same beaten circle, withering in the mud, awaiting the wheel to crush them, still cheated with the semblance of progression, the high intelligence of the age; but still unrelieved and unthought of by the millions who are protected by wealth; who have no thought but for the science of gain—no heart, but for gold; no desire, but for the increase of property; no fear, but for the loss of half a dollar; who forget the humane and divine view of the universe, and become as soulless as the machine by which they make their money; they sell their good names, and their honorable consciousness for lucre, with as little compunction as Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

They have become hardened in unbelief—BLASPHEMERS! They have become lovers of themselves—GROVELING SELFISHNESS! They are without belief in virtue—DESPISERS OF THOSE WHO ARE GOOD! They are without honor—and without shame!

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What is the present drift of marriage and home life? Has the relation between the sexes become more pure with its divorces and all its attendant wrong to the law of God and the welfare of Society? These MEN and WOMEN who give their lives to unhallowed pleasures, marriage-breaking, illicit love, prostitution, and criminal intercourse. Men who have but contempt and disrespect for woman as wife and mother, even when adroitly veiled in the compliment that most flatters her when most eager for her ruin.

WOMEN who defile their souls to secure a position which will compel “social recognition,” who will lie, cheat, steal, pay court to men and consort with them in unworthy ways, who disgrace themselves and their children—for WHAT? to wear costly and superb clothes and dazzling gems—to dance to ravishing music—to ride in a handsome limousine—to make a series of calls upon those whom they hope are not at home.

Alas! This world will not be improved until the relationship between man and

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woman has become more pure, until they decide the existence as well as the character of the new generation. “We are all born—we live—and we die.” THEREFORE—the first great fact of life—is BIRTH. Plato said in his laws so many centuries ago “that life begins before birth; and the mother is the cradle of the unborn child.”

To raise and regenerate the world morally—it will be necessary that true—WOMANHOOD MUST COME TO THE RESCUE! The mother must be a sacred person, for in *her* lies what the future generation *WILL BE!* and her offspring must be protected by all skill and care.

The mind and the heart are factors of life from the beginning. Moral and intellectual as well as physical traits are transmitted by generation; and not only disease, but folly and sin, go with the blood that flows from a union of man and woman against the DIVINE law and the best instincts and affections of the heart; thus children tell the secret, that parents never spoke to the world.

WOMEN ARE THE MAKING OF CREATION! AYE—and the marring too.

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Therefore, it behoves that WOMAN should stop and THINK!—and then—*THINK AGAIN*—WHAT THIS MEANS TO HER! MOTHER OF THE RACE—*REFORM THYSELF!*

Build from within—your mind is your real being—every thought is force. “Thoughts are things. With thoughts you can do all things.” Each individual has two personalities—to each of us two sides are gliding on at the same time—one above—the other underneath—Abel upholding the good—Cain the evil. The life of our minds—the life of our actions—the outward and visible—the inward and invisible. We are what we know ourselves to be—and what others think us to be. By the life of our actions we are judged by the world—the inward and invisible is never known—but to ONE!

A good woman can make us wish and strive for something more pure; she can teach us that virtue is not a hard law, a dull formalism, a harsh negation but a living inspiration, drawing power from the eternal love, and going forth in healthful freedom to its

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conflict of peace. As Cicero says, “Virtue is sufficient to secure happiness.”

By thus elevating mankind and womankind in thought and work, society will be elevated in laws and institutions. Spencer says, “that paper constitutions will not work as they are intended to work and that the real basis and bulwark of national greatness and of progressive liberty, is character.”

To me, the world can be sustained by four things only: the world to be purified by the learning of the wise, the justice of the great, the prayers of the good, and last but not least the PURITY OF ITS WOMEN! thus by a MORAL DOCTRINE—MORALLY FOUNDED—THIS GREAT REPUBLIC CAN BE SOLIDLY ESTABLISHED.

No political party or society of any kind can—or has established DEMOCRACY. Nothing as yet—has even converged to produce DEMOCRACY!

The advent of Democracy can only be brought in by a CHRISTIAN SPIRIT—when HUMAN RIGHTS and JUSTICE rise above the present institutions and LAWS—

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when the GOVERNORS—as well as the GOVERNED shall alike hold the sacred idea of “JUSTICE TO ALL.” In this way we may develop the human spirit so as to arrive at its fullness and perfection—then this world will be ready for DEMOCRACY.

“How is it possible to compress into one brief glance
The endless stair-flights, endless and dark by
Which an honorable man descends to desires and
Deeds of dishonor! the downfall of a single soul,
Suitably narrated would fill a volume.”

Victor Hugo

“Mistakes may be the stepping-stones of the stairs
Of which we are climbing. Every time we recognize
One for what it is, and call it a step instead
Of a goal, we move on.”

Louise Collier Willcox

“This was the entry, then, these stairs—but whither
after?”

Tragedy of Brennovalt

CHAPTER I

“He lead me down among the things of darkness:
There sighs, and groans, and lamentable wailings,
So rang throughout that region without star,
That on the threshold I began to weep:
Horrible tongues, discordant languages,
Words full of dolour, ascents of sharp anger,
Shrill and hoarse voices, sounds of smitten hands,
Rose in wild tumult, eddying through the gloom
Like sands before the whirlwind of the desert.”

Dante

The twilight shadows settled over the city; between the edges of two clouds, a star flashed and flickered unsteadily. Up the dark streets in the vicinity of the Bowery the lights were shining feebly; the lamps were few and far between. As the twilight gradually disappeared, and the shades thickened, an almost total darkness prevailed in places.

The wind sighed and sung, as if murmuring some weird incantation, mingling its gusts with a rising mist; the lights were casting

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black shadows that had no shape, and belong to darkness.

Through the floating mist a dusky shape is gliding—gliding stealthily—keeping within the shadows—and then disappearing in the darkness. Then came another—and another—and then another. This stealthiness is ominous—this furtive gliding in and out—this silent flitting of nighthawks—this incessant low shuffling of feet—reminding one of the tread of fallen spirits, who glide like phantoms into the Gates of the Inferno, which are ever open to those who choose to enter and mingle with the ferocious shades wandering in its pit.

A grisly and awful sight! A terrible shadow of something that smothers the spirit of man—a hideous travesty of itself—and which converts human beings into fiends, and makes earth to its inhabitants a HELL of unutterable torments; it silences the voice of conscience; and quenches and debases to the lowest level the holiest emotions of the human soul; and souls thus

deprived of great principles—fall collapsed into the mire of the earth;
plunging down into the blackness

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of the abyss of death—or plunging on like a river without source and without issue—rolling its waves eternally through a purposeless channel.

On—on—up and down the street—the lagging tramp—tramp—tramp of thousands night after night—come and go—this bat-life of the leprous spawn of human beings are constantly thrown upon the shores of life, only to contaminate and curse—sinking at last into a terrible gulf of darkness. Tomorrow will be like today—and the day after that—and on—and on—forever on—will go this continual procession of shadows—for the tide rolls them ever onward—pushing them along the dark road from which there is no return; and no rainbow lifts an arch of promise against the gathering darkness. “Each generation slides into the castoff garments of its predecessor, too indolent even to change its pattern.”

What a night! Darkness everywhere! Peopled with shades! How cold. How dreary. The wind is wailing still, like a presentiment of evil; the rain is drizzling, the streets are rivers of black mud and slush,

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through which walk haggard women and besotted men, how their teeth chatter, how they press their thin hands together as they shuffle along the sidewalks. What a hideous stream of dreariness, misery, squalor and crime.

The gas-lamps glimmer cold and mocking as they shine in the darkness, reflecting in the muddy pools beneath. If the stones could speak, then, each could record some dark and bloody deed committed within these foul haunts, this hot-bed of American crime and degradation.

A sharp peal of thunder, followed by a flash of lightning, told of a coming storm; then darkness was folded about a cluster of rickety, rotten buildings, a sheltering pile for the poor, where beings of every age, color, and condition of infamy are herded and driven together like cattle.

The houses almost touch each other; overhanging the streets with gloom. They close about them; a net-work of streets and alleys hedge them in, where they are lost from sight in the great surging mass of humanity.

As the night advanced, the wind raged

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with unaccountable fury; peal after peal of thunder; and great flashes of lightning swathed the sky, shooting through a garretwindow it flung a light into every shadowy corner, revealing in its instant illuminations a garret—its old black rafters draped with festoons of cobwebs—concealing an army of spiders; a floor full of cracks and holes, thick with layers of dirt; in the corner, a broken stove filled with gray ashes.

A sudden flash revealed a woeful spectacle! That of a woman stretched upon a draggled bed, in the midst of her birth-throes; the sounds were swallowed in the wind that rushed with demoniac shrieks, and then died away in frightful torment; the lightning flashed uncertain shadows upon the wall, making the room look weird and fantastic.

Towards dawn, the feeble cry of an infant was heard—and into THIS he was born! A tiny mite of mortality—a helpless, shivering, unwelcome guest—unbidden—repulsed before it cometh—born of an adulterous amour—a moment's unhallowed passion—OUT OF SUCH CORRUPTION

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SPRINGS LIFE. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? NOT ONE.”

ALAS! The MOTHERS of the race—who DESTROY the heirs of their own body—the HOPES of their own RACE. How many out of the millions upon millions of MOTHERS pray for this unknown—this new-born creature—this hope of the world—this beginning of that “PIECE OF WORK” called MAN—with a genuine MOTHER LOVE? We know that all over the world children are regarded as burdens—and inconvenience—a hindrance of plans of comfort—an upsetting of their pleasures—which is anything but welcome.

Does such as this woman possess aught of maternal tenderness? Does such as she know how to mould a child's mind, rooting out evil tendencies? Evil may come in spite of your best endeavor, but it is certain without it. That little child will be tainted by a vile mother, and in its turn a degraded man.

What to her—is the infant at her side? Was it not the living evidence to a moment's selfish lust? Did not her whole being loathe the creature! She hated her own son—her

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own flesh and blood with as bitter a hatred as ever a woman felt toward a man!

The baby feebly wails; the woman raised her head, and gazed upon that tiny morsel; a strange dark glitter creeping into her eyes; as she looked she muttered, “What for should she have brats! They ought to die! ALL OF THEM!” she hissed these last words between her teeth—her face full of intense loathing.

All at once every muscle in her body grew tense with a purpose entering and filling her soul; her face grew livid; her quivering right arm arose; she reached out her wasted hand; in her eyes there was a cruel glitter, her face was now rigid as if cut out of stone; she resembled a somnolent serpent—venomous—coiled for a spring—and sure to carry death in that spring.

She was hideous to the gaze! Her eyes were fixed upon the face of her baby with a stare which seemed to say, “WHY NOT? ONE MORE OR LESS! WHY NOT?” Her whole soul rose in defiance and hate—aye—and murder! “I won’t have it! I won’t have it! I’ll choke it! I’ll choke it to death!”

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As her hand grasped and fastened upon the throat of her child, she was seized with a fit of giddiness, the room whirled round and round furiously, something like a mist hung before her and blurred the baby from sight; her hand relaxed powerless; she was deafened by a violent singing in her ears; a faintness overcame her, and she sank back unconscious.

Thus came this poor little shrunken BEING into life, just as millions of others come—the mother a CREATURE of shame—A FATHER—who vanishes somewhere into unknown space.

Already the sombre shadows of his dreary life was beginning to settle down upon him; a life made sorrowful by neglect and cruelty. It is a pity that only the evil things in this world—poverty—with all its vices—and all its crimes are contagious.

As the day dawned, the wind wailed about the house as if a lost soul was groaning in wordless anguish; and the whirling, driving rain beat upon the roof, and against the window; while the baby kept up a low wailing that was pitiful to hear.

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CHAPTER II

“Thou wouldst have me to renew
Horrible pangs, of which the very thought
So wrings my heart, I scarce find power for utterance.”

Dante

This woman suckled her young as would a viper, willing to throw it into the gutter to grasp a glass of gin. As the infant is unconscious, it cannot be morally injured by its mother, but it is not so with the child—it follows its mother’s example, who at last drags it insensibly to her level.

A year went by—and still another; the child passes day after day in this abominable garret, neglected and ill-treated, his little body covered with bruises; he was hungry—always had been HUNGRY! What a pitiful sight to see cold—rags—and hunger in a little child. To see it tossed to and fro on the tide of poverty and misery.

Day followed day—he crept about with his eyes full of tears—his little heart yearning and pining for tenderness—he had an

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untutored instinct that demanded something else besides blows and curses! He pines and starves for affection—he has a longing for sympathy—a craving for a mother’s love; but the mother cannot give what she has not!

For hours he sat thinking—the tears rolling down his wasted cheeks—thinking and wondering dully WHY? WHY? He wondered all sorts of things : WHY? OH! WHY WAS IT? His little heart was full to bursting—JUST FOR A WORD—A HUMAN WORD!

Another year slipped by—and the child began drifting from the purity of childhood—he was robbed of its joy—its innocence—aye—of the very consciousness of childhood! He was slipping into an atmosphere of bitter thoughts—he became silent and moody under the baleful shadow of neglect—blows—and curses; and early, those sweet impulses weak by inheritance, were being chilled. Call out the good, and it WILL ANSWER YOU. Rouse the evil, AND IT WILL GROW!

A sound, just audible, came faintly to his

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ear; he listened, he heard a shuffling of feet in the hall, then the door was cautiously opened, and a face peered in with a low gurgling laugh—something that had been a woman once, but was now the mere mockery of one; a woman with set lips and brazen expression, the features coarse and revolting, with crisp wiry black hair above low hung brows, narrow eyes; a face to which habits of gross intemperance had added an expression of stupid imbecility.

At the sight of her, the child shrank in fear, his eyes seemed to dilate with terror as he gazed into those eyes that glared at him with the glare of hate; he crept tremblingly to the farthest corner, like a dog that knows it will be whipped; at this she laughed, an insane crackle—crackle—followed by a torrent of foul language, “Out of my sight, ye BRAT!” she screamed, and again came that wild unearthly laughter. His eyes grew larger and darker as he watched every move she made. Ah! how that miserable piece of humanity was feared; how he watched that eye with an intensity almost unbearable; how that voice made him shiver;

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seeing this she broke out in a furious rage “Hurry up! Hurry up! d’yre hear me, out of my sight I tell yer!” saying this she came toward him with a threatening air—her arm raised—her eyes sparkling with ferocity; at this the child put out his little hands in an agony of fear the tears flowing down his cheeks—and upon his knees—he implored her for mercy. “Don’t, oh, don’t!” he begged in such a piteously shrill voice; “Don’t, please don’t!” he cried with a sob—putting forth his little trembling hands—his face quivering with fright. A fury took possession of her as he pleaded, and giving vent to her rage she clutched him by the hair of his head with her bony hand, she shook him until he was dazed—then with all her force she hit his head back and forth against the wall. She rebuked him with a torrent of abuse, “I’ll shake ye till every bone in yer blasted body falls apart!” she yelled with an oath.

“Oh! let me go! Let me go!” he screamed, and in a spasm of terror he sprang away from her and rushed for the door—before he could reach the door she snatched a stick and came furiously upon him. “Yer try

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that again ye brat” shrieked the beldam as she struck him with the stick, “Ye try that again” indulging in the most blasphemous language “and I’ll

kill yer!”

Blow on blow fell, the sharp pain of which left marks upon his body. The most frightful piercing shrieks were heard, rendered unnatural from fright and horror; the hag poured out in blows her whole pent-up passion; she whipped him until compelled to cease by pure exhaustion; when, with a violent push, she flung the child angrily from her, who fell heavily to the floor; striking his head upon the edge of a bucket which stood near—a sharp cry—a convulsive shudder—and he lay apparently insensible—only an occasional gasping sob giving evidence that he was still living; from his head—the blood was trickling down over his ragged clothes.

The hag watched him for a moment as he lay there before her, and then burst into that unnatural laugh—a laugh which struck fear to the child’s heart—and with that laugh—she strode from the room.

When alone—his little frame quivered

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with emotion—moan after moan escaped him—a great gulping sob shook him; it was piteous to hear him sobbing. He sat upon the floor—rocking his little body from side to side—he wrung his hands—sobbing as if his little heart would break—his strained eyes stared—into the darkness—his face so white and fixed in its despair—all his pent—up suffering burst into a wail—as he rocked backward and forward—his tiny hands locked tight together, “Oh! I wish I was dead! I wish I was dead! NOBODY CARES FOR ME! Nobody in all this world cares for me! NOT EVEN MY MOTHER! If I could only die! IF I COULD ONLY DIE!” he moaned over and over as his little body rocked to and fro—to and fro.

How grief shook him—what bitter—bitter cries in a child—a cry that will echo through life forever more! The warm effusions of a bleeding heart is something that should wring the sternest soul.

After this wild spasm of grief—he sat there amid the shadows—staring at space—he sat with idly folded hands—and eyes that did not see—eyes that looked out across the

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desolate future! What soul—grief—what regions of sorrow—that wrings the heart with such torture—it has not the power of utterance.

He was afraid—he was afraid of everything—he was afraid of his mother—he was afraid of his own shadow! There was something sinister in

that empty room! Fear filled his heart! A bug crawled across his hand. A mouse gnawing, made a noise; he crawled, shivering to bed, cowering down among the bed-clothes.

As he lay there alone among the shadows, it seemed to him peopled with unknown shapes of terror; he was frightened at a certain dreadful sound; not a daytime noise—but one of those stealthily—indefinable—long—interval noises—that comes in the darkness—makes one's blood creep and curdle! CREAK—CREAK—CREAK—C-R-E-E-C-H-Y! C-R-A-W-C-H-Y! Softer and softer—then dying away entirely; a weirdly awful sound! Goblin whispers and rustlings swept through the room. The wind rattled the window. The door creaked. A shrinking panel cracked. Then a grating

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and grinding. A scampering and squealing. A dash of rain pat! pat! SPLASH! A hundred imaginary noises made his heart throb—he raised his head and listened, he lifted himself on one elbow and peered 'into the distant corners of the room, his heart was throbbing wildly—he was sure there was something in that room with him—a something that only comes in the darkness—he was sure he could see something—it was difficult to tell WHAT that made his heart throb with violence—it seemed like some vague black form—he continued to gaze in a kind of hideous fascination—IT MOVES!—IT IS CREEPING TOWARDS HIM!—IT WILL HAVE HIM! His hands were icy cold. IT WILL GRASP HIM BY THE THROAT! As he gazed with horror—it suddenly vanished—it seemed to crumble away. He looked around with a shudder—

THERE WAS NOTHING! It WAS GONE! and he breathed a sigh of relief—BUT NO—THERE IT IS AGAIN! and so it came again and again—never remaining but a few minutes at a time—when it faded away.

Trembling with a nameless fear, he crawled

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down—down—pulling the bed-clothes over his head, where at last he fell asleep, utterly worn out.

In his sleep he was tormented with dreams, he felt himself traveling hundreds of miles away—flying across frightful gulfs that yawned beneath his feet—or he was dropping from an enormous height—and again his mother pursued him with a long spear—and was forever on the point of overtaking him.

Thus the first five years of his life were passed, no inner life was developed; it was a waste—a desert! His outward life was cold and empty! The love of kindred here dies out of strangulation—by the neglect to make the least exhibition of love—by unjust punishment which darkens and embitters the soul.

“Out of the heart are the issues of life.” Human kindness is never lost, even if bestowed upon the unworthy.

The great black wave of ruin is sweeping down upon him fast—fast! He is struggling—his soul just hovering over the abyss of darkness—the tide is strong—it is

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almost surging over him! A WORD—A HUMAN WORD—AYE—EVEN A LOOK—WILL SAVE HIM FROM PLUNGING DOWN INTO THE DEPTHS FROM WHICH THERE IS NO RETURN.

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CHAPTER III

“Why do I exist
Why art thou wretched? Why are all things so?
Even HE who made us must be as the maker
Of all things unhappy! To produce destruction
Can surely never be the task of joy,
And yet my sire says HE’S Omnipotent.
Then why is evil—He being good?”

Byron

The weeks dragged wearily on; his mother staggered in and out, her life given up to drink, her soul so degraded—so tarnished—so discolored by depravity—that a white spot could not be found in her soul.

How true it is that when a woman once commences a downward course, her descent is more rapid—and she arrives at a depth of wickedness positively not attainable by MAN—her path may be traced by the poison and slime she leaves behind her.

Shivering under old tatters—the boy not yet six years of age—was driven out to beg—he was obliged to pilfer—forced into

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crime, “Make ‘em thieves—keep ‘em thieves,” she said; what cared she that if my child steals I am responsible for his sin, and unless I frown upon it, I am an accomplice in it. At this age, children begin to follow their mother’s example; bad children reflect the imperfections of the parent—as bad CITIZENS the imperfections of the government.

It is quite possible to train a child out of all common sense, common usefulness and earthly and heavenly beauty. The association with that which is repulsive is freed from even an idea that is UNPLEASANT.

His nature was changing, it came on gradually—so gradually—as to be hardly perceptible—but STILL IT CAME.

He lived in a reverie that had something portentous and terrible about it. What repressed emotions swarm in the dark depths of his soul, breeding new unthought thoughts, subtly influencing his actions, and ceaselessly watching for a chance to slip into consciousness. At times, his soul shrank

from these pitiless thoughts which assailed him; but in vain he is chided by his conscience—IT IS BUT A STILL SMALL VOICE.

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The MIND can create a world for itself—it is its own place—and in itself—can make a Heaven of Hell—a Hell of Heaven. As Milton says, “The heart and mind are open for all winds to blow through, airs from Heaven or blasts from HELL.”

Such is the depravity of human nature, that although it he truly penitent today—before tomorrow it will be plunged as deep in the mire as ever. So peremptorily did these shades beckon him that it was like a grim black phantom that sat upon his shoulder, casting a shadow before his eyes. Week by week—month by month he brooded upon it—he dreamed of it by night! The battle in his heart raged fiercer and hotter; he commenced to HATE HER—the feeling grew and grew upon him—he felt as vindictively towards her as if she was his bitterest enemy—his mother despised HIM—and her SON abhors HER! New and evil thoughts swept darkly across the troubled surface of his mind—and the hiss of the serpent wound its first cold coil in his heart—where its hissings and writhings were no less terrible because unheard and unseen.

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The outer conduct of the boy was known—but the internal conflict between good and evil was unknown. The outer deeds and their consequences do not reveal the inner being nor the essence of individuality. Contact and familiarity with vices, gradually WEARS OFF THE EDGE OF ABHORRENCE, overclouding the highest principles, as well as the most refined minds.

As the slow years rolled on, his soul developed like a noxious reptile reared in a damp, dark cellar; shrunken and distorted—twisted—ghastly and unnatural. “Nature, Bacon tells us, runs either to herbs or weeds.”

A morbid tendency for the horrible ran through his being. He hated everything! But OH! HOW HE HATED HER! He cursed her in his heart; and he wished “SHE’D KICK THE BUCKET!”

The most human sentiments fled from his bosom; he became callous—hardened. He found enjoyment in tormenting and killing!

He began by inflicting torture on insects, he took a keen delight in torturing to death—a fly—a great hairy-legged spider or a

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huge wriggling caterpillar. He gave full vent to his inherent cruelty—the greatest abuse he could heap upon some animal was his greatest joy—a howl of pain from some dumb brute was the most grateful sound to his ear. Thus it is that the ferocity of animals, and their malevolent propensities is the result of wickedness on the part of man. Cruelty to animals must be supplanted by kindness towards them—when LOVE controls their spirits—where only FEAR now does—the “LEOPARD WILL LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB, AND THE LION SHALL EAT STRAW LIKE THE OX.”

The downward path daily becomes more slippery with sin, until the soul loses all ability of will—all power of resistance. A change began to creep over his face—there was something jarring in his laugh—it sounded crafty and cruel—theft—hatred—and cruelty filled the boy’s eyes with a wicked glitter—and the heart with the sudden incipience of crime—he decided he was getting altogether too big to be hustled about in this way—she had to quit laying

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“that air broom of hern over his head, or some day I’ll strike her!”

Dark—vague—suggestions began to stir within him. “JUST WAIT,” he muttered, “MY TIME WILL COME! JUST WAIT! I’LL GET EVEN SOME DAY!”

What vile imaginations will be forever forming themselves within us—a whirlpool of thoughts which gradually swallows up all that which is good.

He sank lower and lower, and the lower he went down—the more absorbed he became with the monstrous idea which had taken possession of him—and so he nourished this serpent which wound deeper and deeper with its envenomed folds until his heart strings were crushed beneath its coils.

REVENGE is a secret monster which is ever gnawing away at the root of human life; he heeded not the inward monitor—which whispered the ancient words—that were spoken in thunder and lightning, “THOU SHALT NOT KILL.”

Sorrow falls with very different power upon different human hearts; it is to some as the devastating tempest—tearing up the soil

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—and beating down and destroying all that which is fair and fruitful. “Ismir Allah” (It is time for prayer.)

Vengeance to God alone belongs:—
But when I think of all my wrongs
My blood is liquid Flame!
One sole desire—one passion remains,
To keep life's fever within my veins—
Vengeance! DIRE VENGEANCE on the ON
Who cast on me this ruinous BLAST.

CHAPTER IV

“She hath spoken, and her words still resound in his ears!”

Hao-Khieou-Tchouan.

It was night. In the old stove a few pieces of wood crackled and burned; from the cupboard a dark stream of cockroaches flowed forth; the room was lighted by a lamp—the glass smoked and broken—patched with brown paper. At a rickety table crouched his mother; leaning forward on her elbows—her fingers hiding her grimy face and cheerless eyes.

The door creaked—opened—and the boy shambled into the room; at the sound, she lifted her head, as her eyes met his—they gleamed; “So yer here at last, ye bag of lazy bones!” she said with a leer as she added, “Do ye think I’ll be waiting all night fer sich brats as ye?” “AW! go ter Hell, ye old chicken hawk!” he answered with a sneer. “And what’s more, I’ll advise ye ter let me alone, if ye know what’s good fer yer!” he

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added in a low fierce tone. “Don’t ye dare tell me,” she replied savagely, as she shook her clenched fist in his face, “What I’m ter do, ye poisonous young VIPER! I’ll let ye know I’m BOSS in this yer house!”

Savage depths began to stir within him. All the slumbering hate of his nature was being roused into action—his whole soul rose in defiance at his mother’s leering look.

“Take away yer dirty fist—ye old RIP! Do yer hear!” he hissed between his clenched teeth.

At these words she sprang up with an angry scowl—and said in a harsh grating tone, “Why—you—you—base—born BRAT—you—you—how dare ye talk ter me like that! WHY DAMN YE—just let me get a hold of yez wunst—and—I’ll—choke ye—ye—her last words were lost in her inarticulate wrath.

While she hurled these words at him—a terrible expression stole over his face—his eyes were balls of fire—and all the blackness of HELL seemed concentrated in his heart; thoughts raced through his brain with the rapidity which almost defied his efforts to

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catch them. How he hated her! How he hated the sight of HER! WHY SHOULD'NT HE HATE HER? Had she not made his life one long breath of misery? Had he not wept and cringed Under the hardships of his childhood? Hadn't his poor little soul wept and flamed under the torture and insult of the unjustly applied stick! Had she not ruined his life—destroyed all that was good in him? Did she not MAKE HIM *WHAT HE WAS*? He made up his mind in an instant, that she would never—no never strike him again!

“Keep away!” he hisses in a menacing tone, “Don't come near me! Don't touch me! If ye do, as sure as I'm standing here, I'll—I'll KILL YER!” “KILL ME!” she screamed, her face growing purple with rage, “You—you—low down dirty cur, you threaten to KILL ME?”

“Yes! if you dare lay hands upon me—WILL!” was the deliberate answer.

In the bitterness of her rage she cursed him—denounced him—she extended her bony arm—her long finger quivering like a serpents tongue—and pointed it full in his face,

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“Why—you—you—dirty BASTARD YOU—I DEFY YOU!” and she laughed in his face—a mocking—taunting—jeering laugh.

This taunting—jeering laugh was the last drop in an already full cup—it fairly maddened him—a wild passion took possession of him—the blood in his veins flamed like fire—his face flushed a deep red—then turned to a ghastly pallor—while his eyes flashed with a light worse than the eyes of a wild beast—with a terrible expression upon his face—he stepped one step forward—holding her eyes with a stare of deadly animosity—he broke out in rapid—broken sentences—words that fell like flints—hard and separate—one upon another: “Look at me—look at ME—I SAY. WHAT AM I? WHOSE WORK IS IT? You laugh at me—mock me—curse me—rob me of all that my poor soul craved and hungered for. LOOK INTO MY EYES—NOW—DO YOU KNOW WHERE I'M GOING? YOU KNOW WHERE I'M GOING—I KNOW.” As he hurled these words at her—he was transformed into a DEVIL—his lips tightly

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compressed—while his face wore an air of desperate resolution—his eyes seemed to flash the words: “MY TIME HAS COME!”

Impelled by a ghastly fascination—she cowered beneath the withering hate of his glance—she stood transfixed—gazing at him in terror—reading in his eyes his savage purpose. In vain she tried to remove her eyes from her SON—but he held her as by a powerful spell—she could not move—or cry out—but stood powerless—as in a frightful nightmare—it seemed to her—she was gazing at a hideous serpent—with head erect—its venomous eyes glaring at her in fiery eagerness.

And now—with all his long smothered passion let loose—and his hatred bracing his nerves and muscles—making him desperately strong—with one bound he sprang forward with a stifled cry—his fingers closed round that shriveled throat—she uttered a shuddering cry at his touch—despair nerves her to wrench away the fingers which held her with a grip of steel—and now the battle began for the supremacy between MOTHER and SON. She made convulsive efforts to

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breathe—her lips moved in a spasmodic struggle for speech “MURDERER!” with a terrible gasp the word fell from her lips. BUT still he held her with that grip of steel—her eyes protruded—her tongue was out her mouth—there was a curious gurgling sound—a convulsive movement of her body.

He burst into a laugh of awful triumph—then his grip relaxed—his fingers opened—and let their prey loose—his mother’s form fell back—back—and down upon the floor—she was dead—stone dead—and BY HIS HAND—the evil deed was done.

A strange feeling came over him as he gazed down upon that white dead face—he recoiled with awe before his own work—he went staggering backward till he felt the wall behind him—he could retreat no farther—his limbs trembled beneath him—his heart throbbed with apprehension—his intellect failed him—only the affrightened soul within him was filled with panic—almost blind with fear.

Alas! he had in his passion committed himself to that from which life will never allow him to be dissevered. All the sorrow in the

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world and everything else that is in the world cannot undo it now.

He must flee from this appalling fate which had hovered over him so long. His only thought was to get away as fast as possible, he crept forward

and opened the door cautiously—he peers out looking in every direction—all is darkness and silence; he creeps softly along the passage—he descends the garret stairs—feeling his way by the wall—for all is pitch blackness, not a glimmer of light—the boards creaked ominously beneath his tread; silently he opens the street door—looking hurriedly about him—and then—unchallenged by a single voice—he hurries through the dimly lighted streets clinging close into the shadows of the buildings—running at times when the thoroughfare appeared deserted—he ran as though he were running for his life—rapidly he made his way towards the outskirts of the—city.

A soft, gray penetrating mist enveloped everything—through which the moon shone dimly—forming itself into strange fantastic shapes. Suddenly he became aware of the sound of footsteps behind him—he glanced

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over his shoulder—but no one was visible—he thought it might be the echo of his own steps—he felt disposed to run—he did so—and immediately he heard the clatter of some one of equal speed, he turned in a very sudden manner, glancing keenly in the rear—but no living thing was visible—the street was deserted, this aggravated his nervousness, and again he started to run—on and on—he went until in the distance he saw the shadowy lines of a bridge merged into the fog, seemily hanging in the air as lightly as a cobweb, its arches looking enormously lugubious—across the road the moon cast ink black shadows—and before him—outlined against the sky stood a gigantic cottonwood—its huge body and great arms—swaying back and forth against the night's blackness.

On and on he strode until he reached the bridge, those phantom steps still dogging him, he could not escape it; walking half-way across the bridge, he stopped, he stood motionless as if in a trance.

Around him were the lights of the city, twinkling like stars, below him, the river, its current running in turbulent waves, dashing

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and foaming against the rocks, then rushing with an angry chute under the arches dashing against the piles as though to force them out of the way, they seemed to babble tragically of untold atrocities.

He stood there watching this chasm in all its murkiness, it seemed to woo him, he contemplated a fall into that sombre void and shade, YES he

would dive down into those depths below, he would drown in that blackness! At this moment he heard a sound that shook his very soul! It was but the bells of Trinity chiming the hour of three, to him their sound was the most solemn and touching of all sounds, it was like some VAST VOICE uttering a word through the night LOST! LOST! LOST! Immediately one clock after another took up the sound until it seemed to him that VOICES, some mournful and beseeching, OTHERS solemn and denouncing, were crying to him from all parts of the universe! LOST! LOST! LOST!

The bells chimed and tinkled from every quarter, but to his ears those awful bells tolled loud and dismal, echoing and vibrating through his brain until he was nearly crazed,

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each moment their vibrations became more violent and the sounds they produced grew louder and louder, till they reached a shrill wild cry that rang in his ears with a shrill cry of warning. Then came a pause, then a deep shuddering groan, the sound of the last stroke died away, only a faint echo remaining.

He stretched out his arms, and then broke out in words of despair, in a passion of selfreproach, "Oh! what have I done? WHAT HAVE I DONE? WHAT SHALL I DO? OH! WHAT SHALL I DO?"

He saw no path open to go back, yet shrinking more and more every moment, when all at once, obeying some inward impulse, he turned abruptly about, and then, he began to run, it seemed as though he was flying from himself, from the new and hideous form he had taken, he was rushing madly back over the course he had trod, he was drawn onward by an irresistible power, that no will of his could modify or overcome.

On and on he strode into the city from which he had so fearfully fled, on into the place, which had been his curse, on and on through the gloomy streets he moved until

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the red glare of the light above the street door told him he was outside his own hovel, he opened the door, and began climbing those stairs. What a long, fearful ascent! He reached the door, his haggard face white with fear, his eyes large and full of a strange gleam, clutching his hands together with a nervous motion, he pushed the door softly OPEN, and crept in.

Through the window, the moonlight shone, and rested full upon that lifeless heap upon the floor. A shudder of repulsion passed over him as he gazed upon that distorted face those wide-open staring eyes! He stood there staring at it like one gone mad, when suddenly a superstitious dread took possession of him, and he fled to the farthest corner of the room, he crouched down and hid his face, shivering with an awful fear.

The moon, whose light had been steadily growing dimmer, faded from sight, and the darkness, worst of all terrors to the guilty mind, enveloped all. In half-awaking remorse, he talked, but knew not what he said, sometimes he cried, and again he laughed, uttering shrieks of wild frantic laughter that

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was dreadful to hear, he never ceased, until his overtasked nature gave way, and he sank into a stupor, still his crime ever hovered about him like the furies that followed the footsteps of Orestes.

The mind is a chaos of fancies, desires and temptations. A furnace of dreams, a Den of shameful ideas—a pandemonium of passion's battle-field!

Conscience has a terrible tenacity of life; and when it seems to have been killed, it is not yet dead, BUT ONLY SLEEPETH!

“Oh, what a fate is guilt! How wild, how wretched! When apprehension can form naught but Fears.”

Howard

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CHAPTER V

“Like one who dreams of harm befalling him,
And dreaming wishes it may be a dream,
Desiring that which is as though it were not.”

Dante

Imagination perhaps never works so powerfully as in the dreams which haunt the guilty mind. The blood they shed is still liquid before them, each drop appearing as a terrible accuser, it is in darkness that “horrors on horror’s head accumulate” being their last waking thoughts it is reproduced in their dreams, and here they repeat forever the awful crime in which their last moments had been spent.

In the dream which came to him, he was walking along a very narrow and rocky footpath which skirted the outermost verge of a cliff, its gloomy portal dropping perpendicularly a hundred feet to a region of wondrous waterfall and torrents that rushed amidst huge rocks, sending up to him a dreadful note of warning in its threatening monotone.

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The passage became narrow and dangerous as he trudged onward and upward, huge fallen rocks were heaped before him in wild confusion, his only foothold these insecure rocks, which the moment after dropped away, rattling and clattering till lost to hearing; he found that the higher he climbed the more toilsome and dangerous the ascent.

He walked along precipices that hung over the valley like vast shelves, one rising above the other, leaving but a narrow ledge between, in which were great fissures, over these he had to leap, one false step meaning instant death.

At length he came upon a great rock casting a portentous shadow, he looked below, could he ever get back? No it was impossible! THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK! He looked upward, COULD HE CLIMB HIGHER? Ah! whatever point we may have reached, there is still a higher point to gain. No matter what may happen, HE MUST KEEP ON!

He traveled on until he reached a recess between overhanging cliffs, he saw before him a narrow crevice through the rock to a ledge

beyond, along this crevice he crawled on his hands and knees until he reached the outer edge of the shelf, he was on the verge of a fearful precipice, the awful height of which made his head whirl, he had to lie down to keep from tumbling from the ledge, clutching the rocks with a death-grip he peered over into the abyss beneath, he perceived that the rock on which he lay was but a projecting shelf a foot or so in thickness, should this table-rock yield beneath his weight he would be hurled through mid-air into a terrible gulf.

Out beyond was empty air. Down below, all was miniature, the wild, rock-filled gorges looked but tiny gutters, the forests, shrubbery. He was so high that no sounds from below could be heard. His brain reeled as he gazed into this solemn solitude, he shrank back from the dizzy verge appalled, YET, how grand to view the wide-spread landscape before him!

Blue ragged outlines of granite spurs, a bewildering sea of peaks upon which seems to rest the blue vault of heaven. The sunset came, redly burning in the West, and as its

last rays were gilding these stupendous spurs, when LO! there came from the highest peak a loud VOICE which said "PRAISED BE THE LORD." Then another and another and still another until from every mountain peak the words were repeated "PRAISED BE THE LORD," the echo sounded from rock to rock repeating the NAME of GOD.

It filled his soul with awe, and a great fear—tremblingly he crawled away from that dreadful verge, feeling along trying to find some way to descend, when suddenly he felt himself sinking down, down, down out of sight, he was precipitated into a dark pit, he sought to ascend, when he fell again and deeper, in an agony of fear, he rushed hither and thither only to fall a third time and still deeper, everything went spinning round him, he saw nothing, he heard nothing, till at last there came a sound, a squeaking and chattering, a grinding of teeth, it was absolutely bloodfreezing, then something struck against him, he was frantic with horror, then he heard groans and shrieks, as if souls in torture. Now a wide chasm opened before him, through which issued forth the figure of DEATH,

holding in his unyielding clutch a struggling MORTAL, on whose face the swollen veins and drops of sweat told the horror and despair of the soul, the head thrown violently upward, as though attempting to avoid the sight of the exultant monster that was dragging it to death.

After this there came forth a skeleton, followed by another and another, they were of all forms and sizes, from that of the man of gigantic stature, to that of the tiny infant, falling into file these bare, blanched bones marched slowly up through the crypt, there was no end to the marching of the dead from those regions below, they seemed to be flowing on, forever on like a river. They shook their unfleshed hands at him pointing at him scornfully with their wan fingers as they passed by, the void sockets of their skulls were filled with glaring eyes that gazed menacingly upon him, they marched in solemn procession through the cavern and then ranged themselves before him, they danced and jostled each other, cutting the most grotesque capers, wagging their heads mockingly at him, flinging out their legs, and waving

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and flourishing their arm-bones to and fro, as if in impatience, or anger, or in pain. And thus they capered, screamed, and fought and in their ferocity, they tore off each others heads and arms, which at once grew on again, and after they had dismembered one another twenty or thirty times all round, they burst into a mirthless discordant laugh, a laugh growing louder and louder, that echoed back and forth until it seemed that a demoniacal host were enjoying the wildest and most unearthly of revels, they pointed at him with the air of avenging furies, and then came a voice, which sounded as if speaking from some great height, "LOOK UPON YOUR WORK!" and again came that demon-like laugh, and with the echo of that fiendish laugh ringing in his ears he awoke, cold drops of agony stood out upon his forehead, he opened his eyes slowly, the pale dawn shows gray in at the window, not a sound to break the awful stillness, then as memory returned to him, he sprang up and looked about him. "YES, IT WAS TRUE. IT WAS THERE!"

Alas! who can undo the evil they have

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wrought, FATE you may resist, but you cannot conquer it.

These stupendous succession of horrors so unnatural and terrible, was too much for his overtaxed nervous frame, and he fell back with a groan, wild-eyed, as one utterly bewildered, he raved madly, with half-intelligible utterances that froze one with horror to hear.

What regions of TORTURE, we must suffer, TO MAKE US WHAT WE ARE!

“March—March—March!
Earth groans as they tread!
Each carries a skull,
Going down to the dead!
Every stride, every stamp,
Every footfall bolder;
'Tis a skeleton tramp!
With a skull on his shoulder!
But LO! how he steps
With a high-tossing head,
That clay-covered bone,
Going down to the dead!”

CHAPTER VI

“Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,
That comes to all: But torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed—”

Milton

Not a sound broke the stillness, not a window jarred, nor a door creaked; not so much as a breath from the chill wind that complained without.

Presently the silence was broken by the sound of footsteps, then voices, again silence, then a black shadow loomed up in the doorway, then another.

A neighbor not having seen them for two days reported to the police, upon opening the door they looked upon a terrible spectacle! In the middle of the room lay the dead woman half eaten by rats, while in the corner crouched the boy, staring before him vacantly.

“Why, the lad’s clean daffy!” exclaimed the neighbor.

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A hand was laid upon his shrinking shoulder, a hand that closed down like a vice, the hand of the LAW! He left that grim room in the custody of the police, arrested for the murder of his mother. As he issued forth into the street, windows were opened, and heads thrust out on all sides; it was impossible to say where the people came from, but in a short time the street was blocked with a crowd that gathered round the door.

He was taken to a dismal pile called the “Tombs” a long, narrow, lofty building. Upon entering, he gazed around as one in a dream, he saw four galleries running round it, one above the other, communicating by stairs. Between the two sides of each gallery and in its center, a bridge, on each of these bridges sat a man. The whole was lighted by a skylight fast closed; from the roof there dangled limp and drooping two useless wind sails.

On each side of him were rows of small iron doors, in which were square apertures, through these, women peeped anxiously. He was taken before one of these doors, the fastenings jar and rattle, it turns slowly on its hinges, he saw before him a small bare cell, in

which was a bedstead, he then passed through and into a gateway which leads to the State Prisons.

He was kept here for months, forced into close contact with offenders of all grades of guilt, from the timorous young who have taken their first step in wrong doing, to the old and hardened offender who boasts of his deeds, and who pollute with their wickedness those with whom they come in contact. A dreadful place to pass long days and nights, a place where there is no decent provision of personal cleanliness, and where the air is foul with sickening stench.

He was gazed at by the curious, and scoffed at by the unfeeling, he was forced in self-defense to hurl back words of scorn, which were prompted by his evil passions of hate.

When the boy was brought to trial and the Judge asked him "His name?" he answered listlessly, "They calls me THE VIPER."

"Have you no father?" continued the Judge.

"Never had any on hand as I knows of," he replied stupidly.

When he was asked if he was guilty or not? he made no reply, of what use were words.

He sat there, day after day, white and silent, for he had not spoken since. Seeing before him nothing but hostile faces, no one saw anything good in that poor face, and he remembering all the rubs and knocks which had fallen to his share, a great hatred of mankind gazed out of his eyes upon that throng beneath him, a throng no less murderously disposed towards him, who called him, "A hard nut."

On the last day of his trial, when the Judge rose to pronounce his sentence, he leaned forward to hear his fate, "What was he saying?" he was sentenced to "Hard labor for twenty years." The whole stress of the charges against him was laid on, Not what he had done, but what he MIGHT DO! Imprisonment is intimidation from crime, not the improvement of criminals.

When he heard these words, he shuddered, his face deepening in its pallor then it grew dark and surly as he muttered to himself: "Well, that's always the way, the poor they has no chance, they has ter PAY THE PRICE!"

The intricate workings of a boy's soul cannot

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be exhibited to judges or juries, for treatment had made him surly, and poverty, UGLY!

He was now a criminal, a convict reduced to simple classification No. 31999. Society regards prisoners as mere outcasts, as such, he was treated as a brute, he was thrust inside such a cage as is used for wild beasts. The hideous clank of the chain jeered and mocked him, it galled him to be a convict, it bred in him a violent resentment, then the wolf was roused within him, and he felt a wild desire to become what they believed him to be.

"They treat me as though I was a devil," he said in a husky whisper. "Very well, from now on I'll show them what a devil can do!"

The hot fires of his nature were wholly aroused, his soul was filled with a fierce determination, evil for evil, abuse for abuse. The old tiger within him rages, he made up his mind, "That they could not force him to do what he did not want to do! You may lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink."

His whole soul was now intent on executing some plan to cause trouble, the more trouble

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the better. He began by pricking his gums, swearing he was bleeding at the lungs; then again he would lie for days in his cell, refusing to rise, declaring with awful blasphemies his inability to move. Next he would steal soap, making pills for frothing at the mouth, going into sham fits. Immediately after this he invented methods of self-injury; in some way he would get possession of a piece of broken glass, when with the quickness of a cat he would inflict a terrible gash across an artery, and lie bleeding to death; when taken to the infirmary, he resorted to every device that might cause trouble to his attendants, sometimes he would lie and scream for help, until assistance was close upon him, when he would sit up and with unerring aim fling at the persons head everything within reach. At another time he dropped suddenly out of bed and with an ell-like writhe made for the bedside of the other patients, and there he would smash basins, bottles, everything in sight; his attendants found he was not an unresisting sufferer

of injuries. When taken back to his cell, he would arouse the whole prison with his howls, shrieks and demoniac

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yells that issued from his cell; he would tear or break to pieces everything that he could lay his hands on; he became one of the most troublesome of all the prisoners, thus proving what one can do when they determine to make themselves formidable.

How many times was he subjected to the torture of the straps, how many times was he knocked down by the guards, it was abuse for abuse, but it did not subdue his rebellious soul, it only reacted, and inflamed that which it was intended to remove. "He swore," with a mighty oath, "that he would not work, 1 and that no human BEING could make HIM WORK!"

The warden decided to take him to the ladder and see if that would not make him change his mind.

"Suppose you do, WHAT THEN?" The guards took him to where a ladder leaned against the wall; it was bolted at the bottom to the floor, and at the top to the wall. The warden ordered him "TO STRIP." He looked around at the warden, in his eyes an expression of defiance. as he said: "If you want me stripped, do it YOURSELF."

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The guards used brutal violence in stripping him, they stripped off all his clothes, and he stood there before them nude, they dragged him to the ladder, they jerked him off the floor, strapping his arms to the top of the ladder, then they strapped his legs, and thus he was put upon the rack.

The warden said to the guard, "Hand me the whip!" and with the whip held firmly in his hand he stepped up to the boy and said, "I'll give you one more chance, will you go to work?" The boy raised his sullen eyes and looked into those eyes before him, and answered angrily, "NO! I tell you, and I mean what I say."

"Very well," replied the warden, and stepping back he raised the whip, it came down with a sharp sting, leaving its mark upon his body. Lash on lash descended upon this helpless victim, until his back and shoulders were streaked with swollen and livid lines. Again the warden in the act of inflicting another blow exclaimed: "Now DAMN YOU, WILL YOU GO TO WORK?"

The boy turned his head slowly, the blood shot up in his forehead till the veins roughly

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ridged it, his eyes flashed with a fury of passion, as he gave way to a perfect tempest of rage. "YOU COWARD! YOU LOW DOWN DIRTY COWARD! YOU TIE ME UP LIKE A DOG! YOU WHIP ME WHEN I'M HELPLESS ! WELL, DAMN YOU, KEEP ON WHIPPING ME! FOR I SAY, NO! *I'LL DIE FIRST!*"

In brutal rage the warden whipped his helpless victim, he beat him as though he expected to make a new organization of a human soul by torture, in fierce unbridled temper he whipped him until the blood trickled slowly from his wounds, till at last his whole back was wet with blood, a tiny stream was flowing down his legs, and dripping, drop by drop, off his toes on to the floor, an awful crimson stain that was slowly, spreading, creeping, forming itself into an ominous pool beneath him.

His head now hung between the rounds, his bloodshot eyes spoke of repressed and unutterable anguish, then all is black before him, his ears are full of a roaring sound, all sense of feeling reeled, and he knew no more. Alas! this hour left its permanent mark upon

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him, the iron had indeed "entered into his soul." Whatever he might have been, is past! "Oppression maketh a MAN MAD" and kills the soul-life.

He was ordered thrown into the dungeon and there wounded, bruised and bleeding, he was locked up like a beast, kept there all day and night, with nothing to eat, also with nothing to cover his body. He was now in the hands of ONE who made him pay the price.

On the following morning the warden came, and again said to him: "Are you ready to go to work?"

At these words, the boy looked around in a dazed way, his mouth was tight set, in his eyes—what depths of suffering! As he gazed upon that face, there came a revulsion of feeling, instant, complete, and hideous; his face became livid, every drop of blood left his cheeks, his breath came sharper and quicker, his rage was so great that for a minute he could not speak, he confronted the warden like a maniac, and there the two stood glaring upon each other, then he burst out, he ejected the sentences with an energy that was

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fierce : “I’ll tell you again, and I’ll tell you the same as long as I have breath to speak, NO! I say, NO, NEVER! I’LL ROT IN HELL BEFORE I’D GIVE IN TO SUCH HOUNDS AS YOU!”

Oaths poured from the warden’s lips, in his rage, he struck him down, then stood over him contemptuously, and kicked him. “How dared that shrimp DEFY THE LAW!”

To punish him for doing so, he had him chained to the dungeon floor, where he was fed on bread and water. It was indeed to him a

Dire dungeon—Place of doom,
Where compassion never enters;
But LAW clanks the chain.
He drank the cup of wormwood.
Why—Oh—Why was he ever born?
A fathomless tragedy—Who can tell.

Who is the Conqueror? Has one man the right to punish another man? Has any man the right to torture a human soul? NO! it is a direct disobedience to God’s established order and command, who said: “All the punishing of my family belongs to ME, as MY sole prerogative.”

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If this man is vile, is it not the system which has made him so? The laws are responsible for the moral debasement of the people, so far from checking crime, it nourishes vice, and teaches the arts by which men prey upon one another.

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CHAPTER VII

“With pallid cheeks and haggard eyes,
And loud laments and heartfelt sighs,
Unpitied, hopeless of relief,
He drinks the cup of bitter grief.”

Anon.

At last the portals of the Satanic Gates were unlocked, he was liberated, he might now tread where he pleased.

As he issued forth, he staggered, his frame was thin to emaciation, his face sallow to cadaverousness, as he shuffled along painfully and laboriously in the shadows, a dark figure followed noiselessly, a figure that will henceforth hound him till death, for was he not a convict, a criminal, a man to be distrusted, a man to be kicked out, treated less than A DOG!

He stopped and looked back upon the prison walls, and up to the windows, from which the lights glowed with a lurid and dusky gleam through the darkness like the eyes of fiends glaring after him with deadly

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hatred; he staggered along hurriedly, as if afraid of a hand that might again grasp him, then he passed out of sight into the gloom.

He came out, as he went in, with angry and hateful thoughts against his fellow men; with feelings which none but an emancipated captive can fully understand.

Twenty years ago, he was but a quivering boy, today he was a man without reverence for anything on the earth, or under it; he was without any trace of conscience, nowhere any sense of sin.

Can twenty years of punishment against a rebellious soul inspire it with better thoughts? Can hatred be overcome by hatred? NO! “Hatred never ceases by hatred, but by LOVE.”

Everywhere he went, he was met by hostile and suspicious glances, many times the door was slammed in his face. In all his wretched life, it had been the same, nothing but cold looks of distrust and suspicion.

Unable to work, he wandered around the city in an aimless way, he strolled from place to place, roaming until a late hour amid the lights and

shadows of the populous city, he

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hung around old haunts, undecided what to do, feeling himself shadowed, hunted, something of the old tiger was roused within him.

Often in bitter moments—he wandered off into a fit of musing: the past, what did he see in it?

Back went his thought to the first years of his life, passed in terror of his mother's cruelty. All the terrible dreams of his childhood were brought back to him, the curses of his mother, his twenty years of paying the price. Stormy thoughts swept through him as he brooded upon that which was gruesome, and which no lapse of years would ever blot out. He had indeed shut himself up in no garden of thought.

As he meditated upon that which was past, he gave utterance to his thoughts in an abstract manner: "What is done, is done. I cannot re-live my life. Even if I could; perhaps I would do the same. We are as we are." "ALLAH AALEM" (It's in me.)

In life each must learn for themselves, and the learning will be the result of our own experience, not that of another.

For a long time he remained in a study, as

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if reflecting upon some difficult question, then continued in his soliloquy: "There was one thing certain, he must in some way get a living, either by his own work, or somebody's work." The question to him was: "What had the world to offer such as he?" He knew there were but few industries open to convicts who wanted to work. But did he want to work? Could any man by the sweat of his brow make a fortune? NO! "Hard work never made money." Then why should he toil?

He saw that the world was a market, a conflict between Capital and Labor, a barter which never ceases, wherein the many were the slaves to the few, enabling the few to accumulate great wealth, while the great masses are doomed to incessant toil and want." "JUSTICE TO ALL," he said in a tone of contempt, his lips curling scornfully, "Where is your Justice?" Was it not a thing of price and purchase? and he smiled bitterly. Did he not know that men got into jail not because they steal, but because they did not STEAL ENOUGH! JUSTICE, he added scornfully. You talk about YOUR JUSTICE!

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Why a million injustices are committed every day, to which the people close their eyes! and he laughed scornfully.

And your LAWS! and he smiled a sarcastic smile. What is LAW? Why the very word means wicked power! Trace it link by link, phrase by phrase, chase its shadow until you find its substance, and what, WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND? That laws are like Spiders' webs, which catch the small flies, BUT LET THE GREAT ONES BREAK THROUGH!

To the poor it is like a magical stream; once wet your foot in it, and you needs must walk on, until you are overwhelmed in its endless stormy waters. It is the opportunity of evil to get the better of goodness! He smiled bitterly as he thought of these things, for was he not one of the many who had suffered the tortures of HELL THROUGH THE LAW!

He continued in his musings: "I am alone. I am nothing to any one who lives. Not one is anything to me. For myself, there is but myself." Then he paused; a sudden idea made his eyes gleam. From now on I shall lay hands on what money I can get. Nothing

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shall be allowed to stand in my way. Money at the cost of everything! FOR MONEY IS POWER. Let them catch me who can.

Strange thoughts and speculations crowded through his mind as he strolled down the street, meditating upon those who have, and those who have not, at this point, his thoughts were interrupted by a voice at his side, turning his head, he saw one whom he had known in the past, drawing him aside, a long and rather vehement whispering conversation was carried on, after which the man turned and hurried away and was shortly lost in the crowd. The Viper stood chuckling and rubbing his hands; at last he had found an opportunity, one which he did not hesitate to profit by. He was weak of body, but his will was forward, and what was wanting in health was supplied by zeal, retracing his steps to a certain rendezvous, he there became an agent selling certificates of naturalization.

He sold these papers in beer cellars for a nominal sum to anyone who applied: upon assurance that they should be used for the Democratic Party; he sold within a few weeks 5,000 of these fraudulent certificates.

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These papers were granted in some of the Courts without investigation, signed and sealed, leaving blanks for the names of the applicant and his

voucher. Forty thousand persons were naturalized within a short time preceding the election.

In his wanderings from place to place, he kept his eyes and ears open, watching with shrewdness that which was going on about him, for he meant “to get at the bottom of everything.” He found himself in the midst of a political conflict, no matter where he went he saw candidates hanging around, on every side he heard earnest argument, passionate appeal, jest, defiance, retort, oaths, laughter, “taking a drink”, all condescending to low arts of bargain and barter and corruption, it was a case of buying, bribing and cajoling votes. No kind of bribery was spared, bald money if money would be taken; if not, then money in other forms; sales of offices under some form, as of political and personal support, or of money for influence. “He was all things to all men.” He crawls that he may rise.

He heard false issues raised and lustily

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cheered. He listened to the noblest appeals to stand by the grand old party, and to maintain the time—honored principles, and to keep the proud flag of no surrender flying: under which in the back room the “SWAG” was pleasantly divided. He heard men eloquent for LIBERTY, but whose own temper was the temper of TYRANNY! Satan, can clothe himself as an angel of light, and so vice assumes the guise of virtue, great words are thus bandied about in political circles till they are soiled by irreverent associations, and then, according to that fine saying of Lord Bacon: “Like a Tartar’s bow they shoot backward, and mightily entangle the judgment of those who use them.”

He saw that the politics of the city was completely debauched. Every influential thief, gambler, and ward politician rolled in money, and shone in diamonds and costly chains. A carnival of vice reigned in every quarter of the city.

Seeing this, he calculated with shrewdness, as he said: “I hold within my hand, that which will make me, WHAT I CHOOSE.”

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CHAPTER VIII

“Vice is a monster of so frightful a mien,
As, to be hated, needs to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

Pope

A caucus of the Democratic electors was being held in the “Pig Pen.” It had been called for the purpose of nominating state officers and members of legislature.

The candidates and their friends arrived at the hall at least an hour before the hour of meeting. Ireland always shrewd in such matters, moved that Michael McClutchen take the chair, which gave to Ireland the organization. Germany was conciliated by the appointment of Louis Seidel as secretary.

Nominations being in order, up popped a wiry little Hebrew who said: “Mr. Chairman, der is nine tousand Jews in der city, and dey expect to be remembered in making up de dictet! De Hebrews hain’t been

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treated right, and I chust wants ter tell you dat dem nine tousant votes has got to be consitert.”

Next a burly Teuton: Misderr Jairman, vot if der pe nine tousant Choos? Vot of it? I chust wants to tell dat chentleman dat der ish fifteen tousant Chermans in der city, and dat dey ish choing to have someting to say about dese nominations! If dey ish’nt choing to get deir share, dey chust bust up der dictet, YOU BETS.”

Germany having sunk to repose, a brawny son of “the old sod” took the floor, and in a tone of mingled respect and menace said: “Mr. Chairman, I know there’s a good many Jews and Germans in the city and they all go the regular ticket like good Dimmicrats, and have had their share of the offices. There may be nine thousand Jews, and there may be fifteen thousand Germans. But I can tell them gents that there’s thirty-five thousand Irishmen in this city, and I’d jist like ’em to tell me how they’re going to

elect a Jew, or a Dutchman, or any other man without them? It's all very pretty to talk, but kin ye do it? We've got more of the voters than all of ye

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PUT TOGETHER, and we expect half the ticket, AT LASTE!"

Symptoms of confusion began to arise, and the caucus bid fair to break up in anything but a celestial temper. At this juncture, the Viper appeared in the doorway; the attention of the mob was arrested by this thin-looking, thin-chested piece of humanity; "Fellow citizens" he called out, "Hear me," he waved his right hand to command silence, then proceeded: "I'd like to ask if there's any chance for an AMERICAN on that ticket?"

This insolent inquiry aroused the indignation of those present, who instantly shouted: "PUT HIM OUT! PUT HIM OUT! THROW HIM DOWN STAIRS!" and they yelled, and hooted and hissed.

The contemptuous manner in which he was received roused within him a paroxysm of rage, he shook his fist at them and shouted in a voice choking with concentrated passion! "YOU SCUM of the earth! Damn you, the day will come, when I'll make you hear me!"

The mob sprang up with oaths, he was instantly surrounded, a struggle commenced, he was overcome, and kicked down the stairs!

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He picked himself up furious with anger, cursing everybody and everything, he limped away brooding upon that which had transpired, strange suggestions were running through his mind HOW and WHAT?

He fell into an uneasy and reckless walk, he wandered aimlessly through dingy alleys paved with mud, where strolling old women, who smell of gin and tobacco swarm in and out. He strolled past underground dens, where they dance and game, from which issued peals of laughter, hollow and false, the mocking mirth that comes from SIN, a melody of discordant sounds. He saw women in the depth of infamy, women who were profane, repulsive, slaves to drink and debauchery, all wallowing in the SLOUGH of DESPOND.

As he rambled on, the bitterness grew within him, he turned down a street that seemed a pandemonium, filled with a vast horde, countless, ill-fed, ill-clad, uneducated and miserable, who resembled nocturnal creatures groping in the unseen worlds and astray in the shady subterraneans, almost beasts, part phantoms, howling, seeking and gnawing

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its way, making CREATION ugly and darkening the face of HEAVEN. A TERRIBLE PARADISE THIS GODDESS OF POVERTY! Where one may see the lagging tramp of millions, day after day, all trending towards frightful caverns of DESPAIR; and ending in the WILDERNESS OF DEATH.

He wended his way past hidden haunts of darkest vice, dens of ill repute, where the skulkers are fierce, petty and uncleanly, a class who abandons itself to courses that stifle the sentiments of humanity, disease breeders, reduced to mere brutality, where there is no pretence of good. Here you will find diseased prostitutes with their victims and associates, wretches half-idiotic through debaucheries, lame, maimed and blind, a revelling and blasphemous crowd, whose souls are tossed like a tempest upon the vast waves of passion. What billows of flame are ever rolling through them. What despair and what agony rack the mind. A tragical scene of sights and sounds.

“Talk of the flames of Hell,
We build, ourselves I conceive
The fire the fiend lights—”

He trudged along a villainous region of old wharves, coal-yards, tenement houses and low grogeries, there was an incessant swinging of saloon doors, where all was dancing and gambling as if Sodom and Gomorrah had shaken off his ashes. Before him stood the old brewery, towering high above this mass of corruption, a tottering, filthy old building, with yawning seams in its walls, and poverty glaring from its ragged windows, with it is associated some of the most appalling crimes that were ever perpetrated; could these walls speak, what tales they might tell, the place seems suggestive of heinous crimes, suddenly there flashed before his mind with vividness the remembrance of the woman who had poisoned twenty persons, the children of four families, her own mother, two husbands, and a man with whom she lived. He thought of the mother who deliberately shot her own son, a boy thirteen years old. Multitudinous billows of thought flashed through his brain, tinged with hues of the horrible. Again there came to him thoughts of all the violent deaths of the past year, of the hundreds of infants found dead in these alleys,

and the scores of murders which are committed and nobody the wiser.

It is an old proverb, "Murder will out, the stones will not hide, the heavens will not cover it, the reeds will speak, the walls will whisper it." But in later days, I might say, in our boasted twentieth century, with all our high civilization, so to speak, the rule seems to be reversed. New York City alone has furnished its quota of contradictions of the old saying, for instance there is the Nathan murder, the Burdell murder, the Manhattan Well murder, the disappearance of Chief Justice Lansing.

He stood for some time lost in deep thought, his anger had now subsided, when a sudden idea appeared to strike him, and turning abruptly, he retraced his steps and once again entered that rendezvous which he had entered on a previous occasion, he had decided to play his best card and perhaps take a trick.

Selling certificates had resulted in the discovery of the plot formed in the city to carry the State in the election for the Democratic Party.

He knew all about the "ring" and also about the "boss" who had used his popularity as a volunteer fireman to advance himself in Tammany, an organization of political notoriety, claiming to be the head of the democracy of the nation, and whose theory of political action was, that New York was to be governed from below, not above; by the weight of its ignorance and the strength of its corruption; and not by the force of its intelligence and virtue. How well he knew its established policy, that when no other way was open, to boldly BUY ITS WAY TO THE SEAT OF AUTHORITY.

His observations had been keen and to the point, therefore he understood clearly that Tammany's power was the result of the wellregulated machine which it had built up throughout the city, directed by an omnipotent "boss". Each of the assembly districts into which the city was divided, sends a certain number of representatives to the General Committee of Tammany Hall. Each district has a "boss" having one or more municipal offices at his disposal, and who also handles the election money spent in the precinct.

He was well informed as to when a "political machine" was in perfect order, that is to say when a few managers control "regular action" so that

they can nominate any candidate whom they may select.

He perceived that the rule was to look for a rich candidate, some one who had made a lucky speculation, one who would be flattered by the nomination, and eager to draw checks for thousands of dollars, he knew of one instance where the candidate drew checks to the amount of sixty thousand dollars.

He—saw that the “machine” made any ignorant quack who was willing to pay, a member of Congress. And so it is that money buys legislatures, bribes courts, and both makes and interprets the laws.

Having full knowledge of the “boss” of Tammany, who had the party machinery in his hands, and who dictated nominations for the party to suit himself, for did he not secure the election of accomplices in the Mayoralty and the other administrative offices, even in the Common Council of the city, as well as the chief executive office of the State, also

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in the State legislature, as well as in the Judges’ seats.

He was well informed in regard to all these matters, for was he not one of the agents who sold false naturalization papers, and was it not by the issue of these papers and fraudulent voting that the election resulted in the triumph of the Democratic Party by over 85,000 majority, and the majority rule. But only honest majority can rule justly. A man who will acquire an office meanly will not fill it nobly.

For nearly an hour, he was engaged in a low and impassioned discourse, with a certain party. It is needless to detail what occurred, all that is sufficient to say, he played his best card, and took the trick. His turn had come at last.

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CHAPTER IX

“Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey, Where wealth accumulates and men decay.”

Goldsmith

For the first time in seventeen years the State government in New York was solidly Democratic, and led by the “boss” who had complete control of the State government, a conspiracy was formed to rob the city treasury of millions. A plan by which the “boss” and his immediate friends could “feather their own nests.”

The construction of a new court-house was arranged for, the estimated cost of which was two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, but the real cost of which might be made to reach several millions.

The building was begun. The contractors for labor, materials and supplies were required to increase their bills. The bills were passed by the Board of Supervisors at the dictation of the “boss” who was a member

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of the board. They were audited by his tool. The contractors received the amount due them and from fifteen to sixty-five per cent of the total bills were divided amongst themselves.

It was a plot of sheer stealing, and it was successful. As it has been successful in hundreds of other cities.

Now the “boss” who is State Senator as well as Commissioner of Public Works, by the free use of money, secured the passage of a new city charter. The power of auditing bills was taken from the Board of Supervisors and placed in the hands of a Board of Audit, composed of the Mayor, the Comptroller, the Commissioner of Parks and the “boss” who was Commissioner of Public Works.

The “ring” had reached the height of power. There is nothing in this world so corrupting, or so fatal as absolute power. The contractors of the new court-house were required to make out claims for imaginary services, and these bills to the amount of six millions, were passed at one meeting. More than half the amount passed into the “itching palms” of the “ring”.

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Before the end of the year, the fraudulent expenditures of the court-house had reached over eight million dollars. The capitol of Albany like the court-house is a permanent monument of the immense and inevitable jobbery of great public works. These are but two of many hundreds that could be mentioned.

To silence criticism the “boss” filled the pay-rolls of the city government with multitudes of men, drawing large salaries, who never performed any work; and gave profitable contracts to others at enormous figures, checks were given for salaries larger than the Governor’s. Police justices were given larger compensation than the Chief Justice of the United States. He gave fifty thousand dollars worth of coal to the poor; he laid out flower beds in the Park and the Battery, and mended the paths in the Square.

The expenses of the city reached twentyfour millions of dollars a year, as much as under the entire civil list of the United States Government.

Two years flew rapidly. Money came to him, the flood-gates of affluence began slowly

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to rise—with money—society flung its doors open to him, and he could come and go at pleasure.

He drew aside the velvet curtain of “fashionable society” and entered the Court of Mammon. Here he saw bright masks and blazing gems and superb toilettes, all parading in deceptive masquerade. A society which had the varnish of an outward refinement laid over its leprosy. A mask which covers ghastly diseases and foul sores; but which is tenfold more infectious and destructive than the shameless wickedness which wears no veil to hide its loathsome front. “Apples of Sodom.” Lovely fruit—but within full of ashes—the poison flower that sheds a fatal perfume.

“Although thou shouldest put on a tunic of foreign silk thou art naked; although thou shouldest beautify thyself with gold and pearls, and gems, without the beauty of Christ thou art unadorned.”

As he came to know the actual situation of this society and reflected upon it, he realized that it was nothing more or less than a huge orgy, a jargon of licentiousness, a ceaseless

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carnival of extravagant dissipation, selfindulgence and enjoyment. Nothing but fashion and wealth and idleness which warps the soul, as it contorts the

body, leaving nothing but a polished husk of life. Under glistening robes was coiled the loathly snake. Souls which were sodden with pleasure until all trace of God's high image was lost in the deformity of art.

What did he see about him? Greed for gold! The idolatry of money! Everywhere he saw men pushing and driving and clutching after wealth. Greed of the most rapacious and repelling kind was written on every face, the single passion that engrossed these men, was the accumulation of property, they measured progress by success; **MAN BY MONEY!**

It seemed to him like a wide-spread Arena, into which was cast a mass of Christians, who had become corrupted by worldly materialism and carnal-mindedness, where life was indeed a witches' Carnival, with Satan swaying the hearts of those who seem noblest and purest.

When he entered these magnificent homes,

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and gazed upon the fine carvings, paintings and statuary and tread upon the luxurious carpets; and sat upon the richest of upholstery, he said to himself: "This is a thief's house and these are his spoils, stolen, YES stolen; but from whom? **POOR WIDOWS AND STARVING ORPHANS!**" After all society was nothing more or less than a conspiracy of the rich against the **POOR.**

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CHAPTER X

“And Nemesis beholds with awe,
Ready to seize the poor remains
That vice has left of all his gains.”

Bishop Hoadley

The end is not yet, but an end must come, first or last to those who remain on the broad way of destruction. “For those who venture under the Niagara must expect to be drenched.”

A rebellion now broke out against the “boss” in which the ex-sheriff and a State Senator were prominent. The people as a rule are but the dupes of bold and designing men, who possess a serpent-quile of pandering to their lusts and passions, and who deceive them for their own purposes.

It is the employment of the excellent BIRD of our country to duck all people under her wing; therefore New York is a foreign city; with an ever shifting and restless population, drawn from all parts of the world, the majority of whom never think for

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themselves; and who blindly accepts any politician whom the daily press may support.

That newspapers are unduly controlled by the counting-room, is shown by the fact that during the thirty years’ reign of thieves in New York; the number of newspapers upon the pay-roll of the “Ring” was eighty-nine, of which twenty-seven so depended upon the plunder for subsistence that when the “Ring” was broken they gasped and died.

It is the PRESS that makes the “POLITICIAN” as it makes the “SENSATION” and the “BOOM”. It is within their power to decide WHAT SHALL APPEAR, as well as, WHAT SHALL BE OMITTED. WHO SHALL BE PROMINENT—and who obscure. By seizing every opportunity to insert a name, they can create renown; and so by omitting a name they can keep it long in obscurity.

“There is a mighty power in merely leaving things out.”

A mass meeting was held at Coopers Institute to consider the charges of corruption against the city and county officials. A committee of seventy

was appointed to conduct

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a thorough investigation and to carry out such measures as should be necessary to prevent future frauds.

When the veil was lifted, and all the details of the “Ring” was published in all the leading newspapers, the Viper read them with feelings that may be easily imagined; he recognized at once his own imminent danger; and as he was not as yet exposed—he immediately fled from the city.

His life was now an aimless drifting about in the maze of traffic; full of uncertainty, he was a vagabond among idlers; he cared not what became of him; he plunged recklessly into vices and excesses of all kinds; his face was full of everything hard, bitter and malicious.

He roamed hither and thither, plunging madly from sin to sin, until he reached the climax.

In all his wanderings from place to place, he kept track of all that which transpired of the “Ring;” again it was proven to him, that there was no justice, by the fact, that of all those who were implicated in the plot to rob the city treasury of millions, only one man paid the price. The “Boss” was arrested,

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tried, and sentenced to twelve years imprisonment on Blackwells Island. While on a visit from Ludlow Prison to his home in the custody of officers, he escaped; made his way to sea in a yacht, was recaptured at Vigo, Spain, sent back to prison, where he died; and thus ended the career of the “Boss” of the “Ring”.

The Viper wandered about, and finally arrived in New Orleans, where he joined a secret murder society, composed mostly of escaped convicts, desperadoes who defied the laws, and great criminals; he was now a “bravado” he had become so demoralized by his vices that any horrible crime was possible.

Any one who had a grudge to satisfy could hire a “bravo” at a charge of five dollars, and be assured of the removal of his enemy. The latter would be mysteriously murdered and it would be impossible to trace the murderer.

The members of this organization were guilty of some of the most flagrant crimes; the outrages committed were such as to render life insecure.

The stillness of night bristled with horror; cries of murder, the thud of falling blows

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and the shrieks of women, were familiar sounds! Butchery and murder was going on everywhere, they were of daily occurrence; causing A REIGN OF TERROR! Merchants and business men of means received notices to pay such sums as the society saw fit to impose on them, under penalty of death.

Foremost among the “Bravos” was the Viper; he had now committed innumerable murders, he was cruel, an inhuman fiend. Paint him as black as you will, the sketch will be too faint for the original.

The police were powerless, as no one dared to give any information. The chief of police, who had been active in his efforts to root out the society was sent the regulation “warning” to desist; but as he did not, he was executed in one of the most public streets shortly after dark.

At this the people rose in fury; and a citizens’ committee of safety was organized headed by the most responsible citizens.

Nineteen of the supposed murderers were arrested, among them the Viper and placed on trial. The result of which was a virtual acquittal of the prisoners; proving again

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that corruption and perjury had apparently rendered the machinery of the LAW inoperative! There was no power in the State tribunals to bring them to Justice ; with organization oaths and secrecy baffling and defying the appliance of the law; and bringing them to each other’s aid.

This acquittal of the prisoners so enraged the people, that a meeting of the leading citizens was convened in the streets under the statue of Henry Clay. It was resolved that the people should take the law into their own hands.

A mob of excited citizens under the leadership of a prominent member of society, rushed upon the jail with furious yells; and in excess of rage, they burst open the prison doors; and began to massacre the prisoners, they shot down seven and dragged forth the balance; and began hanging them to the lamp-posts, they were like fiends in their madness! What a frightful DIN, shouts, yells, screams, oaths! In the midst of this hubbub, the Viper who was like an eel, slipped out of the clutches of those who were holding him; fleeing in terror from an appalling fate.

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He made for the river; the tramping of thousands of feet close behind him; he reached the bank gasping for breath; he cannot refrain from turning his head, "THEY ARE COMING! THEY ARE COMING! He found himself suddenly beset by all the terrors prepared for those who wander from the "STRAIGHT AND NARROW PATH." Here was NEMESIS in the shape of an awful, unutterable idea of ETERNITY. He jumped into the river; and made a dive for his life.

The mob reached the river, forming a line along the bank; ready to shoot, as soon as he rose to the surface of the water. In a few seconds he came up to breathe; and when he saw that mob ready to shoot, a savage grimace writhed across his mouth; distorting all his features, so that whereas they had been brutish they now appeared devilish; he was like a demon just up from the bottomless pit. The mob now blazed away; the Viper's face was completely riddled with the shot from their guns, the whole front of his face was shot away, leaving nothing but a mask of clotted blood: in a few seconds the river was

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stained crimson with his blood; and then that gory face, its human features so hideously destroyed, sank to rise no more!

The mob recoiled in horror—for this terminated one of the most dreadful looking deaths any human being could witness! And so descended the black curtain which sooner or later must drop its shadowy folds upon our lives; and the prophecy of the Good Book receives a new and pregnant illustration.

God had put an end to his life. And as he had sown so had he reaped, from the wind, the whirlwind. There are certain penalties that every career must pay! Sometime, early or late, he falls a victim to the law of human nature, which long since was written in the Book: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." As a Turk would phrase it—"ALLAH KERIM" (God's will be done.)

“Lord, let war’s tempest cease
Fold the whole earth in peace,
Make all thy Nations one
All hearts beneath the sun
Till thou shalt reign alone
Great King of KINGS!”

CHAPTER XI

Conclusion

“The little I have seen in the world, and known of
The history of mankind, teaches me to look upon
Their errors with sorrow, not in anger. When I
Take the history of one poor heart that has sinned
And suffered, and represent to myself the struggles,
And temptations it passed through; the brief pulsa-
tions
Of joy; the tears of regret; the feebleness of purpose;
The scorn of the world that has little charity; the
Desolation of the soul’s sanctuary; the threatening
voices
Within; the health gone, happiness gone—I would
fain leave
The erring soul of my fellow-men with HIM from
whose hands
It CAME.”

Dr. Chalmers.

Whatever may be our faith, the presence of death, drives the mind to thoughts of immortality. It is death alone that can suddenly make Man to know Himself.

It is the end of a career that gives the character to it all. A story is told that King

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Croesus in his prosperous years asked the Greek Sage Solon, “If he did not deem him a happy man?” and Solon replied: “Count no man happy until he is dead.”

Solomon said: “Better is the end of a thing than the beginning.” Lord Buddha, the founder of the Buddhist religion, who was born 500 years before Christ; the following is one of his doctrines: “None shall spill the blood of life, or take of flesh, since life is one, and mercy cometh to the merciful.”

The Talmud abounds in lessons of virtue, of gentleness, of forgiveness and of peace, many of which men have yet to learn; it enforces and defines the highest principles of progress, it teaches: "Be persecuted, rather than persecutors" and also that "Thou shalt not kill" as well as "Thou shalt not steal."

To do evil is to bring forth destructive elements. Those who live by hate, die by hate, that is "those who live by the sword will die by the sword." To prove this let us look back over history, which introduces us to the life of past generations. This record of the past is undeniable.

No historical fact is of any value except so

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far as it helps us to understand human nature; the lessons of the past contain many truths of high importance, which should influence the future. We are the products of the past, and the sacrifices of the past are our strength and power of the future. As we grow very unlike what we were, we may yet become very unlike what we are at present.

Let us now consider the career of some of the most conspicuous names in the records of the past, which will be a means of illustrating the proverb, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed."

Of the seven Kings of Rome, only two died natural deaths; of the twelve Caesars only three, Augustus, Titus, and Vespasian, died natural deaths, and of the thirty-nine succeeding Emperors, twenty-nine died of violence.

In the records of ancient Rome we find accounts of the horrible wars of Sylla and Marius, followed with executions yet more horrible, until the Forum ran red with blood, and the people wearied with internecine strife, were ready to accept the comparative peace and prosperity which the empire afforded.

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Here Caesar fell, victor of many battles, to be at last the victim of assassins.

Tiberius expires, fleeing from the Senate and from his conscience; in the house of Lucullus, smothered under the pillows of his bed, without knowing to whom will descend the crown which was like a bridal ring with which he had wedded the earth, already hearing the noisy delight occasioned by the news of his death in the court and in the streets.

Caligula is wounded among Asiatic comedians, and expires begging in vain for mercy from his executioners.

Claudius is poisoned by his own wife. Galba falls assassinated in the streets, and his head separated from his trunk, rolls through the mire, like a stone. Otho commits suicide.

The glutton Vitellius flies with his butcher and cook; he takes refuge in a porter's lodge; he falls into the hands of his enemies, denies his name and is dragged by the neck with a long rope, is conducted in the midst of the insults of the people, who rain stones and filth upon him, to the banks of the Tiber, where they trample him to death with their feet.

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Nero was feasting when word came to him that the rebel Galba had burst into Rome and seized the Imperial sceptre. Flushed with wine and fierce with anger and alarm, he upset the table, broke his favorite dishes, called for a box of poison, and rushed into the palace gardens, and there considered what he should do next. After which the excited Monarch went to bed and fell asleep, when the dawn came he found that his guards had deserted, and carried away the poison as well as the bedclothes. Barefooted and in his nightrobe he rushed toward the Tiber to drown himself, but turned at a safe distance from the banks, and walked slowly back. Like all cruel men, he was a coward, and was afraid to apply the Roman remedy for intolerable trouble. Nero's faithful friend found him in this sad plight, threw a mantle over him, placed him on a horse and fled with him before the yelling rebels to a solitary country house, where he was exhorted to kill himself quickly. His grave was dug before his eyes, and after much hesitation, he placed a dagger at his throat; His cowardly hand refused to press it, he begs of his companions

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that they shall kill some one else to show him how to die; he weeps and supplicates until an attendant passes a sword through his throat and Nero dies in desperation and shame. His body was laid upon a costly funeral pile under a silken coverlet, and consumed. The grave was only for his ashes.

The three who died natural deaths; Vespasian died drunk; Titus, died of melancholy, weeping like a woman, imagining he heard the threatening of thunder in the clear heavens, assailed by visitations of infernal terror. Augustus, dies with a sardonic smile on his lips, with cold skepticism in his heart, believing his empire a farce, his life a comedy, his end the exit of an actor.

Domitian, died wounded in the stomach by his domestics, struggling with a crowd of freedmen, pretorians, and gladiators, who insult him, spit in his face, strike him, torture him, and kill him with howls of rage and derisive laughter.

The cruel and indolent Richard the Second, fled in the disguise of a monk, and wandered in suffering and privation from castle to castle, finally surrendered himself to the Earl

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of Northumberland, who promised him protection from personal violence. He was compelled to sign his resignation, after which he was sent to Pontefract Castle, where he died by the sword.

Edward the Second, a cruel oppressor, who shed the blood of high and low to satisfy his desires, was driven from his capital and held a prisoner at Kenilworth. The keepers of the royal prisoner having private wrongs to avenge treated him cruelly; and not long afterwards he was murdered in a horrible manner in Berkeley Castle.

Henry III caused the Duke of Guise to be assassinated, and was himself struck down by the avenging dagger of a Dominican Monk.

When King Charles the First was led to the place of execution in front of the palace of Whitehall, he was insulted by the soldiers and the mob, who uttered all sorts of unfeeling cries, and some even went so far as to spit in his face.

Peter III is persecuted by Catherine his wife, the Pasiphae of the North, the coarse fury of crowned sensuality. When he was in prison the very men who promised him

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liberty, poisoned him in secret in a night of debauch, in a orgy of mingled blasphemy and brutality. When Peter felt the first effect of the poison he turned furiously upon the assassins. They knew there was no time to be lost, and assailed him like a mad bull, overcame him in spite of his Herculean efforts, threw him to the ground, falling all about him in his death-struggle, until they killed him with a thousand wounds, mashing his head against the floor. The next day, the afflicted Empress deposited in a magnificent catafalque the body of her husband dressed in the uniform of a Russian general. The Russians have a custom of kissing the lips of the corpses of their friends. The masses kiss the corpses of the Czars. When

they kissed the lips of Peter III they drank the poison, and so corrosive was the liquid, that sudden swellings appeared on their mouths.

Paul I died in the same manner. His servants, his domestics, his courtesans pulled at the strings by which this savage was strangled.

Charlie IX died by poison. His last hours were wretched, and his remorse for the massacre

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of St. Bartholomew filled his soul with agony. He beheld spectres, and dreamed horrid dreams, his imagination constantly saw heaps of livid bodies, and his ears were assailed with imaginary groans.

Nearly all the leaders on both sides, perished by the sword or the dagger. The Prince of Condé, the Duke of Guise, and his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, all were assassinated.

Philip of Spain set a price upon the head of William of Orange, that is he offered a reward for his assassination. But when William fell under the pistol of Génard his blood stained Philip's church and all the perfume of Araby could not sweeten the spot, nor all the holy-water of the world wash it away.

Philip II, the cruel executioner, who delighted in the torments and the death of his victims, the assassin of his own son, died in great agony in the palace of the Escorial.

Charles the XII, the Madman of the North, was finally killed at Fredrikshall.

Mary, Queen of Scots pays on the scaffold at Fotheringry the penalty of her crimes.

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History is little else than the record of such illustrations; the student stands amazed at the exhibition of the fiendish malignity of those who were noted in the annals of the past.

Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon, have amazed the world with their daring exploits, and by the mighty powers which they exhibited in the service of ambition; but—WHAT WAS THE END OF THEIR CAREER?

Nero, Caesar Borgia, Richard III, have shown to what prodigious efforts unmingled sin may summon the human powers.

D'Alembert, Diderot, and Voltaire, have evinced to what almost supernatural feats of intellectual strength the mind may be summoned, in a

united effort to corrupt a nation, and dethrone religion from the hearts of men.

Nebuchadnezzar, reminds us of the Black Prince and Edward III of England. Robespierre, Saint Just, Lé bas, and Hebert prove how grossness can take the show of goodness, and become as corrupting as it is fascinating in the glow of a beautiful rhetoric. The memorable saying of Robespierre in his oration,

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“Today for pleasure, tomorrow for justice,” which justice signified bloody hecatombs to the guillotine, he sought to effect the Revolution by terrifying executions of the guillotine; alas! it has ever been so; the worst crimes that soil the pages of history have been committed in the name of that which is holiest: in the name of LIBERTY, or of JUSTICE, or of RELIGION.

The web of history is woven from the countless threads of individual life, and is necessary for man’s education and progress, the present which despises the past, will never give birth to a better future.

Sometime, early or late, man falls a victim to the law of human nature, which takes upon him tumultuous vengeance during his death struggle, it is then, that justice begins. We may laugh at these things; in our self-conceit, we may sneer with cold skepticism in our hearts, but, just the same, WE cannot be so easily rid of it, no matter how great we may be; we cannot overcome the grand scheme of destiny. “Man proposes and Fate disposes.” To those who laugh in their self-conceit, let them think of the death of George Orloff

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who died a raving madman, the victim of remorse. The bleeding shade of the murdered Peter III followed him wherever he went; terrified him in horrible visions at night, and seemed constantly to threaten him with avenging darts.

Let them think of the death of Alexander who shut himself up like a hermit in the country, and died there, in the manner of Titus; among possessions and terrors, half mad, furious against himself, jealous of himself, without belief in humanity, or hope in God.

Let them think of the death of Oliver Cromwell; who lived in constant fear of the dagger; who surrounded himself with guards, wore armor beneath his outer garments, who slept in a different chamber every night;

and died during a storm which tore roofs from houses and leveled huge trees in every forest amidst the most gloomy apprehensions.

Let them think of the death of Queen Elizabeth, whose last days were passed in a state of melancholy; her soul burdened with secret grief, refusing to eat, dying of starvation.

Let them think of the death of James V, who died at last broken-hearted and deserted;

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paying the penalty all traitors pay in universal neglect and contempt.

Let them think of the death of Princess Mary, who suffering in mind and body; neglected by Philip and hated by her own people, died in unspeakable agony.

Let them think of the death of Napoleon Bonaparte who died an exile, on the island of Saint Helena; forsaken by all, and like Oliver Cromwell, during a fierce tempest. I have taken but a few names from a mighty list; only a few dead coals raked from the embers of a tremendous conflagration. "The evil that men do lives after them." So let us all remember the great king of ancient days who asked the philosopher to name some of the happiest of the race; and who named men who had passed away; and the king asked him why he did not name men who were still living: "Look at all my splendour" said he, "why do you not think of me?" "Ah" said the wise man, "who knows what your life and your lot may be yet? I call no man happy before he dies," and sure enough that monarch was reduced to captivity and misery, and died a miserable death. And so it is

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that "Better the end of a thing than the beginning."

Let us remember the past; so that we may correct our mistakes, and strengthen our confidence in the future. The object of our daily pursuit, and our aim in everything we do, should be towards the attainment of the ideal. We are capable of great personal development, all are familiar with the quotation, "To him that hath shall be given" this is as true of the mind as it is of the material things of life. Growth to be real, must be progressive, and the months and years should bring development in the thing growing; is it practice alone that brings the powers of the mind as well as those of the soul to its perfection, pure thoughts flow from pure principles and aims at

pure ends, that which is really good, springs from a good motive, flows from a good principle, is directed by a good rule, and aims at a good end. Dante has said "Humanity is one. God has created no useless thing. Humanity exists; hence there must be a single aim for all men; a work to be achieved by all, the human race must, therefore, work in unity, so that all the intellectual

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forces diffused among men may obtain the highest possible development in the sphere of thought and action."

There is a fact which we must keep steadily in view, that the germ of all that is best in our modern civilization is to be sought among the institutions of antiquity; the Hebrew's mission was a grand one, to teach righteousness, of all the elements of the rich legacy bequeathed to the modern by the ancient world, by far the most important in their influence upon the course of events were those transmitted to us by the ancient Hebrews. Their mission was to teach religion, and here they have been the instructors of the world, their literature is a religious one, for to them literature was simply a medium for religious instruction and the awakening of devotional feeling.

Emerson "exhorts us to read the great writers thankfully and gratefully, take all they can give, and not to let them go until we receive their blessing," as Cicero says, "the mind of man is improved by learning and reflection. To think is to live, man has been born for two things, thinking and acting."

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We all have faculties and powers capable of almost anything, but it is the exercise of these powers which gives to us ability and leads us to perfection, the desire to accomplish is a proof of the ability to accomplish.

The education of life does not consist in the number of things one knows, but is a spiritual and moral process and can only be truly organized with a view to moral development, our pursuit of knowledge should be as a means to righteousness. Pindar insists strenuously upon virtue and self-culture; with deep meaning he says, "Become that which thou art," that is be that which you are made to be.

THE END

“I believe that in all ages
Every human heart is human;
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
For the good they comprehend not;
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Reach God’s right hand in the darkness,
And are lifted up and strengthened.”
Longfellow

