The Man with the cloaks

William Austin

Some Account of the Sufferings of a Country Schoolmaster

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— The Original Text —

NEW-ENGLAND GALAXY.

THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS AND THE LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE MUST STAND OR FALL TOGETHER. HUME.

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For the New-England Galaxy.

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I was born in New England of white parents, and received my education at the University in Cambridge. Until my twentieth year I was a member of that sect of happy mortals, who think with Mr. Pope, "all is for the best." At that time, the fatal sisters spun me a yarn of new colour, and caught me in the web, which literally preyed upon my entrails.

In the fourth year of my college life, ere I had arrived at man's estate, although born of white parents, I was at noon day, publickly sold at auction, on one fatal day in March, at a March meeting, to me the ides of March ! On that day was I sold at public auction, and afterwards, in the month of December, was I kidnapped into a district school in the town of .....

The proceedings relative to me, at March meeting, ran thus, — "Mr. Moderator, I know as well as any man alive, the advantages of learning ; and we have thirty dollars in the treasury, I vote that we spend the whole next winter in giving the boys a complete education." "Second the motion," said another, "and let us have a schoolmaster, college-learnt." It was put to vote, and carried unanimously. "But who will board the master ?" said one ; "I will," said another ; "and I will," said a third ; "and I live nearest to the school," said a fourth. On this, a man arose, and said "the master should be put up at auction, and whoever will take him for the least money, should have him." Agreed. And ten and six pence, and ten and five pence, and ten four pence, down to seven and six pence, regularly decreasing a penny, were successively bidden for me. I was knocked down at seven and six pence. Nothing of all this, at the time, could be known to me ; and although the town had sacrificed a victim, it could not be foreseen on whom destiny would fix for the future schoolmaster. The month of December came ; and it was soon

known that a schoolmaster was wanted for two months in the town of..... Fifteen dollars per month were no small temptation to a young man who had never seen a bank bill numbered higher than five. The best scholars, all of them, refused the offer, alleging it would be a reproach to literature to teach a school for fifteen dollars per month, when they could get as much for tending a stable in Boston ; and as horses are generally more docile than boys, the stable had the preference.

At length the proposal was made to me. "Fifteen dollars per month," thought I, "is very well to begin with. If I refuse, I shall certainly lose the money ; and then I shall as certainly dream of it. Now it is vastly more pleasant to dream that you have got money, than to dream that you have lost it." Unluckily, at that moment Shakespeare threw in one of his old saws — "There is a tide in the affairs of men," &c. The town agent who was empowered to secure me, saw my hesitation. He was a sensible, keen looking, hard featured man ; as sharp faced as if he had long been fixed for a weather-cock at the north pole. He was dressed quite tidy — wore his hair queued with an eel skin. His coat was more than square at the skirts ; much like a mainsail.

"Young man," said the town agent, "do not think lightly of thirty dollars, all things in this world proceed from small beginnings ; a pint of acorns in process of time will send a seventy-four to sea. With respect to yourself, learned as I suppose you are, you began with the alphabet. Franklin tells you that five shillings seemed to him the nest egg of all his future prosperity. If you are inclined to go with me, the amount which you will receive ought to encourage you ; for let me tell you, no man ever received from the town so much." "What do you tell me," said I. "Do you offer me the most that any schoolmaster ever received in your town ?" "We never, before now, gave more than ten dollars per month." Here, Alexander the Great conspired against me. I recollected he was offered the freedom of a certain petty Grecian city ; and when he snorted at the offer, they told him he need not turn up his nose, for no stranger except Hercules had ever received that honor. He then graciously accepted the offer. I considered it would be entered on record, that I was the first schoolmaster who had ever received fifteen dollars per month in the town of.....

"Besides, sir," said the town agent, "money is not so easily obtained as you young men imagine. Look at this great brick building that you inhabit, and consider for a moment how it was built, — from the first stroke of the pick axe, to the well formed brick in the hands of the mason. Heaven and earth united do not give you a mouthful of bread short of three months. Would you know, young man, the real value of money, go to Salem." In short, the money tempted me, and I, in an evil hour was seduced. I went with the town agent ; and after a day's journey, passing through many cross roads we arrived at a place, which appeared to be outlawed from the rest of the world. It was in the month of December, and no snow had fallen — all was frost-bound. At a distance I saw a house in the midst of a landscape, abrupt, broken, and mountainous. The herbage far and wide was so sere and withered that it was doubtful if any future spring could refresh it. Such will be the desolation when time, with his scythe, shall visit that place at his last call. "There," said the town agent, "is your boarding place," pointing to a tottering house, the top of which was covered with moss, and shone like an emerald. "Heavens !" said I, "can you have a heart to leave a fellow creature in this desolate place ? It would be in vain to cry for help, here, if any one should attempt to murder me." "Fear nothing," said he, "crimes are unknown here ; the family sleep with their doors and windows open in summer." "But," said I, "the wild beasts will catch me." "Fear nothing," said he ; "we should have reason to rejoice at the sight of a wild beast ; he would soon take off the rust from our spits." "Saying this, he dropped me on an ill-shapen door-stone that looked as if it had grown there, and disappeared with a satisfaction he could ill conceal. I was cold, hungry, and sleepy, all which together gave me uncommon courage. I entered the house, and was welcomed with great diffidence. The family was small, an elderly man, his wife, a son grown to manhood, and a daughter. If the scenery without the house was appalling, a fine lesson was read to you within doors. Here, nothing was superfluous, and every thing within reach. You could stand before the fire, and reach every article of the kitchen establishment, from the gridiron and warming pan, down to the pudding bag and dripping pan. There was no separate kitchen to the house, and, from necessity, the keeping-room served for "kitchen and parlour and all." "How few

things," thought I, "will satisfy our real wants. Thousands in Boston would die of chagrin, to be reduced to this necessity. Yet Adam and Eve lived very comfortably without any of these things."

After inquiring the number of my scholars, and the distance of the schoolhouse, I requested a morsel of victuals. The table was immediately set, and a slice of bread and a slice of cheese, with a pewter pot of cider were presented to me. The cheese was beautifully white, it looked exactly like Stilton cheese ; but to the taste it was quite different. I have since heard the same sort of cheese called white oak. The bread was sweet enough, but rather too solid ; the knife cut as smoothly through it as it would through the cheese-like clay near Hartford Asylum. The cider was as clear as a rivulet, and would have been excellent had it tasted of the apple. I had resolved to conform to the family, and render myself agreeable, therefore lest they might think me delicate in my diet, I ate up all on the table.

Immediately after supper, I was shown up stairs to my bed chamber, where I fortunately found a bed and one chair. There was only one superfluous thing in the room, a fireplace, but there was no tongs nor shovel nor andirons, nor any signs that a wreath of smoke had ever passed up chimney. But to a weary man sleep is sleep, whether on down or straw. Nature was always a leveller between bedtime and uprising.

In the morning I began my daily labours. The schoolhouse was nearly a mile from my abode in a northwesterly direction ; but nothing is better than exercise for a schoolmaster. From the appearance of the surrounding country, I anticipated an easy task, especially when I saw the school house, which appeared like a martin box at a short distance. I was quickly undeceived ; although the schoolhouse was very small, it was full within, and surrounded without. Whether it was the novelty of a college-learnt schoolmaster, or a laudable desire of obtaining a good penny worth of learning, I cannot tell, but certain it is, the building could not contain one half of the scholars. Whence they all came I could not imagine ; the surrounding country gave no sign of animal life. I should as soon have thought of opening a school six weeks after the flood, as in that place. In this perplexity I thought it most reasonable to fill the schoolhouse with the most ignorant, and dismiss the rest. Accordingly, after a short examination I retained about fifty, and sent as

many home. This plan was considered by many very judicious, and rendered me popular. But alas, I soon found that popularity would not fill an empty stomach. From the first day I perceived I was at board on speculation, and that I was limited to less than one dollar and twenty-five cents worth of food per week. To sit down to one's dinner with an appetite is agreeable, but to rise from table with all the pangs of devouring hunger, would excite the pity of Tantalus. The ancients could invent nothing worse than to show a hungry man a good dinner, and deny him a taste ; I think I could have added to the misery of Tantalus ; I would occasionally have given him a taste.

The pangs of hunger began now to assail me. The increasing cold, and the daily exercise of travelling four miles, to and from school, soon gave me a *pamphagous* appetite. And as the good people with whom I lived had taken me upon speculation, I was at the mercy of a close calculation. Thrice a day my host gauged that part of man which requires food, and as he always reckoned without me, he made no allowance for my wants. Within two days after my arrival my head became sorely affected : I felt drowsy in the forenoon, soon after breakfast. This I immediately attributed to the right cause. Instead of real coffee, I discovered that I had been drinking the decoction of a noxious drug, the grain of which has been known to kill horses and oxen — I mean rye-coffee, so fatal to the intellects of the sedentary and studious. I complained that rye was injurious to my head, and requested I might, instead thereof, have tea. But alas, there was no tea in the house ; they said they had conceived a prejudice against tea ever since the Revolution. My next request was a bowl of milk — but alas, the cow was dry.

In a few days all the luxuries with which the house was stored at my coming were exhausted. The cheese, the butter, the flour disappeared. Fresh meat there was none ; no beef-cart was ever seen in that precinct. I began to fear for the pork barrel. That bread, which at first, in the wantonness of my appetite I compared to Hartford clay, was now more delicious than the first bread cake of the pilgrims. One day, as I sat down to dinner, foreseeing that should I eat all on the table, I should rise with an increased appetite, I fainted at the recollection of an incident which had occurred to me ten years before. When a boy, I passed

through the town of Lynn, in the county of Essex, on my way to Exeter, in the stage. Just opposite the residence of Mrs. Mary Pitcher, the stage broke down, the whippletree parted, the braces snapped asunder, and there seemed to be a sudden and unaccountable wreck of every thing ; but no one was injured. The passengers, one and all, exclaimed it was done by witchcraft. "It is quite likely," said the stage driver, "for there stands Mrs. Pitcher at her door, with her cup in her hand." The passengers beckoned to her, and she came out to see them, evidently pleased, as I suppose witches always are, at the accomplishment of their purposes. However, as it is always best to bespeak the good will of a witch, the passengers treated Mrs. Pitcher with great courtesy, and gave her some money. She examined the faces of all of us, and for the most part made flattering comments : but when she laid her piercing black eyes on me, she stood considering a moment, then clapped me on the head and buried her hand in my flaxen hair, and gently shook me, saying, "you are a very likely boy, Johnny, but I fear you will one day die of hunger." The sudden recollection of Mrs. Pitcher's prophecy, gave me such an "ill-turn" that the family observed it, and asked me if I was indisposed, I told them I felt rather faint. They immediately insisted on my emptying the vinegar cruet, telling me that vinegar was the sovereignest thing on earth for a fainting fit.

To one who has never palled his appetite in a pastry shop, and whose spartan diet only rendered hunger more keen, the idle ceremony of daily holding a knife and fork, tended only to increase the desire to eat. By degrees the cravings of hunger, changed my nature, and took absolute possession of my imagination. One day, the whole dinner consisted of one dumpling, which they called a pudding, and five sausages, which in cooking shrunk to pipe-stems. There were five of us at table. My portion of pudding was put on my plate ; I swallowed thrice, and it disappeared. My one sausage was put on my plate — I swallowed twice, and my dinner was ended. I rose from table deeply impressed with the beauty of that passage in Job ; "Behold now Behemoth ; he eateth grass as an ox ; he drinketh up a river ; he trusteth he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. So I, in my imagination, thought I could devour whole hecatombs." I fancied a roast pig would be but a mouthful ; a knife and fork seemed the most useless things in the

world ; with the two legs of a turkey in each hand, I made a lantern of the carcass in a moment. Chickens and partridges I swallowed whole. If the globe had been a pasty, I thought I could have swallowed it, Captain Symmes and all. Thus would my distempered fancy prepare the greatest delicacies ; so that I often detected myself in the act of working my jaws, as though I were actually eating substantial food.

I had recently read "Riley's Narrative" of his sufferings in Africa, and was at the time sensibly affected. Now I began to laugh at Riley and his companions, and wished myself one of the company. Any man may easily imagine that the sense of hunger is far more keen and devouring on the hills of New-England in the winter, than in the soft climate of Arabia, where if a man can once in twenty-four hours swallow a pint of camel's milk, he is perfectly happy.

As my sufferings became daily more and more dreadful, I was put upon my wits, and as necessity is the mother of invention, one half of that time which I ought to have devoted to my school was employed in devising means to preserve my life. And here, in justification of myself, I ought to observe that a man consumed by hunger becomes by degrees destitute of all moral principle. There was at school, one little round faced, chubby, fat fellow of about forty pounds weight, on whom I cast my evil eye. For the extremity of hunger makes cannibals equally of the civilized and savage. The example of the Jewish mother, and the more recent example of the French army in their retreat from Russia. But fortunately a better morsel was soon thrown in my way. Some of the school boys had discovered, and killed a skunk. It remained near the school house. When I had dismissed the scholars, I seized upon my prey and returned to the school-room. With the help of my penknife I quickly stripped off the skin, and had the pleasure of seeing fresh meat. I laid the tongs and shovel across the andirons, and placed the creature over a bed of coals. I broiled it about fifteen minutes ; and when I supposed it sufficiently cooked, I cut it in halves, meaning to eat one half, and hide the other in the woods, for another repast. But my appetite was sovereign ; after I had eaten the one half, so delicious was the morsel, I could not restrain the call for more, and I devoured the whole. That was a bright and happy day ; but my hunger soon returned ; wild meat is not so substantial food as the stalled ox.

A few days afterward, being faint and weary on my return from school, my eyes were delighted at the sight of an animal, I had never before seen. It was a rackoon which the young man Jonathan had taken, or rather overtaken, for he caught it with the help of his hands and feet. So true was the observation of the town agent, "If a wild beast should be detected in these parts, he would soon take off the rust from the spit." As soon as the rackoon was discovered, the young man gave chase, and the creature, after some time ran under a rock for protection, whence he was soon ferreted, and a well aimed stone entirely disabled him. He was brought home in triumph ; and when skinned, he seemed to be one entire mass of fatness, of a most delicate whiteness. I was overjoyed ; and both the cat and the dog leaped for joy. The dog in particular was transported. When he looked steadily at the rackoon, the water ran from his mouth in a stream. It was, in truth, an equal temptation either to an epicure, or to a man perishing with hunger. If Vitellius and Albinus had lived in the same age, they would more readily have fought for that rackoon than for the Roman empire. I retired to bed, as was my custom, as early as I could with decency ; for I soon learned that all the time I could consume in sleep was clear gain to my stomach. But sleep for a long time fled before a beautiful apparition in the form of the rackoon. At length I fell into a slumber ; and O, had I been a mussulman I should have wished never to have awaked. I seemed to see the rackoon suspended on a hook, and hanging majestically before the fire, perspiring most beautifully into the dripping pan. The rackoon roasting in this manner, showed to far greater advantage, than if he had been run through with a spit. I eagerly watched it all the time it was roasting ; the flavour of it was ravishing ; no heathen god ever smelt such an incense. At length I saw it placed before me on table ; and I seemed to have the whole rackoon within reach of my knife and fork, and most uncourteously I seized upon the whole for myself. Yet however impolite this may appear, it was quite natural ; for I know by experience, that excessive hunger is excessively selfish. Steak after steak, slice after slice, collop after collop I carved from the rackoon ; and when I could cut no more, I took every bone from its socket, and as though my appetite increased by the meat I fed on, I seized the rackoon's bones and polished every one of them to the smoothness of ivory. When I had eaten the entire rackoon, I

awoke : and such had been the deceit practised on my senses, that after I was satisfied it was all a dream, I could not keep my jaws still, so inveterately were they bent on eating. However, as there is no good in this world without its evil, so there is no evil without its good. I readily consoled myself in anticipation of the real rackoon, which the coming morrow would place in reality on a real table.

Long before daylight I heard the family stirring, and the alacrity of their footsteps, and the repeated opening and shutting of doors, all, gave assurance of the coming holiday. I arose, and loosened the strap, which after the Indian manner, I had buckled around my body in order to pacify the corrosions of hunger. This I recommend to all who may hereafter, fall into my distress. A leathern belt with a buckle drawn tight around the waist will be of great service ; for the more you can contract the stomach, the little mill within, which is always grinding, will have the less room to play.

I was soon ready for breakfast, and when seated at table, I observed the place of Jonathan vacant. "Where is Jonathan ?" said I. "Gone to market," said they. "Market ! what market, pray ! I did not know there was any market in these parts." "Oh, yes," said they, "he is gone to ..... about thirty miles to the Southward of us." "And what has called him up so early to go to market." "He is gone," said they, "to sell his rackoon." I should have fainted again, but the dread of vinegar preserved my senses. I now resigned myself to my fate, and patiently awaited the accomplishment of Mrs. Pitcher's prediction.

"I am doomed," thought I, "to a strange destiny. If I perish here I shall die ingloriously and unpitied. If I abscond, I shall lose my honour, and the story of my sufferings will never be credited." There would be some satisfaction in being drowned or assassinated, or in perishing with hunger, in a noble attempt, to discover the source of the Nile, or in exploring the outlet of the Niger. But to perish here in the woods — perhaps in a snowdrift, where I may lie till spring, if the birds of prey do not find me, was fearfully depressing. I then turned my thoughts wistfully to the sea board, and no landscape was ever so pleasing to Claude, as the recollection of the clam banks at low water, on the sea-shore, was to me. How happy, could I steal away in the night, and watch the ebbing tide, and enjoy a feast of shells. There I compared

my situation with that of the first settlers of New-England, and thought they had a great advantage over me. When the winters drove the fishes into deep water, they could always get a discount at their banks ; clams in abundance, and even the more delicious quahog could always be had at banks hours.

In going to school that morning, I perceived a large flock of crows. It was a bitter, black, cold morning ; and the crows hovered over, and scaled around my head. "Ah," thought I, "sagacious birds, do you foresee that my strength will soon fail, and that I shall fall a prey to you ? O, that the severity of the cold would freeze some of your wings that you might become a prey to me." Then, half delirious, my imagination carried me to the first inhabitants of Charlestown. Happy people, instead of the crows coming after them, wild geese in a time of famine, were ready to fly down their chimnies on to their roasting hooks. These people had appointed a thanksgiving, which threatened to change itself into a fast. The night preceding the day of thanksgiving was intensely cold ; and while an immense flock of wild geese were pursuing their way to the South, the frost suddenly seized their wings, arrested their progress, and they all fell down into Charlestown square. Every family not only filled their bellies, the whole winter, but also filled their beds with down. Whereas, I was reduced to the extremity, that a crow, a hundred years old, would have been to me the richest treasure.

The next day beheld the earth covered with a deep snow. My fears now multiplied upon me. "This snow," thought I, "will be my winding sheet ; I can never in my present weakness force my way through these snowdrifts. I shall perish with a double starvation, with both cold and hunger. But courage, courage !" said I, "hope often lingers after the footsteps of despair ; and help came even when hope was gone." In fact, that day proved to me the happiest day in the calendar of that year. I succeeded in gaining the school house after travelling double the distance ; for I was so weak, that in balancing myself, I would frequently retreat two steps backward ; and then in rescuing one leg from a snowpit, I would lose my balance and stagger in a semi-circle. It is really incredible how much a man can endure in a good cause. But I hasten to describe the most happy occurrence of my life. On my return from school, at the moment, when one leg was about

refusing to follow the other, and the belt which I had loosened the day before in expectation of the rackoon, had just fallen down and was resting on my hips, I saw at a distance an object, partly buried in a snowdrift, which appeared to be a living animal. Had it been the Nemean Lion I should have attacked it with no other weapon than my penknife. On approaching the creature I perceived it was a cow. Instantly I resolved to have a steak. I had just read Bruce's travels in Abyssinia, and he had taught me the art of cutting a steak from a living cow in the real oriental style. On examination, I perceived she was a new milch cow, and carried not less than a pail of milk in her bag. I preferred the milk to the meat, and did not mangle the cow. How to get at the milk was the thought only of a moment. I perceived the top of a stone wall at a little distance, which the late snow storm had not quite covered. Now, hunger will as readily leap over, as break through, a stone wall. I succeeded in forcing the cow astraddle the stone wall. In that situation, she was as quiet as at her own stanchion. I cleared away the snow, and laid myself down in the form of the letter Y, on my back between the cow's legs, and she was milked in less time than a cow was ever milked before. While draining the cow, my belt soon began to tighten, and became painful, but my handy penknife quickly cut it asunder. When I had drained the last drop, I threw down the wall and let the cow go. If a pint is a pound, I arose sixteen pounds heavier ; yet I felt no ill consequence from that copious draught. It lay in my stomach like a poultice.

The timely succour of the cow sustained me several days ; so that I began to bid defiance to the crows. I lived in hope of meeting with that beautiful cow again, but unhappily I never saw her more. The pains of hunger began again to consume me. Strange fancies haunted me in my sleep. I rambled through the country milking, in my own way, every cow I met, and hamstringing every ox, and cutting steaks from them. So jealous did I become, that I often questioned myself in my sleep, and argued the point whether I was really eating or dreaming. Once in particular, I well remember that I insisted I was eating a beef steak, and took it on my fork and held it up, and said, "this is a real beef, this cannot be a dream, I am certain I am eating an excellent beef steak, I cannot be dreaming now." So inveterate and persisting, busy and alert is

excessive hunger. It haunts you by night and by day, awake and asleep. But happily though the sense of hunger is most ferocious, it is not inclined to despair. Had you hung a sirloin of beef on one horn of the moon, my hunger would have hoped to reach it.

When I became reduced a second time, so low, that my belt was lost between my ribs, I was relieved by a happy mistake. Instead of the snuff of a candle which was usually handed to light me to bed, I found the candlestick adorned with more than half of a tallow candle. I cut the candle into four pieces, ate the tallow, and reserved the wicks for the last extremity. Before I fell asleep, I fancied I felt something stirring the bed clothes. It was a rat cautiously climbing up the bed rug. On any other occasion, this would have been an unpleasant visitor — but instantly I saw my advantage. I feigned a sound sleep, lay quiet, and set my trap. For, a starving man, I appeal to France, cannot distinguish between a rat and a squirrel. I opened my mouth uncommonly wide, nearly from ear to ear. The hungry rat, attracted by the smell of the tallow, the perfume of which had not evaporated from my lips, softly approached my mouth, and began to lick the remnant, if any remnant there was, of the tallow. I am convinced the rat was as hungry as I was, and from his gentle movements, I am satisfied he designed me no harm ; therefore I have ever since, felt a regret at the foul trick I played him. When the rat had tenderly passed over my upper, he began with my under, lip ; and when he was about midway, directly under my nose, I made a sudden snap, took his whole head into my mouth, and strangled him between my teeth. When the rat was quiet, I dropped him on the floor, and fell asleep.

The next morning the candle was missing, and on being questioned, I replied with great truth, I had no doubt it was eaten, as I had seen a rat in the room.

I now began to think I might probably survive to the end of my engagement, as it was drawing to a close, and I had four candlewicks, well saturated, and a large rat, safely deposited in my trunk.

At this time a strange sight appeared in the neighbourhood. A man with a load of pork, bound for Boston, had lost his way. He came up to our door to ask for directions. I detained him as long as I possibly could, for the sake of beholding the charming swine. My stomach

dilated at the sight, and my teeth began to move. As the man and team moved off, I discovered for the first time, that I was a ventriloquist. There came an audible, distinct voice from the lower region of my stomach, saying, "It is suicide to die of hunger, when food is placed before your eyes. Fly ! cut a collop." "But," said I, "thou shalt not steal." The voice replied, "that law was not made for an empty stomach." I rejoined, "the law has made no exception." "Fool," said the voice, "had you rather eat a rat than a pork steak ?" I confess, I was not entirely convinced ; however, I followed after the team, and slyly slid behind it, and whether feloniously, or justifiably, the Supreme Court can determine, but true it is, with my penknife I cut two as handsome steaks as Eumæus cut from the two porkers with which he regaled Ulysses. O, the beautiful steaks of red and white ! I see them even now in all their allurement. I put my booty in my pocket, and hastened to deposit it in my trunk. Never did time linger so lazily ; the sun appeared to me to be travelling to the east, so impatient was I for night, in order to taste of my dainty ; for it was now more than six weeks since I had had a smack at fresh meat, except that which I had eaten at the schoolroom. Bed-time at length arrived, and I retired, but not sleep, but to the most delightful contemplations. I cut those steaks latitudinally, and longitudinally into more sections than you find marked on the terrestrial globe. Nothing in the world appeared to me so captivating as pork steaks. Had I been a calico painter or paper stainer, the only figures would have been pork steaks. When all was quiet, I arose, opened my trunk, took out my steaks, softly descended to the kitchen, raked open the coals, rubbed the rust off the gridiron, placed my steaks thereon, and soon began to snuff the delicious flavour. The dog who was outside of the house, no less quick-scented, immediately began to bark. For fear of disturbing the family I opened the door, and let him in ; but alas, before I could shut the door, he flew at the steaks, seized one in his mouth, and although I seized him by the neck with one hand, and thrust the other into his mouth, at one gulp he swallowed the whole. While I was contending with the dog, the cat seized the other steak and fled up chamber.

Many a man has succumbed at a less disappointment than this — "but, courage !" said I ; "do not despair, you have still a rat, and four

candlewicks." I retired to bed, and soon began to dream of my steaks ; and when I had eaten them, awoke, and found my lips moving as usual.

The next morning discovered a trait in natural history, which I will here notice, for the satisfaction of the curious. The dog appeared to be sensible he had wronged me. No soothing could induce him to look me in the face. He lost his animation, curled his tail between his legs, and hung his head down to his feet. The next day the dog absconded. At first I attributed this to his sense of honour, then to his sagacity ; he had obtained one taste of fresh meat, and was no longer a domestic animal ; but I was in part deceived, as will quickly appear.

I was now reduced again to great extremity, but was unwilling to depredate on the treasure in my trunk, for I had still a week more to suffer. However, on retiring to rest that night, I determined in the morning to eat two candlewicks, and carry the rat to school and cook it in the intermission. Soon as I awoke and could distinctly see, my wistful eyes turned to my trunk. I partly arose, my eyes still fixed on my trunk, and to my sorrow, I saw a mouse leisurely go down the side. Miserable wretch ! on taking the steaks from the trunk, I had carelessly suffered the clasp of the lock to rest on the ridge of it, and left ample room for a mouse and a cat's paw to plunder me. Both the rat and candlewicks were gone !

Now, indeed, for the first time, my spirits began to fail me. The remembrance of the Lynn lady's expression came over me with a fearful foreboding. I hesitated for a moment to go to school. But as it was a beautiful, bright morning, my official duty urged me on ; and with a heart heavier than all the rest of my body, I pursued my way through the pathless snow-drifts. The crows, my former visitors, with a numerous recruit hovered over my head, uttering ominous language. Instead of "caw, caw," they seemed to me to say, "we are come." At this moment, a whirl of snow nearly engulphed me. My bones trembled in their sockets ; the north wind pierced me through, and shook the casement of my body. My right leg faltered and sunk into a snow pit, and my left leg refused to help it out. My danger was imminent ; for although I had sufficient strength, perhaps, to fight off a crow, an eagle or a vulture in my emaciated state, could have borne me off an unresisting victim. At that moment had an umbrella been at my command, I should have tied

myself to the stick and took my chance to other regions. But, joy ! The spirit of hunger again burst forth in ventriloquism. "See the dog with a rabbit," exclaimed a voice from the lower regions of my stomach. It was true — the noble animal came up to me, bold as a lion, his eyes glistening through tears, his tail lashing each side of his hams ; he laid a prodigious large rabbit at my feet. When the crows saw this, they disappeared, and I saw no more of them. I placed the rabbit in my bosom, and buttoned it within my waistcoat ; and I presume there was room for a dozen more.

This rabbit I took effectual care to secure to myself. On the first opportunity I took off the skin, cut it in four parts, and put them in my pockets, meaning to eat a quarter part daily. But let no hungry man in future say, "this much will I eat, and no more." When I had broiled and eaten one fore quarter, I was more voracious than ever ; and while exerting all my power of restraint, the voice below exclaimed in imagination, "treat every part of your stomach alike !" in short, I broiled and ate the hind quarter ; then the other fore quarter, and lastly the other hind quarter : yet after I had eaten the whole, I thought I had swallowed only the phantom of a rabbit.

Thanks to the dog, I was enabled to linger until Saturday, the twenty-fifth of January ; and then time with his leaden feet released me from my contract with the town agent. No one, before me, ever lived so long in two months. Methuselah might complain of the shortness of life ; not I. A thousand years were crowded into the period of sixty days. After the ceremony of sitting down to an ideal dinner, I arose to depart, left my trunk behind me ; took a bundle in my hand, and took a most cordial farewell. I was thirty-one miles from home. Most fortunately the wind was in my favour, and blew a gallant breeze ; otherwise I should never have reached my door stone. I was reduced to such a gossamer, that Zephyr would have blown me about at pleasure. As it was, I made rapid progress. Had a field of wheat covered the whole distance, I could have skimmed over it without bending a blade. But it was fearful to hear my bones clatter as I ran along the road. The journey, although delightful, was in one respect unpleasant ; for my incredible fleetness, and the large bundle in my hand, rendered me so suspicious that ever and anon the people cried, "stop thief." Yet this worried me not ; the hyppogriff

could not have overtaken me. I saw nothing, horse or sleigh, that I did not instantly overtake, and as quickly leave far behind. Indeed I knew my life was an imminent danger from two quarters ; therefore I heeded not the ventriloquist, who exclaimed, at every tavern I passed, "stop, O, stop ! and send a message to the cavern below." "No," said I, "life depends on speed, I would not stop to feast with an Alderman." In truth, I was fearful, if a physician should see me, he would seize me as a stray anatomy ; and to render me perfectly helpless, would dislocate my arms, pin up my tongue, and fasten me to the wall of his dissecting room. Had I stopped at a tavern, I might have been arrested for a mummy, shut up in a lemon box, sent to Boston, sold to Greenwood, placed in the New-England Museum beside the little black Egyptian, and there exhibited among a thousand notions.

I was a quarter past five o'clock, when I reached home. I opened the door ; the family were at tea ; before I could make myself known, they all fled in consternation, and left the tea-table and all its contents to me. There was but one who ventured to examine me, and she immediately recognized me and burst into tears. In a few weeks I recovered my personal identity, and returned to college, protesting in favour of country schoolmasters, against public auctions and rye coffee.

The Late Joseph Natterstrom

— The Original Text —

THE

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JULY, 1831.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

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THE LATE JOSEPH NATTERSTROM

THE great wealth of the late Joseph Natterstrom, of New-York, was connected with several remarkable incidents, which, under the pen of a writer of ordinary imagination, might grow into a romantic tale.

The merchant of the United States frequently traces the origin of his prosperity to foreign climes. He holds a magic wand in his hand which, reaches to the extremity of the globe ; and, if he waves it judiciously, he levies, from all quarters of the world, princely revenues. The restless sea and its richest contents, desolate islands and the most circuitous rivers, the cultivated territory and the interminable wilderness, are as much the merchant's, as the rain and sunshine, the warm breezes and the fattening dews, are the property of the husbandman. But the embryo fortune of Mr. Natterstrom was not of mercantile origin. It came from the heart of Arabia, and grew out of an incursion of the Wheehabites — a reforming and fanatic sect of Mahometans, who date from Abdul Wheehab, of the last century. This man, like Martin Luther, thought a reformation in morals and discipline had become necessary.

About the year 1790, Ebn Beg and Ibrahim Hamet were returning home from Mecca to Abou Jbee, a village not far from the Rumleah mountains. They had united religion and trade together, as is sometimes done here by the sons of Mercury. In performing their pilgrimage to Mecca with a caravan, they furthered their temporal and eternal interests ; for on their return from Mecca, they encountered a

party of those children of the desert, who believe they have a divine right to all the goods of this world, which they can conquer ; and what they spare, they credit to their magnanimity and generosity, and herein they do not greatly differ from most other people. But the caravan of Beg and Hamet proved too powerful for the children of Hagar, who became the prey of the stranger. The spoils of that day enriched Beg and Hamet, for those Arabs had shortly before enriched themselves at the expense of another caravan.

With joyful hearts these two men approached home, having left the caravan at the intersection of the road that leads to Aleppo ; rejoicing that their danger was over, that they had honorably obtained an accession of wealth, and that they had become entitled to the coveted name of Hadgee. But there soon came a blast from the desert which converted the shady spot, with which they had encompassed themselves, into a sand-heap. When within a day's journey from home, they met a man whom they knew. It was Ali Beker. Said they, "Is there peace at Abou Jbee ?" "God is great, there is peace at Abou Jbee," said Ali Beker, "the peace of the grave." He turned his head away, and said no more. Their hearts withered within them. Soon after they met another man ; as he approached them, he looked at them earnestly for some time, and then said, "Do I behold the unhappy Beg and Hamet !" and he tore off his turban and flung it on the ground. They passed on, neither Beg nor Hamet speaking to each other. At length they approached the confines of their village, and learned the whole. The Wheehabites had been there, and, being powerfully resisted and nearly overcome, they left nothing but a heap of ruins to tell the story. Beg and Hamet were now alone on the face of the earth. They made a circuit around Abou Jbee, took a last look, and passed on to Smyrna. There they remained some time, and studied the French and English languages.

From Smyrna they sailed to Marseilles ; and there they assumed the European dress, and studiously conformed to the manners of that people — a seemingly impossible change, from a Turk to a Frenchman. From Marseilles they proceeded on foot to Paris, and, after remaining there a few months, they saw such strange mistakes made, that, fearing they might lose their heads, without a chance for explanation, they passed on to London, where they felt quite at home. There

they remained during the winter of 1793. Chancing to meet Captain Dixon of the New-York Packet, who had been in the Smyrna trade, they became attached to him from an accidental expression which fell from his lips at the New-York Coffee. Some one had asserted that there were not twenty merchants in the city of New-York, who could pass for genuine merchants on the Royal Exchange of London — such was the mercantile honor of Englishmen. An appeal was made to Capt. Dixon, who, waving a direct answer, said, "If you wish to find mercantile honor in perfection, surpassing the comprehension of an European, you must go to Turkey. A Turkish merchant's word is better than a Christian merchant's bond ; the word is sacred ; the bond may be disputed. I have seen many a Turk, in whose skin you might sew up half a dozen very decent Christians." "Allah !" said Beg, in rapture, "an infidel has spoken the truth ! I wish the Prophet could hear that !" This incident led to an acquaintance with Capt. Dixon, who gave them such an account of the New World, as excited their curiosity to see it. Accordingly they sailed soon after, with Capt. Dixon, for New-York.

Beg and Hamet now began to speak the English language pretty fluently ; and concealing that they were Turks, they passed through the principal cities and towns, unconscious of the fact, for very decent Christians. Among the clans of New-England they passed current for two Dutchmen of New-York or Pennsylvania ; and at Baltimore they were supposed to be two Scotchmen, so prudently and discreetly did they demean themselves. They spent a year in the United States, the chief of the time at New-York ; and during that time they found ample food for their minds. Hamet told Capt. Dixon, that he had brought him not only to a new world, but to a new race of men ; a people not really civilized, yet far from savage ; not very good, nor altogether bad ; not generally intelligent, nor altogether ignorant ; a calculating people, who reckoned up their rights as often as they did their money. "In fine," said Hamet, "I perceive this is a very young country, but a very old people."

As Beg and Hamet travelled through the states, they were surprised to find so much order and tranquillity among a people without any apparent government ; for, during nearly the whole year, there was no appearance of any government. In divers provinces, each of them bigger than the pachalic of Damascus, a few men would meet once a

year, wind up the government like a clock, and leave it to run at random ; for, after the public agents, like a dispersed caravan, had hastened home, all signs of government vanished. "How different," said Beg, "from all other countries ! where the first object of government is, to make itself seen, heard, and felt ; whereas, among this strange people, you can neither see, hear, nor feel the government."

Beg was greatly diverted in attending a lawsuit at Boston. "There were five reverend judges," he said, "with twelve men to help them, aided by four counsellors of the law, who consumed a whole day, and part of a night, in settling a case of twenty-five dollars ; and" said Beg laughing, "the next morning the jury, as they called the twelve men, came solemnly into court, and said they could not agree, and never should agree ; whereas," said Beg, "one of four cadis alone would have settled it in twenty minutes."

A few days previous to Beg and Hamet's return to Smyrna, as Beg was passing down Wall-street, he heard a man say, as he was leaving one of the offices, "I don't believe there is an honest man in New-York." "O, yes, there is," said another, as he was passing, "there is Joe Natterstrom." At that moment, an accountable trance-like feeling came over Beg, and a voice, which seemed to him audible, said, "Beg, before you leave the country, see Natterstrom and prove his honesty." Beg had not proceeded far, before he saw two men in conversation on the side walk ; and, as he passed them, he overheard one of them say, "Can I trust him with so much money ? are you sure he is honest ?" "Yes," said the other, "honest as Joe Natterstrom." This second incident, to a Mussulman, who believed in predestination, was as imperative as the voice of the Prophet. Beg responded aloud, "I will see Natterstrom, and prove his honesty." Presently after he heard two men disputing, in Broadway, with no little passion, and, as he approached them, one said, "I will refer it to Joe Natterstrom." "Agreed," said the other. "So," said Beg, "this Natterstrom is also a man of judgement. I will certainly see Natterstrom and prove his honesty."

The next day, Beg inquired for Natterstrom, and soon learned that Natterstrom had become a proverb. "As honest as Joe Natterstrom," was in every body's mouth ; but he could find no one, who could give him any account of Joe Natterstrom. All agreed that no man in New-

York was better known than Joe Natterstrom, yet no one, of whom Beg inquired, could identify him, or tell where he resided. "Pray, Sir," said Beg, to a merchant on the Exchange, "can you point out to me Joseph Natterstrom ?" "No," said he, "I cannot ; but his name and reputation are perfectly familiar to me ; ask almost any man, and he will tell you where he is to be seen." To the same question, another replied, "I have often heard of honest Joe Natterstrom ; he must be known to almost every body ; but for my part, I do not recollect ever to have seen him ; ask that gentleman, across the way, in a drab coat ; he knows ever body." Beg, then accosted the gentleman with the drab coat. "Pray, Sir, can you point to me Joseph Natterstrom ?" "Honest Joe Natterstrom, do you mean ?" "Yes, Sir," said Beg, "honest Joe Natterstrom." "O, yes, I know Natterstrom," said the gentleman in drab, "every body knows Natterstrom ; there is no man in New-York better known than Natterstrom." "Sir," said Beg, "can you describe him to me ?" "I would have affirmed, a minute ago," said the gentleman in drab, "that I well knew honest Joe Natterstrom, but I must confess I cannot describe him to you, and do not distinctly recollect that I ever saw him, but almost everybody knows Natterstrom." Beg was astonished. "Here," said he, "is a man honest to a proverb, and no one knows him. Honest men must be very plenty in New-York."

Beg now thought Natterstrom must be known at some of the banks ; and he inquired at the City Bank, if Joseph Natterstrom ever transacted business there ? "Do you mean honest Joe Natterstrom ?" said the cashier. "Yes," said Beg. "No," replied the cashier, "but we should be happy to accommodate Mr. Natterstrom if he wants a loan." The cashier of the Manhattan Bank said he had paid many a check drawn in favor of Joseph Natterstrom, but he did not recollect ever to have seen Natterstrom ; nor did he know at what bank he negotiated his business ; but said, "Joseph Natterstrom can have any accommodation at this bank." In short, Natterstrom was known by reputation, at every bank in the city, and it seems, could have commanded their funds, but none of the officers knew him.

The next Sunday, Beg was certain he had obtained a clew to the person of Natterstrom. The clergyman, on whose preaching Beg attended, (for, though a Mussulman, Beg believed a full third of what he

heard), spoke of Natterstrom by name, as a man of such integrity that his name had become synonymous with honesty. But, to Beg's surprise, the next day, the preacher told him he did not know the man, nor where he resided, though he supposed he was the most familiarly known man in New-York : for he had often heard the children in the streets mention the name of honest Joe Natterstrom. Beg, now in despair of ever finding Natterstrom, began to suppose he was an imaginary being ; and, as there was not an honest real man in New-York, the people had conjured up a phantom, and given it the name of Joe Natterstrom. Yet this was not the fact ; for a few days after, as Beg was walking through Pearl-street, he saw two men in conversation, and heard one of them say ; "There goes Joe Natterstrom ; let it be settled by honest Joe Natterstrom."

Beg now followed Natterstrom in order to obtain a knowledge of his person. "Allah !" said Beg, after he had obtained a distinct view, "he has the mark of the Prophet ; he would not be ashamed to look the Sultan in the face !" The next day, Beg, with studied secrecy, Hamet himself ignorant of it, disguised himself like an old man tottering on the brink of the grave. He painted his face more cadaverous than the natural look of death. Then, taking a bag of gold in his hand, he sought an opportunity about twilight, when Natterstrom was just leaving his compting room, and slowly opening the door, he reached, with an apparent feeble arm and trembling hand, the bag to Natterstrom, and said only, "Occupy till Ebn Beg comes," disappearing in a moment, leaving Natterstrom in reasonable doubt, whether the occurrence was natural or supernatural. However, he immediately untied the bag, and, to his astonishment, counted five hundred English guineas.

Natterstrom stood some time in a revery, many unutterable things probably passing in his mind. He then reached his leger, and entered therein, "October 21st, 1794, Received of Mr. Eben Beck five hundred guineas to be occupied for his benefit." Beg and Hamet, the next week, left the United States, and returned by the way of Liverpool to Smyrna, where Beg established himself as a merchant.

The next morning Natterstrom opened a new account and placed the money to the credit of Ebenezer Beck, considering himself merely as the agent of Beck. From that day Natterstrom kept Beck's concerns and his own entirely distinct ; and from that day Natterstrom

was esteemed the most fortunate man in the world, but Natterstrom pronounced himself the most unfortunate. The money of Beg all prospered. It was like a snow-ball in a damp day rolling down to the white mountains. It doubled and trebled itself like an assemblage of clouds driven by contrary winds ; while Natterstrom's own property was dissipated like a mist in the summer. He seldom saw his own money but once ; the winds, the waves, and rocks in the sea, all conspired against Natterstrom. The same tempest which wrecked Natterstrom's ship on the rock Rodondo, drove Beg's into a famished port in the West Indies, where they weighed silver against flour. The commissions on Beg's adventure retrieved Natterstrom's late loss and gave him the command of a great sum as the agent of Beg.

Natterstrom was among the first to embark in trade to the Levant. The situation of the commercial world was most inviting to the commerce of the United States. All the world was a new milch cow to the merchant. While all Europe were fighting for this cow, and one nation was seizing her by the horns, another by the extremity, a third by her fore leg, and a fourth by her hind leg, the merchant of the United States was sitting down under her, milking, quietly as a milkmaid. Natterstrom freighted two ships, one on his own, the other on Beck's account, and sent them to Smyrna. Capt. Dixon commanded Beck's and Capt. Hathaway, Natterstrom's ship. On their arrival in the roadstead of Smyrna, they hoisted the flag of the United States, which excited no little curiosity on shore, for very few of the Smyrniots had ever seen our national colors. It soon came to Beg's ears that two ships, from the new world, deeply laden, were at anchor in the offing. He was immediately on board the nearest, which proved to be Capt. Hathaway's ; and learning they were both from New-York, he was greatly delighted. Beg was invited into the cabin, and, at his request, was shown an invoice of the cargo. When he had perused it, he cast it on the table, and said, "I pity the owner ; every article is a drug here, and would better suit the New-York market." "That is Natterstrom's ill-luck," said Capt. Hathaway ; "if he had shipped gold, it would have transmuted itself into brass ; if he held in his hands the rain of heaven, it would descend in mildew. Whatever he touches, with his own hand, he poisons ; but whatever he touches, with Beck's hand, he converts to gold. I dare say,

Beck's cargo will turn to good account." "Natterstrom," said Berg, "Natterstrom, what Natterstrom ? I was once in New-York, and knew a Mr. Natterstrom ; they called him, honest Joe Natterstrom." "The same, the same," said Capt. Hathaway ; "who could have imagined that Joe Natterstrom was known to a merchant of Smyrna ! He is the owner of this unhappy cargo, which is his whole property." "And whose is the other ship and cargo ?" said Beg. "That," said Capt. Hathaway, "is more than any living man knows. Natterstrom himself is ignorant of the owner. He says he is the agent of one Ebenezer Beck, and, as no one doubts what Natterstrom says, the property is all taxed to Ebenezer Beck. This Beck owns a large real and personal estate, particularly a valuable wharf, in New-York ; and as nobody knows who the man Beck is, and, as the estate has thus strangely slipped away from the lawful owner, the public have called it Beckman's Slip. Heaven grant that this same Beck do not ultimately prove the ruin of poor Natterstrom." "It may be so," said Beg ; "a man may be wise for another, and a fool for himself. Let us now go on board Beck's ship, and examine his cargo." "That is needless," said Capt. Hathaway ; "here is an invoice of Beck's cargo." Beg examined it, and exclaimed, "Admirable ! It is worth half Smyrna. This Beck is a lucky fellow ; he was born under the sun ; his lamp will never go out. He must be a favorite of the Prophet, and was nursed under a tree that sheds its fruit, when ripe, into his lap." Beg then went on board of the other ship, and, to his surprise and great joy, beheld his old friend Capt. Dixon. After an oriental salutation, Beg mentioned his interview with Capt. Hathaway, and lamented the unhappy voyage of Natterstrom. "And who," said Beg, "may be the fortunate owner of your cargo ?" "That," said Capt. Dixon, "is a mystery, deep as the hidden springs of your deserts. If honest Joe Natterstrom speaks truth, the fountain is still sealed. He is an agent of an unknown being. Natterstrom, though he is obliged to live and appear like a pacha, asserts that he is a poor man, only the agent of Beck, and dependent on his commissions. He affirms that all the property in his hands is one Eben Beck's ; and when questioned who Beck may be, he says he don't know, he never saw him but once, then in the twilight, and that, several years since." "But," said Beg, "is there any doubt that Natterstrom would surrender this property to the man Beck, if he should

come and demand it ?" "That, indeed, remains to be proved," said Capt. Dixon, "and will forever remain a doubt, for there is no probability that Beck will ever appear. Many believe that Natterstrom, from some strange whim, or dubious motive, has fabricated the whole story of this Eben Beck." "It may, nevertheless, all be true," said Beg ; "and Natterstrom may be the honest agent of Eben Beck. He is no friend to virtue who doubts its existence. The case may be as Natterstrom affirms ; therefore wrong, to prejudge. To attribute a bad motive to a good action is to sow tares among wheat. Is it so very extraordinary that a man should be honest ? Our Prophet could summon thousands of the faithful, whose least merit would be their integrity. To return a pledge, to keep sacred a deposite, to do equity where the law would excuse you, in the estimation of the Prophet are all natural ; little better than instinct. I fear you wrong Natterstrom, in doubting his integrity. Mere honesty is only a silent virtue. Your Prophet and ours have, each of them, many humble followers, who, like the potato of your country, never raise their heads above the surface. Yet the potato is worth the whole tribe of flowers that sport in the breeze. The English, who trade to the Red Sea, trust whole cargoes to our people, who carry them to the heart of Asia, and all the security they demand is a token, a crook of a Mussulman's finger. If Natterstrom has proclaimed himself the steward of another man, has he not pledged himself to a surrender when that man appears and reclaims his own ?"

"I wish Eben Beck was in the Red sea," said Capt. Dixon, "for it is evident, whether a real being, or a phantom, he is the evil genius of honest Joe Natterstrom." "But now to business," said Beg. "Give me the refusal of your cargo, and, I will freight both vessels back with such products as you may order." This accomplished, both ships returned to New-York, deeply laden with the richest products of the East.

When it appeared that Beck's ship had performed a prosperous voyage, and that Natterstrom's was a desperate concern, he was disheartened ; all his thoughts turned, inwardly, to one dark idea. Strange things passed in his mind. He remembered the pale look of the person, the feeble arm and trembling hand, that reached to him the bag of gold. The apparent old age and the decrepitude of the man, now fixed his attention more strangely, than in the moment of reality. The man of

1794 seemed to re-appear to him in full life ; and an impression, that he might be the passive agent of an unholy principal, overpowered the man. He began to hate his own name, without being reconciled to that of Beck. However, the course of events, and the facility of business, all tended to sink the name of Natterstrom into that of Beck ; so that Natterstrom was frequently addressed as Ebenezer Beck, by foreign merchants, who really supposed they were merchandising with the man. Indeed, he began to be called in New-York, Ebenezer Beck ; so that, at length, he willingly assumed the name. He, therefore, relinquished all business in the name of Natterstrom ; took down his sign on his warehouse, and substituted, in place thereof, that of Ebenezer Beck. Thus, honest Joe Natterstrom sunk into Ebenezer Beck ; and many of the present generation, who suppose they have seen Ebenezer Beck a thousand times, never heard of the name of Joseph Natterstrom. So hasty is time to bury the past ; so closely does oblivion press on the footsteps of time.

Under the name of Ebenezer Beck, Natterstrom long flourished, one of the most eminent merchants of New-York. Although he employed thousands of men, and came in contact with the whole mass of civil society, no man was ever heard to complain of him ; he was the counterpart of the late Mr. Gray of Boston.

After many successful voyages to Smyrna, Beck exclaimed, one day, in the hearing of Capt. Dixon, "Lord, remember poor Joseph Natterstrom ; but as for Ebenezer Beck, stay thy hand, for he has enough !" This being related to Beg, the last time Capt. Dixon was at Smyrna, "Enough !" said Beg, "he is the first man that ever cried enough !" "But," said Capt. Dixon, "if the wealth is not his own, but one Ebenezer Beck's, he exclaimed, enough, for another man, not for himself." "True," said Beg, "it is so ; yet, it seems to confirm his integrity, if he did not apply the expression to himself."

Beg now thought it time to see Natterstrom ; and, he prepared to visit the United States. Accordingly, he embarked a second time with Capt. Dixon, for New-York. On his arrival, he pondered a long time, how he should discover himself to Natterstrom. At length, he resolved to appear before him in the same disguise, in which he appeared at his compting-room in 1794, thirty years before. He now prepared himself

for a meeting ; and, having ascertained that Natterstrom and his family were going to a country seat, at Flushing, he placed himself in the way, and sat down, near the middle of the road, near the Dutch church. With one hand, he supported himself with a staff ; and the other was half extended, as if in dubious expectation of charity. When the horses of Natterstrom's carriage approached Beg, they suddenly stopped and trembled, as if spell-bound. The coachman turned to Natterstrom, and said, "Here, sir, is a miserable object, so unhuman, that the horses tremble at his sight." "Eternal God !" said Natterstrom, "that is Eben Beck ! The day of doubt is passed ; and, if that is a human being, I am happy ; otherwise, I have been thirty years under enchantment." In an instant, Natterstrom leaped from the carriage, and approached Beg. "Thou art Eben Beck," said Natterstrom. "Dost thou appear to me a miserable beggar, or a mysterious being, unallied to this world, and all its concerns ? Speak, for I am Joseph Natterstrom, and have occupied till Eben Beck has come." "How hast thou occupied ?" said Beg, austerely. "I have occupied," said Natterstrom, "until thy five hundred guineas have become more than five hundred thousand. Arise, and take a seat in this, thy carriage, for it is thine ; see thy name on the panel ; and let me accompany thee to thy beautiful mansion at Becksville."

Beg ascended the carriage, seated himself, sat calmly, and said nothing. Natterstrom, though full, even to anguish, was silence-struck at this strange occurrence ; and thus all was quiet, until they arrived at Beck's country seat. Natterstrom now proposed a change of raiment, which Beg declined, observing, he was too old to change his habits ; he had come a long distance to settle his affairs, and was desirous of returning home to his own country. "When canst thou settle with me ?" asked Beg. "To-day," replied Natterstrom. "But how canst thou settle the concerns of thirty years, in one day !" "I have only," said Natterstrom, "to hand thee a bundle of papers, and the business is done." "Explain thyself, Mr. Natterstrom, for I am an ignorant man." "All thy property is in thy own name ; thy real estate is registered, thy ships are registered, thy notes of hand, thy bonds and mortgages, all are payable to thyself ; thy bank stock is all certified to Eben Beck ; and all thy other personal property is in thy day book and leger. Otherwise, how could

Eben Beck receive his own, if Joseph Natterstrom had died before Eben Beck came back ?" "But how canst thou distinguish between thy own and my own ? Joseph Natterstrom has not become poor, while Eben Beck has become rich ?" "Joseph Natterstrom has become poor, and has lived many years under the shadow of Eben Beck ; and has rejoiced, in the sunshine of his prosperity ; for to rejoice in the prosperity of another is to partake of it. But now, all is Eben Beck's ; if Joseph Natterstrom retains anything, he wrongs Eben Beck." "And art thou ready to resign all ?" "All." "And what wilt thou have left ?" "Myself." "True," said Beg, "Joseph Natterstrom will remain, and a man's best wealth ought to be himself."

The next day, Natterstrom resigned all, and Beg took all. In one day, all was settled. From great splendor and apparent opulence, Joseph Natterstrom was reduced to nothing. From that day, Beg never saw Natterstrom. He remained in New-York about six months, continued his disguise, lived meanly, and encouraged the opinion that he was a mysterious miser. The experiment on Natterstrom having succeeded to Beg's satisfaction, he was now desirous of returning home to Smyrna ; but, first, he executed his will, which, for brevity was remarkable. Thus ; "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet. I, Ebn Beg, of Smyrna, known in the city of New-York as Eben Beck, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do make this my last will and testament. First, I devise to Joseph Natterstrom, my late agent, and to his heirs and assigns, all my real estate in the United States. Secondly, I give and bequeath to said Natterstrom, all my personal property, both in Europe and in the United States." This will, correctly executed, Beg deposited with Capt. Dixon, who, now, for the first time, was made acquainted with the long-sleeping secret. By the aid of Capt. Dixon, Beg now appeared to sicken, languish, and die. His funeral was performed, and his decease was publicly noticed, very little to his credit. The good natured Beg smiled at this, and soon after sailed for Smyrna.

Capt. Dixon now presented the will to Natterstrom ; he read it ; and for a moment, his well-balanced mind began to totter. He was now deeply impressed, that, for thirty years, he had been under a supernatural influence, but as it appeared to him to be that kind of influence which one good spirit might have over another, he retained the name of

Eben Beck, to the day of his death, as well from pleasant associations, as from public sanction ; but his real name was Joseph Natterstrom, as is well known to many aged people now living in New-York.

The Origin of Chemistry

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THE

NEW-ENGLAND MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1834.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

SALUTATORY.

With hearty greeting to our Friends we come,
At the younger year's birth-day, to give
Our [illegible] to all, and eke our leaves to wear,
And pray ye all long here [illegible] live,
And ever [illegible] that ye may thrive.

The olde sire, Time, with [illegible] gilded wing,
Hath overflown the paths of [illegible] ,—
But, truth! his scythe [illegible] swing,
And [illegible] his [illegible] chains [illegible]!
He [illegible] on some kingdomes doth let fall,
While yet [illegible] his tread some [illegible] rise.
Change, [illegible] he loves, and [illegible] on all
Through the [illegible] he flies,
Ne cares for mortals' praises, nor heeds their cries.

Him watch we, as he [illegible] his ceaseless way,
And of [illegible] straight to [illegible] say;
[illegible] are his deeds, [illegible] in our lay,
Alike his acts the legends that we bring;
He gives us [illegible], and oft we feele his sting.

Upon his pinions doth he bear along
Man's glorious cause, and spreads
Knowledge that makes the weakest strong,
And levels with the crowde earth's crowned heads,
And human spirits with angelic weds.

THE
NEW-ENGLANG MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1834.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

THE ORIGIN OF CHEMISTY,

A MANUSCRIPT, RECENTLY FOUND IN AN OLD TRUNK.

In the year 1793, during my travels, I sojourned a few days at a London tavern, near to the Parliament House. In the room I occupied, there was a statue of a late Lord Mayor, in the rear of which a very slender man might, if he pleased, enclose himself. An idle whim led me to enter this statue ; and immediately after, one of the attendants opened the door of my room, and observed, "Gentlemen, this room is empty, you can have this :" I was thus in prison, and was constrained to be a silent auditor and spectator of the following discussion and novel scene : —

I had seen all three of the gentlemen before ; one was then a member of the National Convention, another a member of the House of Commons, and the third, a well-known citizen of the United States. As soon as they were seated, the French member said, "The times are propitious ; I foresee, the close of the century will be memorable in our annals. The human race are doomed to a new conflict." "Yes," said the

Commoner ; "we shall have, for a few years, pleasant sport ; but if we do not contrive other engines, we shall, ere long, be laughed at, even in novels." "True," said the Trans-atlantic gentleman ; "I heard, the other day, his majesty pronounced from the pulpit, no reality, but only a metaphor." "The division, over which you preside," said the French member, "will, in the next century, exhibit stranger things than that. At present let us first consider what is best to be done in Europe, under existing circumstances." "Yes," said the Commoner, "a happy thought ! The fire in France will soon expire for want of fuel. If I enter into Mr. ——, and incite him to declare war, there will be full employ for all of our family." "A happy thought, indeed," said the French member, "and nothing easier to be done ; for, with England, peace is only a truce. If you can persuade —— to commence war on France, I foresee that England will ruin herself, even to utter bankruptcy." "I will enter into ——, this night," said the Commoner, "and when he has ruined England, I claim the privilege of entering into the Parliament, and through them of erecting a monument to his memory ; for our servants deserve a reward." "Be it so," said the French member ; "In the mean time, I will raise up in France, a little stripling, who shall reverse the whole order of nature, who shall drink blood like water, and who shall bury the sons before the fathers have grown old. I will sanctify the days of Robespierre ; he was but an epicure, for he drank but one kind of blood, and his little red rivulet shall be lost in the Danube and Beressina. By the help of a northern University, I will exalt this man to the firmament of heaven, and place him among the stars ; and so long as he shall drink the blood of the earth, and seize the plunder of all nations, he shall be glorious, and honored, and obeyed ; but when plunder shall fail, and the issues of blood close, his own slaves will have no further use for him ; and his fall will be terrible, and more mean than that of a felon. Hence, we are always sure of that nation. The best materials for our purpose lie there always ready. Very different from the Dutch or English, whom you must beat, in order to make them feel ; while the French nestle in their sleep, and sleep with their eyes open." "I see it all," said the Trans-atlantic ; "and only lament that I shall have nothing to do." "Not so," said the French member, "you can do more than the three plagues — war, pestilence, and famine. You can secretly consume

the liver, you can enter into every department of the legislative government, and legalize poisoning. By a popular tariff you can dispense a quart of poison cheaper than a quart of milk, so that the parent shall substitute the one for the other, and change the beverage of nature, for a burning internal fury, which shall thirst for its own torment, and thus the rising generation shall grow up volunteers in our service. Your government will aid us ; all wrongs first originate in government. 'Be it enacted,' frequently accomplishes all our work. It is true, the part you are to act, on the other side of the Atlantic, will not be so brilliant as ours ; but it will be more effectual. The present scene in the act of this world's drama will soon close, and the little meteor, which I shall raise up to trouble the nations, will soon disappear, and the world will again repose in quiet. England will then only begin to perish, when the war in Europe, which she has kindled, has burned out. But when the temple of Janus is shut, we must open another temple. It has long been said that I keep an idle workshop. It shall be so no longer. Neither hands nor minds shall know any respite. I will set the world to work. I will construct a wheel, that shall annihilate both space and time ; and he will be a dull one, who cannot, in extremity, prove an alibi. I tell you, my friend," addressing the Commoner, "as sure as I am in London, and that you know has become a proverb, the nineteenth century shall see two extremes meet, in England, and then you may have a holiday. But you," addressing the Trans-atlantic, "must wait patiently, and weave a wicker work, and confound the compass in the United States, and then the people will be like pigeons in an eclipse of the sun. As soon as the Plutocrasy gains the ascendancy, you shall then go by steam : for they will nurse as many demagogues as their different interests may require, and then the cauldron of corruption will boil more merrily than we have ever seen in Europe. Our friend Jugurtha came too soon. If he had lived in your department, he might have accomplished his object with half the trouble he could have effected it at Rome ; for Jugurtha would only have to say, 'Seize the carcass,' and 'Divide the spoils.' Without the trouble of a civil war, a little strip of white paper, with a name written thereon, shall do more in one day than contending armies could do in a year. I tell you, in that day, in the midst of universal peace, one corruption shall only give place to another still more foul, and the time will come when

it will be more dangerous to detect, than to commit, a crime ; and if the public treasury should be plundered of millions no one will dare to expose the fact ; but he who can throw the broadest mantle over corruption will be the idol of the day ; and a man shall be estimated, not by the good he has done, but by the evil he can do. I tell you the time will come, when honesty and integrity will be a disqualification, and it will no longer be asked, 'Is he honest, is he faithful ?' but, 'Can he counteract, is he clever, and will he conceal ?' Popularity shall be the test of good and evil, and demagogues shall reign supreme over the minds of men. Glorious times ! I foresee the period when the innocent and the just shall tremble, and the guilty sleep in quiet. Therefore, do you rest easy for the present ; I will answer for Europe, even into the next century."

"I know," said the Trans-atlantic, "that the lever, with which your Majesty works in Europe, can find a purchase at any moment. But I do not so readily perceive how it can reach across the Atlantic. The Commoner can easily enter into Mr. ——, and Mr. ——, can easily enter into Parliament, and the work is done. Your Majesty, in times past, had only to enter into a French courtezan, and the whole executive government was immediately under your own control. It requires few tools to work with in Europe, but many in the United States."

"Tools !" said the French member ; "the more tools, the better your work is done. You will have a wider field for display than Europe affords. There are religion, politics, trade, legislation, ambition, and offices to feed every grade of ambition. You can easily make religion a ridiculous farce ; and where you cannot make it a ridiculous, you can make it a solemn, farce."

"That will do very well for Europe," said the Trans-atlantic. "Your Majesty can undertake for Italy and France, and you," addressing the Commoner, "can manage Great-Britain. But I do not perceive, at present, how I can manage the United States."

"Nothing easier," said the Commoner ; "I know the materials. Not the clouds of heaven can assume such shapes as we shall soon see. Swedenborg will soon be reckoned a sound man among them, and Calvin and Edwards moderate. The most mad will be considered the most sober. There will be groaning, and dancing, and singing, and

crying, and canting, and laughing. Men will serve God from pure spite. Day and night will be too short, and churches too contracted, for the service. The hills and the forests shall re-echo with sounds that shall send in terror the wild beasts to their recesses. Politics may play chequer-work with the interests and passions of men, but with religion you can poison the blood, and spread a contagion beyond the reach of medicine."

"True," said the French member, "the world never offered the like materials. You will soon see, in all trades and professions, action, and counter-action, and re-action, and underrating, and overrating, and adulterating, and undermining, and overreaching, and misrepresenting, and falsifying, and simulating, and dissimulating, but no cheating ; that word, by common consent, shall submerge. So that when an honest man shall tell the truth, he shall be more strongly suspected of deceit, and pure simplicity shall have the credit of the deepest subtlety. When I shall have tested my experiments in Europe, I will go over and assist the Trans-atlantic ; there will be sufficient work for both of us. Legislation will hereafter be our hand-maid, and will accomplish much of that which has been directly laid to my charge. With little management you will shortly see the best men treated like the worst, and the reverse. A premium will be offered for crimes, and palaces erected wherein to put crimes to nurse. It will be more safe to commit a great crime than a small one : and the public will be more ready to sympathize with detected villainy, than with suffering virtue. The best laws will be vetoed, and the worse sanctioned. There shall be freedom of the tongue and slavery in the heart ; full liberty of speech, but no liberty of action. In short, there shall be repentance, without restitution. But, previous to the extinction of all moral feeling, a dead body shall be of more worth than a living soul. Joy to our brotherhood ! when the dead shall no longer rest in their graves : and to the eye of sensibility an ancient grave-yard shall be the most beautiful landscape."

"Yes," said the Commoner, "in those days the Trans-atlantic will hold no sinecure. I perceive that toleration, in the United States, will be the parent of all intolerable things."

"True," said the French member, "the next century will be an improvement on all past ages. In Europe the days of Herold shall be

remembered with regret. The funeral of a child shall be the most gratifying sight in the universe — to a parent : While in the United States it shall be thought worthy of death to enlighten the mind, or to teach a child to read : and, in the most moral state of the Union, it shall be penal, even to imprisonment, to teach a black child that he has a white soul. I tell you, the United States shall be the grand asylum of the *debris* of the world, — the general rendezvous of all evil spirits, — a mint of all manner of base coin. It shall be in the power of a tailor to send the grossest felon into the politest company of the politest city of the North. So that, in those days, we shall be relieved from sending any missionaries there."

Here, the Trans-atlantic shook his head, and winked at the Commoner, and with his fore-finger pressed the white of his eye down to his lip. "Impossible !" said he ; "your Majesty is deriding our simplicity. No people, in their senses, can ever arrive at such a state of society."

"Why not ?" said the French member. "Set the minds of men loose, and they will always run away with their bodies. The fairest outlines may easily be filled up with the foulest objects. A republic is either the best or the worst of all administered governments. Rogues will generally govern honest men, from a corporation to a kingdom. Just look across the channel, and see what I have done. I protest, I was sick of my own work, and have come here, for a moment, to recreate. If my own empire was not better governed, I would immediately cut and run."

"But to return to Europe, and the old world. Our empire will not really commence, before it is repeated thrice, throughout the world, *'All's fair.'* When *All's fair* becomes a first principle, then the people of this world will afford us a respite. Or rather, when Religion, Politics, and Trade, have the same meaning, and *All's fair* becomes the universal text, then our work is done. Of the credit of the one," addressing himself to the Commoner, "you have already the honor. That has been publicly avowed by one of your chancellors. The honor of the other will belong to you," addressing the Trans-atlantic, "although it has not yet been openly avowed, it will be in the next century. With respect to trade, it will require all our ingenuity to establish the principle of *All's fair* ; but once established, the people of this world will do our business at their own

expense. However, the time is not yet ; we have much to do. The Turks are an obstinate race ; their honesty is proverbial ; but the United States will one day find their way to the Black Sea."

"Let us now," said the French member, "discuss the subject of this meeting, without delay ; for my friends in the National Convention are bewildered, and begin to think I have deserted them."

"We are all attention," said the Commoner and Trans-atlantic.

"Listen, then. If we wish to hold our own in this world, we must enter into all trades and professions, and proceed, *pari passu*, with the arts and sciences. With respect to divinity, that stands well, and will continue to do so : I believe it would puzzle either of us to invent a new system. But in law, we must contrive that justice shall cost more than it is worth ; and hence, in England, and in the United States, we have a strong hold in special pleading. The time was, when the want of a comma would nullify the best cause. Those days are passed ; but we are fully compensated in the multiplication of laws, for every new law favors us, helps perplexity, adds to litigation, and human misery. We never gained a better point, when in England we reared the principle, that the greater the truth the greater the libel ; for the time will come when, in England, no one will dare reproach a convicted felon. In physic, we shall always keep in advance of the age, as we can fabricate new diseases more readily than remedies can be discovered. Murray and special pleading are our two key-stones of law and physic. But a new science is arising, which we could not, in reason, have ever expected to have seen. It will not unfold, in all its glory, until the next century. Then, the principle, that All's fair, being established, Chemistry shall rise predominant over the three plagues. I have lately made a thousand experiments, and I foretell that Chemistry, after all the world shall become quiet, shall do more in one year, than war could in ten. This new science will infect the whole world, and attack every human being. A man shall then more surely eat to die, than eat to live. By the miraculous power of this science, every article of food shall be converted into a slow poison ; and herein consists the beauty of the invention ; for, if the effects of the contagion were rapid, obvious, fatal, it would soon be detected. But, before any suspicion arises, the blood of all mankind will be corrupted, a new plague shall sweep the earth, and pervade every

system, from infancy to old age. The communion-table shall not escape ; bread and wine, the staff of life and token of peace, shall poison the body and corrupt the blood. The faculty, who know every thing, shall confess they know nothing. There shall nothing escape, which, subject to Chemistry, enters the mouth of man. Here," said the French member, "is an experiment on the staff of life ; here is a pound of flour. I will now act the baker ; you see the ingredients ; this pound of flour will give you two pounds of bread ; now it is ready for the oven ; breathe on it, a moment, and bake it ; it is now done. What an elegant loaf ! Taste it." The Commoner and Trans-atlantic each tasted ; and the Trans-atlantic said, "This bread, indeed, would poison your majesty." "Thus," said the French member, "by the aid of Chemistry, every thing that passes the mouth of man, that can be, will be, adulterated ; and the world shall eat and drink themselves into plagues, of which neither Hippocrates nor Galen ever dreamed. I must now retire to the National Convention ; and you," addressing the Commoner, "wait on Mr. Pitt."

The Man with the Cloaks

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— The Original Text —

THE

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THE MAN WITH THE CLOAKS.

A VERMONT LEGEND.

On the border of Lake Champlain you will find a beautiful declivity in the present town of Ferrisburg, which commands a southerly view of the lake. In a calm summer morning you may look down on a sea of glass ; and sometimes in winter, when a severe frost catches the lake asleep, you may behold a spacious mirror, polished beyond the efforts of art.

The following account of John Grindall, who many years since lived on this declivity, is still current in the neighborhood, although time has probably added not a little to the real facts. Grindall was something more than a strict economist, one whom the present extravagant age would pronounce a miser. To give and to lose had with him the same meaning ; so, to get and to keep.

A poor traveller from the Genesee country, on his return from Canada, was overtaken in the month of November in the year 1780, a memorable cold winter in New-England, without a surtout. He tarried for a night at an inn in the neighborhood of Ferrisburg. His landlord, taking pity on him, observed, "my neighbor Grindall has just bought himself, after many years, a new cloak. Call on him to-morrow morning, and tell him I sent you, and hope he will give you his old cloak ; and,

moreover, say to him, he will never be less warm for parting with it, as a deed of charity sometimes warms the body more than a blanket."

Accordingly the traveller called on Grindall and told his errand. The day was extremely cold, and pleaded most eloquently for the old cloak. "How easy," said Grindall, "is it for one man to be liberal of the property of another ? My neighbor is one of the most generous men in the world ; for the simple reason that he has nothing to give." "You do him wrong, sir," said the traveller ; "he gave me a lodging and a breakfast ; and moreover, said you were the wealthiest man in these parts." "Ay," said Grindall, "I have grown rich by keeping, not by giving. If the weather grows much colder, I shall want not only my new cloak and my old one, but another." "So, you will want two, or more, while I have to travel more than one hundred miles without any. Your neighbor bid me tell you, a deed of charity would warm one better than a blanket." "My old cloak will fit no one but myself." "Ah ! he that is warm thinks all others are so." "But you should be more provident, and not have to make the cloak when it begins to rain. However, you have one advantage, a threadbare coat is armor-proof against a highwayman." "And perhaps," said the traveller, "another advantage, 'the greatest wealth is contentment with a little.'" "Yes," said Grindall, "many talk like philosophers and live like fools." "But sir, if you make money your god, it will plague you like the devil." "But he is not wise that is not wise for himself ; and he that would give to all, shows great good-will, but little wisdom." "Still, sir, you make a good purchase when you relieve the necessitous." "My receipts, all of them, are for very different purposes." "Farewell, then. You may want more than two cloaks to keep you warm if I perish with the cold."

The traveller departed. A few days afterward a rumor was prevalent that a traveller had perished on the west side of the lake. Grindall heard the report, and reflecting on the last words of the stranger ; and he felt a sudden chillness shoot through his frame. There was nothing supernatural in this. The body is often the plaything of the mind. The imagination can produce a fever ; and why may it not turn the heart to an icicle, especially as it appeared that Grindall's heart was sufficiently cold before ? The morning after this rumor, he pronounced it the coldest day he had ever experienced ; and he sat in his old cloak the

whole day, congratulating himself that he had not given it to the traveller. The next day seemed to Grindall more severe than the former ; and he put on both the old and the new cloak. Nevertheless he was far from comfortable. The third day he sent to his tailor for a new cloak ; but as the tailor could not make a cloak in one day, he borrowed the cloak of his neighbor the innkeeper.

The weather that year, 1780, as is well known, waxed daily colder and colder, and Grindall was obliged to employ all the tailors, far and wide, for nothing could keep him warm, not even an additional cloak every day ; so that Grindall soon excited the curiosity of all around him. His appearance, indeed, must have been grotesque. His circumference was soon so great that he could not pass out of his door ; yet nothing less than a new cloak, daily, could relieve him. He was extremely loath to send for a physician ; for having, on one occasion, been bled by a doctor, he was heard to declare that he never would part with any more of his blood, meaning thereby, his money. However, Grindall was not without medical advice. Curiosity soon filled his house. All the old ladies, far and near, Indian doctors and doctresses, offered him more remedies than can be found in the Materia Medica. Even the regular and irregular faculty gave him a call, gratis, hoping at least to learn something, either in confirmation of pre-conceived opinion, or, what was more agreeable, from practical experiment on a new disease. While it cost nothing, Grindall was willing to listen and submit. Hence his house became a hospital, and himself the patient of a thousand prescriptions. But all availed nothing ; he grew colder every day. Every new cloak was but a wreath of snow. The doctors at length began to quarrel among themselves. In their various experiments they so often crossed one another's path, and administered such opposite remedies, that Grindall began to jeer them. The only perspiration he enjoyed for three months was caused by a fit of laughter at the doctors' expense. He plainly told them, if one remedy would cure, another would as certainly kill. To this each physician readily assented ; but, at the same time, asserted that his own remedy was the only cure. These opposite prescriptions soon embroiled all his doctors, both male and female. At the same time there was a perplexing debate respecting the nature of the disease. While one pronounced the disorder a weakness of

the blood, another asserted it was an ossification of the heart — a disorder incident to many old people, and always accompanying an undue love of money. Another said the disorder arose from a defect of the blood in the heart, and the true remedy was to send the blood from the extremities to the heart. While the doctors were disputing, Grindall was growing colder and colder, and his circumference larger and larger ; so that he nearly filled the largest room in his house.

Toward spring, when the sun began to assert himself, and when the snow began to moisten, an incident befel Grindall, which has become an interesting part of this memorandum. Grindall said he had been confined to his house more than three months ; and as it was a beautiful day, he would walk out and learn if there was any heat in the sun. But there was one difficulty attending this enterprize. It was necessary, in order to pass his doorway, to throw off more than seventy cloaks ; for in order to feel in any way comfortable, he was obliged to add a new cloak every day. While the ceremony of disrobing was performing, Grindall complained bitterly of the cold ; and before his assistants could recloak him, he became nearly senseless. At twelve o'clock he was reclothed ; as he stood on his door-step, which overlooked the lake, for the first time in his life he was sensible of the beauties of nature, though in winter. For, having been housed more than three months, the glory of the sun, the purity of the air, and the sublimity of the lake, which reflected at midday ten thousand diamonds, seemed for a moment to warm his heart. He became exhilarated, and not having the usual command of his legs, and being ill-balanced, owing to the hasty putting on of the seventy cloaks, he faltered, reeled, and gently fell on the snow ; in a moment, owing to the sharp declivity and the moistened surface of the snow, he became a huge snowball. The snow, as usual, had coveted the tops of the walls and fences, and there was no impediment in the descent to Lake Champlain. Accordingly, in a moment, Grindall became apparently a huge rotund snowball, and acquired at every rebound additional velocity : and when this man-mountain arrived at the margin of the lake, he passed its whole diameter like a schoolboy's slide.

And now the whole country were rallied to disinter Grindall from his mountain snow-bank. Various were the speculations attending

this snow-scene excavation. To some, who held Grindall in no respect, it was a half-holiday ; to others, more serious, connected with what had already transpired, it was more solemn. Some asserted he never could be dug out alive ; others, more indifferent, said he was as safe as a toad in his winter quarters. A physician who had tried all imaginable remedies, and a few others, asserted he would come out a well man ; for the rapid circulation of the snow-ball would equally circulate the man, induce a profound perspiration through the whole system, and effect a cure. "All that may be true," said another physician, who had just arrived ; "but the man can never be produced out alive, for this internal heat, like a volcanic fire, will melt the surrounding snow, cause an internal deluge, and drown the man." "But," said a third, "if the man should be produced alive, he will be deranged ; for as his descent may have been oblique, his brains have fallen on one side." "Never mind what the doctors say," said one of the working men, "old Grindall may yet come out alive, and prove himself a worthy man. Though all the doctors could not cure him, this very accident may ; for accident and nature are two great physicians, and have often outwitted the faculty."

In the mean time the snow flew merrily. Curiosity lightened their labors and speeded their snow-shovels. But all their efforts could not release Grindall in one day. The succeeding night was honorable to the neighborhood, for there was a general assembly of the people, and no little sympathy for the fate of Grindall. The next day additional succor came ; and before midday they came in contact with the outside cloak. There was a loud and tumultuous call on Grindall. No answer ; but soon they perceived a gentle moving of the cloak, as though the inhabitant was nestling. A moment more, and Grindall saw day-light. The first words he uttered were, "Cover me up again — oh, cover me up — I perish with the cold !" Disregarding his cries, they produced him to open day. But Grindall's cry was, "Another cloak, or I perish ;" and this was immediately loaned him by a spectator. By the help of a sled and four horses he was soon at home again.

When Grindall was first discovered, he looked as fresh as a new-blown damask rose ; and though you could see nothing but his face, joy seemed to illumine his countenance, and so far contracted his

muscles as to disclose a fine set of teeth, which shone through his many cloaks like so many orient pearls at the bottom of a dungeon.

The spring now began gradually to exchange her heavy white robe for a silken green ; and those who knew more than their neighbors said, the only doctor who could cure Grindall was the great restorer of the vegetable world. Indeed, Grindall himself now looked to the sun as his only remedy. But, to the surprise of all and the despair of poor Grindall, the sun made no more impression on him than did the great yellow dog who had been hung for sheep-stealing on the tree before his door. At midday, in the month of July, you might have seen Grindall sitting in his now more than two hundred cloaks, on his door-stone, courting the notice of the sun, who regarded him with the same sensibility that he does a snow-drift in winter on Mount Bellingham. This circumstance of course gave currency to many strange stories ; one, for instance, that the coldness of Grindall's head was such that a gallon of warm water, poured on his head in July, ran down to his shoulders in icicles. This, and a thousand such idle rumors, gave a miraculous coloring to the real facts. Especially as hundreds of people from the frontiers, even from Canada, both whites and Indians, attracted by curiosity, came to see a man clad in ten score of cloaks in July.

After the summer solstice Grindall himself began to despair ; for the superstition, or more probably the solemn reflection of the people, began to treat his case as something out of the common course of nature ; and they believed Grindall to be what the Scotch call a doomed man. This was equal to an interdict of fire and water. Grindall's house became a solitude. All, even women, refrained from visiting him.

Thus the solitary Grindall wrapped himself up in his daily cloak, and sat on his door-stone courting in vain the rays of the sun. One day, when peering wistfully through the long avenue of his cloaks at the fervid sun, to him more like the moon in winter, he was heard to exclaim, "O wretched Grindall ! I am an outcast from human nature. There is no human being to sympathise with me. All forsake me. I am alone in the world ; at home, without a home ; in the world, but not of it. More than an outcast — all men fly from me ; even the women, the natural nurses of men, have lost their curiosity. The dogs do not even bark, but stare at me, and pass on. The birds have retreated to other

woods. How dreadful is this solitude ! If I look up, the sun has no genial smile for me ; if I look down, I have no hope but in the bowels of the earth. If I look within — I dare not look within, for there a solitude reigns more dreadful still. Fool that I was — I once thought a bag of money the easiest pillow I could repose on."

Thus the summer passed away, while Grindall had no other occupation than to procure a new cloak every day. But about the middle of November, the anniversary of the traveller's visit to him, who should call at his house but the same man who the year preceding had begged his old cloak ? Grindall immediately recognized him by instinct, for that was nearly all that remained to the unhappy man ; and there came over Grindall a sudden feeling that this same man was connected with his fate, and was the harbinger of a good result. Moreover, the man was supposed to have perished, and his appearance to Grindall was like one risen from his grave. The stranger was therefore doubly welcome. He heard, with apparent wonder, an account of the events of the past year ; and in conclusion, Grindall stated that he had exhausted the whole art of the faculty, who had pronounced him incurable, and that he had at length begun to despair. "A strange case, indeed," said the stranger. "Tell me all that the doctors have done for you." "They have done nothing for me ; but I can tell you what they have done to me. They have made a laboratory of me, and subjected me to all sorts of experiments, cold remedies and warm, internal and external, remedies the most opposite. I have been roasted by one, boiled by another ; I have been stewed, blistered, and parboiled by a third ; merged in hot water, wrung out, and laid by to dry ; and immediately after subjected to a cold bath. I should have been baked could they have stowed me with all my cloaks into the oven. The Spanish Inquisition is a flower-bed in comparison with the bed the doctors have spread for me. They have made an apothecary's shop of my inwards, while each one told me his own remedy was the sovereignest remedy on earth for a cold affection of the blood.

"When the doctors relinquished me, I fell into the hands of a hundred old ladies. Good souls, they would have cured me if they could ; for they exhausted all that is known of botany. I can tell you the taste of every vegetable that ever grew out of the face of the earth, both root and

branch ; from the sweet fern to the bitter el-wort, from henbane to nightshade. And here, O, forgive me if my cold blood warms in wrath ; one pertinacious female forced down a whole dragon root, and said, if that did not cure me, nothing would. It did, indeed, nearly cure me of all my earthly pains, for I thought it time to send for the sexton, the only friend I have in this world."

"But," said the traveller, "why did you permit so many vain experiments on you ? It is the delight of the physician to experiment on new cases. If he succeeds, he has achieved some great thing ; if he fails, the case was remediless." "Ah !" said Grindall, "let the well man laugh at the doctors ; but the sick man is all ears to those who promise help. Cannot you do something for me ?" "I can tell you one thing ; you are no warmer for your many cloaks. It is not the clothes that keeps the body warm, it is the body that keeps the clothes warm ; and in your case it must be the heart that keeps the body warm. Therefore, whoever can warm your heart can certainly cure you." "That, I fear, is impossible ; I never felt my heart warm in all my life. Not one of the thousand remedies that I suffered ever touched my heart. The dragon root which burned up my bowels, made no impression on my heart." "Nevertheless, I can cure you if you will submit to the remedy. You may think it a cruel and tedious remedy, but I believe I can warrant you a cure." "Name it, try it, I am all submission ; and you shall have half of my estate." — "O, no ; I must not be selfish, and oppose a cold heart to your warm one. I see a change in you already. Do you not feel a little better ?" "I do, I protest I do ; the last cloak I put on feels rather heavy." "The cure lies entirely with yourself ; all the doctors in the universe, male and female, can do you no good. A permanently warm heart depends on the man himself." "Ah, you mock me ; how can a man warm his own heart, when naturally cold ?" "As easy as a man can awake from a sound sleep. Pray, tell me how many cloaks encircle you." "This very day counts a year, that is three hundred and sixty-five cloaks." "It will require a whole year to perform a perfect cure ; in the mean time you will be comfortable, more so every day." "But what horrible drug are you about to propose ? I thought I had exhausted both nature and art." "Be easy, Mr. Grindall ; you will swallow nothing. As your disorder has appeared to many inexplicable, your cure will appear equally so, if you can only

warm your own heart. I must now leave you ; I am on my annual visit to Canada ; when I return, I will call and see you ; but to-morrow, about this time, you may chance to find a remedy ; but whether or not you will improve it, depends entirely on yourself. Farewell." The stranger immediately returned to the inn-keeper's house, and requested him to send on the morrow the most destitute man he could find, to Grindall. "Why, you are the very man," said the innkeeper, "who tried to beg his old cloak last winter : and the report was, you had perished with the cold. You might as well attempt to warm Grindall's heart as to obtain a cloak from him. He buys a new one every day." "No matter, say nothing about a cloak, do as I say ; farewell." The stranger was not in the inn-keeper's house one minute. He was gone ; and the inn-keeper soon began to think a vision had passed over him. The call, the conversation, and the departure, were all one. In a few minutes he began to treat it as the magnanimous Jefferson once treated an injury, "like one of those things that never happened." But still, the more the inn-keeper believed it a vision, the deeper impression it wrought on him. In those deep solitudes, at that time, on the frontiers of a savage wilderness, the natural easily passed into the supernatural. Therefore the inn-keeper soon resolved, whether he had suffered under an illusion or had seen a reality, to seek out, and send, a proper object to Grindall. This was no easy task. In those days it was as difficult to find a very poor man as it is now difficult to find a very honest one. However, before night he found his object ; and as the next day proved extremely inclement, the inn-keeper thought it possible Grindall might give the poor man one, of three hundred and sixty-five cloaks.

The next morning, as if by accident, a half naked man stood on the door-stone of Grindall's house, dubious whether he should enter or not. The appearance of the poor man was more eloquent than any language, and the day itself was a powerful appeal. When Grindall understood that a man was standing on his door-step, he reached his spy-glass, for he was now obliged to use a long spy-glass in order to see through the long avenue of his many cloaks. As soon as he beheld the man, "What, my friend," said Grindall with unwonted courtesy, "has brought you here this cold day ?" "I was sent here, without any errand, supposing you wanted to see me." "I did not send for you." "It is only a

mistake then ; farewell." "But stop, friend ; you are almost naked. Are you not perishing with the cold ? I am under cover of three hundred and sixty-five cloaks." "I have on my whole wardrobe," said the stranger, "and, thank Providence, my heart keeps me tolerably warm." "The heart, the heart, a warm heart," muttered Grindall to himself. "To-morrow, about this time, you may expect a remedy, if you know how to improve it." "This man, without knowing it, may be the remedy." — "Why," said Grindall, "how wonderful ! You almost naked, in the extremity of winter, are comfortable, while I, by my fireside, clad in three hundred and sixty-five cloaks, am suffering with cold." "I presume, sir," said the stranger, "your heart is cold ; if you could warm your heart, your cloaks would be a burden to you." "Ah, that is impossible. However, you seem to be a worthy man. Heaven may have sent you here for your own good, if not for mine. One cloak among three hundred and sixty-five can make no great difference. Take this cloak ; it was new yesterday, and may you never want but one at a time." "I accept it most thankfully," said the stranger, and he departed.

The next morning Grindall either did feel, or thought he felt, a little more comfortable. He sent for the inn-keeper, and related what had happened. "I feel," said Grindall, "or fancy I feel, relieved from the burden of the last cloak." "If that is the case," said the inn-keeper, "I advise you to part with another." "With all my heart," said Grindall, "if I could find an object." "Ay, sir, I fear your trouble, now, will be to shake off your cloaks. It is easier for you to procure a new cloak every day than to find every day a worthy object." "What shall I do ? My outside cloak grows heavier and heavier ; it has already become a grievous burden. Pray, sir, assist me : you see I cannot go abroad with all these cloaks. If I should fall in my present bulk, I should roll again on to the lake, and might not be dug out till spring." "Your case," said the inn-keeper, "is certainly a strange one, and somewhat marvellous ; for I now perceive you suffer more from the weight of your cloaks than you do from the cold. Is it not so ?" "I cannot say exactly that ; but the outside cloak seems to feel heavier than all the others." "I wish you were down east in the Bay State," said the inn-keeper, "among the poor people of Charlestown, who were all burned out of house and home by the British. You would find among them objects enough ; for I under-

stand Congress never gave them a penny ; only told them to call again." "If they were within a hundred yards of me, I would send every one of them a cloak," said Grindall. "But," said the inn-keeper, "why do you not take off your outside cloak if it is such a burden ? Why do you wait until you can find an object on whom to bestow it ?" "I have tried that experiment twice this morning, and at each time a cold shivering obliged me to put it on again ; but if I could find a worthy object, like the one yesterday, I fancy that it might warm my heart. I wish to try the same experiment again, even if I send to Massachusetts." "You need not send so far ; only let it be known that you have a cloak for a naked Indian on the other side of the lake, and you will not want customers." "White, black, and red, in distress," said Grindall, "are all my brethren ; only find me a man in distress for a cloak, and you shall have my hearty thanks." "A wonderful change, indeed," said the inn-keeper. "It was only last summer, and there was no human being with whom you could sympathise." "True, but since yesterday I perceive I have something within me which they call a heart ; for after I gave that cloak to the poor man yesterday, I soon felt something stir within me, warmer than all my cloaks. But talking never cured a man like me ; send me a poor man in want of a cloak, that is the best doctor."

Soon afterward a stranger entered the door, and Grindall asked if the inn-keeper had sent him. "Yes," said the stranger. "What did he tell you ?" "Nothing, only to go to Mr. Grindall's house, he wanted to see me." "Right ; do you know any one really in want of a good warm cloak, for you see I have more than my share." "I will thankfully receive one," said the stranger. "But with this condition," said Grindall, "that you send me a poor man who is in want of another." "With all my heart," said the stranger. "Then take it with all my heart."

Thus from day to day Grindall grew a little warmer. As the spring advanced, he found it more difficult to bestow his cloaks ; and on the approach of summer he was obliged to employ twenty men in scouring the country to hunt up suitable objects. Though in winter the Indians were his best customers, yet in summer no Indian would travel far to receive a cloak.

As the dog-days approached, the anxiety of Grindall was redoubled ; for as the heat increased, though he suffered nothing from

the heat, yet the warmth of the remaining one hundred and fifty cloaks required constant watching, lest spontaneous combustion should consume both himself and his woollen establishment. This converted Grindall sometimes into a real pageant. While sitting in the sun, he would appear to be enveloped in a warm vapour, such as you sometimes see in a morning, rising over a meadow ; and when the sun played upon this vapour, Grindall would appear to be surrounded with beautiful rainbows. This was considered by all the curious females in the neighborhood a good sign ; and they all prophesied that Grindall would yet come out bright. It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Although this warm mist produced a suffocating vapour to Grindall, it was productive of no little benefit to others. Thousands of eggs were sent to Grindall, who enveloped them in his cloaks ; and after a little while, from under the skirts there proceeded broods of chickens. This breed became famous. The gallant little rooster on board M'Donough's ship, who, previous to the battle on Lake Champlain, perched on the fore-yard and crowed thrice, cock-a-hoop, was of this same breed.

One day, toward the end of August, while Grindall from his door-stone was watching the descending sun and earnestly expecting the approach of a traveller to relieve him from his outside cloak, it is said he suddenly made an unnatural and hideous outcry, which echoed and re-echoed through the mountains, and over the lake even to Memphremagog. This ebullition of Grindall must have been terrific. For the wild beasts, then so numerous on the Green Mountains, all left their lurking-places. The bears, catamounts, and foxes, with one consent took to the trees. The wolves alone stood their ground, and answered to the supposed challenge. It was feared, at first, that the howling of the wolves would be everlasting. For as the nature of the wolf is gregarious, all within hearing assembled at the first call, and soon an army of wolves collected around the habitation of Grindall ; and as their howling, like the outcry of Grindall, echoed and re-echoed among the mountains, the wolves mistook each individual howl of their own for a new challenge ; and thus a continuous howl, through the remainder of the day and following night, agitated the Green Mountains, even to Montpelier, east, and to the borders of Canada, north. But at sunrise all was quiet. The

howling, from pure exhaustion, gradually died away, so that no echo was returned ; and then all was as still as when Adam was a lone man.

One good sprung out of this incident. It was remarked for several years afterward, that in the vicinity of Ferrisburg the wild beasts had become extinct. Hence, deer, sheep, and poultry, safe from their enemies, increased in geometrical progression, to the utter subversion of the theory afterward promulgated by Mr. Malthus. The fact was, the wild beasts had retired, affrighted, to other forests.

Now, much of this wolvish story has doubtless been added to the account of Grindall. Yet it is in some degree credible ; for it is well known that the human ear, placed near the earth, can hear the report of a cannon forty miles ; and we know that the beasts of the forest, naturally prone downward, have an ear vastly more sensitive to sounds than man.

After this outcry, Grindall exclaimed, "What could have kept those men warm, half naked as they were, who captured Burgoyne on the other side of the lake ! They must have had very warm hearts. Yes, it must be true, as the stranger told me, the heart keeps the body warm. I see it clearly, the country is safe, it never can be conquered. Burgoyne spoke the truth when he said it is impossible to conquer a people who fight till their small clothes drop off in rags. Warm hearted fellows, I wish I could give every one of them a cloak ! But here am I, the wonder and horror of all around me. A dead weight on creation ; worse, a monster, repulsive to man and beast ; the sport of all nature. The elements conspire against me. I am equally exposed to fire and frost. The suns laughs at me, and buries me in a cloud of vapour. At one moment I am threatened with a deluge ; at the next with a conflagration ; then comes a wind, a heart-withering wind, and dissipates all, and whistles through my flapping cloaks, and sings in mockery,

> If old Grindall's heart is as cold as his head
> Old Grindall's heart is the icicle's bed.""

But this was only one of Grindall's ill turns. He was evidently growing better ; and as the cool weather approached, he appeared more anxious than ever to shake off his cloaks. So far from appearing a

doomed man to his neighbors, he was considered a man changed only for the better. His house began to be crowded again with the curious, and all those who delight in the marvellous. His former visitors, except his medical oracles, who confessed he was an outlaw to their several systems, came to congratulate him on what they termed his return to human nature.

But now a new occurrence arrested the attention of all. As the season daily advanced toward the anniversary of the grand investment of the cloaks, the daily dispensation of each cloak gave rise to various reports, utterly subversive of the human character of Grindall. The fact was thus. Immediately preceding the divesting of a cloak, the cloak would appear to be animated with life. It would first tremble, then crankle, and then dance all around the body of Grindall. It would seem joyful, almost intelligent, and inclined to speak. It did not shrivel, or show any sign of distress. Not a few asserted all this was accompanied by a noise not unlike the rumbling of distant thunder. But the moment the cloak was put off, it was as quiet as lamb's wool. No wonder it began to be noised abroad that there was an evil spirit in each cloak.

Fortunate was it for Grindall that no ventriloquist added to the alarm ; for in those days Mr. Page could have made all these cloaks speak whatever language he pleased, and thus the unhappy Grindall might have suffered an ignominious fate under the statute of James the First against witchcraft and sorcery. But the event soon showed there was no evil spirit concealed in these cloaks ; and, if I may hazard an opinion at this late day, I would account for it all in a natural way. There was, no doubt, daily, a strange appearance in each cloak previous to its leaving the body of Grindall. It might tremble, and not only seem to, but really flutter about his body ; this simple circumstance, even in the present enlightened times, would immediately grow into the marvellous. All these strange appearances might arise from the bounding heart of Grindall. Every cloak that he gave away expanded his heart ; it beat high with the joyful assurance that, when all his cloaks had left him, he should become a proper man. Hence the agitation of his heart caused him and his whole establishment to tremble ; and the supposed thunder was only the throbbing of his heart. Greater mistakes than this have been made down east, near Boston, where the good

people of a certain town on the sea coast lived a whole century, after the settlement of the country, on shags, mistaking them for wild geese.

However the truth might be respecting this affair of the cloaks, one thing is certain ; it was near proving fatal to Grindall ; for many of those who came to receive a cloak in charity, when they saw its tumultuous quaking, declined receiving one, through fear of catching the palsy. But after a little while, when they saw these cloaks lie so quiet when cast off from Grindall, and perfectly harmless to the wearer, the few remaining cloaks became popular, although the last of them crankled the most and danced the longest.

The Canadian traveller, on his return, remembered his promise, and stopped to greet Grindall, who had just shaken off his last cloak. Grindall regarded him with a feeling of awful respect. He stood silent ; but the traveller heard Grindall's heart speak. "Your looks, Mr. Grindall, have told me all ; you have found the remedy. You now know how to keep yourself warm in the coldest weather. But in order to keep yourself constantly warm, you must have a constantly warm heart. None of your sudden impulses, warm to-day and cold to-morrow. Most men are governed by impulses, and they endeavor to offset against habitual coldness, a single warm impulse. There is little merit in that. The rattlesnake is poisonous, although it may show you many golden specks scattered over its back. In short, Mr. Grindall, if you desire never to want another cloak, keep a warm heart ; and if you are subject to cold feet in winter, marry a worthy woman." Grindall followed this advice ; and before he died, became a proverb. "As good as old Grindall," is still current west of the Green Mountains.

Martha Gardner;
or, Moral Reaction

— The Original Text —

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MARTHA GARDNER ;

OR, MORAL REACTION.

SIR FRANCIS WILLOUGHBY attempted the first settlement in Charlestown on the land adjoining the old ferry. Afterward Martha Gardner became heir to part of the same estate. What inhabitant of that region, who has passed the meridian of life, cannot remember Martha Gardner ? What man or woman of sixty has not bought sweetmeats, nuts, and apples at the shop of Martha Gardner, at her little mansion measuring ten feet by twelve, which during her life was a frontier cottage between Boston and Charlestown, on the Charlestown shore near the old ferry-way ? Those who remember Martha, and recollect how silent, modest, industrious, and unassuming she was, will think it impossible that any thing interesting can grow out of her history. Yet one incident in her long life merits solemn reflection; though it may appear to many an idle legend, yet it is not so, for the footstep of time hath already left an indelible track ; and Martha Gardner, although long since in her grave, still speaks, trumpet-tongued, from her venerable ashes.

Previous to the American Revolution Martha Gardner lived in Charlestown. Her family name was Bunker, whence came Bunker hill. On the seventeenth day of June, she saw her little mansion given to the flames, and herself, houseless, destitute, and an exile from her Eden. After the war, she returned, and erected her small cottage on the border of the beautiful river ; and there she lived, and there she died in 1809.

In 1785 Charles River Bridge, the greatest enterprise of that day, was erected, near the door of Martha Gardner, on the Charlestown shore. The wealthy proprietors soon began to fancy that a valuable part of the estate of Martha Gardner was their corporate property ; and Martha was compelled either to resign her title, or engage in a lawsuit with the richest corporation in New-England. Her distress may be imagined ; a poor widow, recently flying from the flames of her

dwelling, hardly reinstated in the common comforts of life, already bending with age, and now forced to contend with powerful claimants for a part of the small estate of which unluckily all the deeds and documents were (as she supposed) burned during the general conflagration of Charlestown.

A lawsuit has different aspects to different persons. To some a lawsuit is a holiday ; to others it gives the heart-ache. To some the agitation of a lawsuit is but the lullaby of a sea breeze. So the French officer thought, who, during a tedious peace, contrived to be involved in a hundred lawsuits. When he was summoned before Louis 15th as a public nuisance, the king ordered him to drop them all ; but he, falling on his knees, entreated that he might retain half a dozen of them for his diversion, otherwise he should die with languor during the long peace. But not so Lord Chancellor Eldon ; when his steward complained to him of a trespasser, he asked if the man had stolen an acre of land. "Why no, sir." "Then wait till he does." Nor did Erskine see any amusement in a lawsuit. Ellenborough once suggested to him that his client could have a better remedy in the Court of Chancery. At the name of the Court of Chancery, Erskine, wiping away a tear, and looking the Chief-Justice in the face, said, in a supplicating tone, "Has your Lordship the heart to send a fellow-being to the Court of Chancery ?"

But let us pause a moment to contemplate Martha Gardner. How much do these two words — Martha Gardner — comprise ! More than the whole Trojan war. Homer could have turned Martha Gardner into an epic poem, for she and moral reaction are one. Moral reaction, what a subject for contemplation ! The anger of Achilles, the wanderings of that cunning itinerant Ulysses, the flight from Troy, our lagging sympathy with Æneas, and the fertile squabble of the Crusaders and the Turks for a few square feet of earth, are mere incidents compared with the eternal decrees of moral reaction. Coleridge and Kant, transcendental philosophers ! ye could discourse sublimely on moral reaction forever and ever ; for every action, past, present, or future, would afford food to your telescopic minds. Every intelligent being and nation, as well as individual, is at this moment suffering under moral reaction. The earthquake is but a momentary shock, the thunder dies in its birth, the volcano is but a palpitation ; but moral reaction, though

silent, unseen, and unheard, is the most busy agent in the universe. While it consumes ages for the ocean to effect a little inroad on the sea-beach, moral reaction at one time overwhelms individuals and nations at a blow ; at another it winds in a labyrinth to slow but sure destruction. A giant, but without the arms of a giant ; time with his scythe, but you see not the scythe. The prophetic imprecation of Martha Gardner, which we are about to relate, was but a woman's voice sighing in the tempest and dying away among the billows ; but it was a voice charged with an awful decree.

The story of Martha Gardner, although located under our own eyes, and the principal fact a matter of public record, is so much like a legendary tale, that it is impossible to treat the subject without a tinge of the marvellous.

Soon after the great Corporation of Charles River Bridge began the conflict, with Martha Gardner, for a part of her little patrimony — the dock adjoining the bridge, — Martha, one morning, sat in her chair, her hands folded, looking to heaven more like a figure of stone than a living being, when in came David Wood, the late Colonel Wood, one of those rare men, whom, as soon as the eyes saw, the lips whispered, "there goes a man." His noble heart you might read in his face and see in his hand. In his dealings so just, that his word was a promissory note, which passed like a bill of exchange from man to man. His looks created immediate confidence ; a lost dog might always be found at David Wood's door-step. Indeed, this man seemed to live exempt from the general penalty, and never seemed to realize that all others were not like himself. "What's the matter, Martha ; what's the matter ? You look worse than you did when you fled from the seventeenth of June." Martha at first made no reply, for she did not see him. "Are you in a trance, Martha ? Wake up, and tell me what the trouble is." Martha seemed to awake from a deep reverie, and replied, "Ah, Mr. Wood, the burning of Charlestown, with my little all, was but a momentary conflict — it was but a dream of the night. What comes without anticipation, and ends in a moment, passes over us like a dream. That morning found me happy, and the next morning found me so. The seventeenth had passed over me forever, and the morning of the eighteenth gave me new joy. Why could they not wait a little longer, and I should have been at rest ? But now I see no end to my sorrows. When I

see no end to my sorrows. When I lay my head on my pillow, the Corporation appears to me in all its terrors ; when I sleep — no, I do not sleep — when I dream, I dream of the Corporation ; and when I awake, there stands the Great Corporation of Charles River Bridge against Martha Gardner. They, seemingly almighty, and I, nothing. Why did you awake me ?" "Cheer up, Martha," said the benevolent Wood, "your happy star shall yet prevail. Why, have you forgotten your old wooden post with Ebenezer Mansir's name carved on it, the old wooden post which the Select-men of Charlestown, in their wrath, ordered to be cut away, and which, after traversing the whole world of waters, floated back, after two years, to your own door, and was replaced in its own post-hole ? Arise, look out of your window and see the old wooden pier ; and then doubt, if you can, of eternal justice. Ebenezer — look at it ; it means, praise the Lord !" "Ah," said Martha, "the day of miracles is not yet passed. That old wooden pier has given birth to strange reflections, its return seemed to connect heaven and earth ; it seemed like the return of a wandering spirit, cast out of its native element to its first happy state." "Yes," said Mr. Wood, "think of that post with the name carved on it, to identify it, floating on the mighty waters, now in the Gulph Stream, now driven up the Baltic, then by a north wind sent to the Equator and Pacific, and thence back to the Atlantic ; and after such a voyage of adventure, arriving at Charlestown, in its own dock again !" "Yes," said Martha, "I have heard it observed that many ages past a man by the name of Plato, being in the dark, guessed a great deal about the immortality of the soul, and I have often imagined that the return of the wooden post was like a lost angel to his native home ; and if that old post, subject two years to the winds of heaven and waves of the sea, tossed upon all the coasts, inlets, bays, creeks, and nooks of the four quarters of the world, came home at last, a wandering spirit might one day reach its native home !"

The wooden pier just mentioned was well calculated to bewilder the least superstitious mind. The simple facts were these. Soon after the erection of Charles River Bridge, the Select-men of Charlestown believed a portion of Martha Gardner's estate was the town dock, and they ordered a favorite wooden post standing at the dock to be cut away. The post stood under her chamber window, and from her youth upwards

she was attached to that post as much as Pope was attached to the classic post before his door. Ebenezer Mansir tied his fishing-boat to that post, and Martha, when a child played in the boat, and when it floated on an ebb tide down the dock the length of its tether, she sailed up the dock by the help of the rope. That was a pure pleasure never to be forgotten. Martha remonstrated against the wrong done her, with all a woman's eloquence, but in vain ; and as the post was floating out into Charles River, a by-stander said, "Farewell to your old post, Mrs. Gardner, you will never see it again." She instantly replied, "Who knows but that post may one day come back again, to convince the Select-men of my right and their wrong ?" Nothing more was thought of this until two years after, when the old post, covered with carageen-moss and barnacles, came floating up the dock at mid-day, shining like an emerald ; and as the tide receded, deposited itself beside its old situation. This incident is now a family record.

"But," said Mr. Wood, "when will the trial commence ?" "Next week," said Martha ; "and my heart fails within me, for I have nothing to show ; all my deeds were destroyed on the seventeenth of June." "Ah, Martha, you seem now like a lamb shorn in winter ; but I have a presentiment that there is an angel behind the curtain ; when human help fails us, an armed giant sometimes appears in our defence. A benighted traveller has been often shown his true path by a flash of lightning. You may yet awake out of a dream."

The next morning Mr. Wood received an early message. His mansion stood half a mile from Martha Gardner's cottage, where the brick church now stands at the corner of Wood and Green streets. On entering Martha's cottage, he found her greatly agitated. Said Martha, "Your angel behind the curtain made his appearance last night. He knocked at my door once, I was afraid ; he knocked at my door again, I was afraid and said nothing. He knocked at my door the third time, and said, 'Awake, Martha, awake, and fear no harm.' I took courage and replied, 'I am awake, but am overcome with fear, for I am alone, and there is none to help me.' 'Fear nothing, Martha, I am here to help you. Listen ; in the house of your son-in-law, in an old trunk at the bottom of the old trunk, in the garret, behind the chimney, there all your deeds and records are preserved.'" Search was immediately made, and in an old

trunk, at the bottom of the old trunk, in the garret, behind the chimney, Sir Francis Willoughby's original deed to Martha Gardner's ancestor was quietly reposing in perfect preservation. This was handed to the late Governor Sullivan, then attorney General, the faithful counsellor of the lone widow. She prevailed in the Supreme Court, and was quieted in her rights.

This incident of "the angel behind the curtain," deserves a passing remark. There was nothing strange in Martha Gardner's dreaming every night of her lawsuit, of the Great Corporation, and of her lost deeds. Neither is it strange that she should dream of finding them ; and if we connect the sanguine expressions of her friend Wood with her own earnest wishes, we have the key to her dream. There is no probability that she heard a knocking at her chamber door, either once, twice, or thrice ; but she dreamed she did so, and in the morning she doubtless thought it was more than a dream. She had probably seen that old trunk many times, little imagining the jewel it contained. There is really nothing marvellous in this dream, I do not wish it to be so considered ; for though it was far more important to her than the return of the old wooden post, yet this dream is not worthy of a passing notice compared with the adventures of that almost intellectual wooden post.

But Martha Gardner was not destined to a long repose.

One pleasant morning soon after, looking out of her window, she observed the sea gulls sporting themselves above the bridge. "This is a deceitful calm," said Martha. "These sea gulls so near my door denote an approaching storm ;" and immediately after the Great Corporation appeared to Martha in the shape of a summons, commanding her to appear at Court, and submit to a new trial in the form of a review. Said Martha, "How cruel ! This may be sport to them, but it is death to me. I have but a short lease of all worldly things ; my setting sun shows only a crescent ; it will be down in a moment. Let the Great Corporation take my estate. I will contend no longer. If they have resolved to contend again, let them take my estate this moment rather than I should close my few remaining days in anxiety and distress. I have been already overwhelmed in the waters of bitterness, truly my name is Martha." "Not so," said her friends. "Remember the wooden post with Ebenezer Mansir's name carved on it. Remember the 'angel behind the curtain ;'

and remember the old trunk. Do not let the Great Corporation with their long arms reach beyond your simple rights. The whole Corporation in the eye of the Court weighs no more than Martha Gardner."

In consequence of this assurance, Martha maintained the conflict a second time with the Corporation, and prevailed. She now congratulated herself that she should die in peace, and she resigned herself to that sweet repose, such as virtuous old age, when light-hearted, enjoys under the shadow of a weight of years. In old age most persons cling the closer to earth the nearer they approach it. Not so Martha ; her setting sun seemed to renew her youth. She was as merry as a cricket in autumn, who sings loudest on the last day of its sunshine. She was at peace with herself, and therefore with all the world. The swallows observed this, and built their nests over her window, and twittered on her window-stool. Her day never seemed too long. She renewed her girlhood with the foliage of spring, while the wreath of snow, over the river on Copp's hill, reminded her of a gay plume rather than of her winding-sheet. All her wrinkles fled before the sparkling of her eyes. Young life returned upon her, and in her old age she enjoyed a morning view. Doubtless, a joyous old age, with a heart alive to youthful sensations, is nearly allied to spiritual existence ; in truth, her mortality seemed swallowed up in life. "Happy Mrs. Gardner," said the neighbors ; "there is nothing mortal about her — she will never die — she will sit upright in her easy-chair and seem to die, but no — Martha has only been translated." Hesiod must have had such a one as Martha Gardner in view when, speaking of her first happy ages,

> "They die, or rather seem to die ; they seem
> From hence transported in a pleasing dream."

Indeed, Martha Gardner appeared to have gone to heaven before her time, and to have enjoyed in this world an athanasia. But the evening breeze, which was so sweetly wafting her down the quiet stream of time, to the calm latitudes, was only the precursor of a tempest which overwhelmed her gentle soul. Just before she took leave of this world, the moment she was folding all up for her last journey — just when, with her own hands, she had worked her last white dress, and instructed

her grand-daughter how to adjust it, the Great Corporation sent a third summons — to her, more appalling that would have been her last summons. This blow was too much for Martha, and she became a weeping willow. Again the Great Corporation oppressed her sleep. Her days fears pursued her to her couch, where, in her phantom sleep, she wrestled with the night-mare in the shape of the Great Corporation. Trouble in youth is like the morning dew, the first gleam of the sun dissipates it ; but trouble in old age weighs heavier and heavier, and the heart sinks, and drags hope downward.

But why did the Corporation of Charles River Bridge thus pursue Martha Gardner ? There is but one answer. It was a Corporation.

The metaphysicians distribute man into three parts — the animal, the intellectual, and the moral. Which of these three is most likely to prevail in a Corporation ? The Corporation of Charles River Bridge was composed of many men, in that day, well remembered now for their private and public worth. Less than five of them would have redeemed Nineveh. But unhappily, the animal and intellectual part of Corporations generally govern the body, and conscience is a non-corporate word.

While Martha was preparing for her last conflict with the Corporation, a great storm in November threatened wide desolation to the neighboring shores of Boston and Charlestown. A three days' northeast wind, assisted by the full moon, seemed to challenge the Gulph stream. It is well known that a powerful north-east wind narrows the Gulph Stream, renders it more rapid, and drives it nearer the coast. The third day of this memorable storm afforded the sublimest scene ever beheld in New-England. It seemed for a fearful moment that the order of nature was broken up, and that he who gave the sea its bounds had released the conditions ; that the whole Atlantic, in a holiday, had forced the Gulph Stream into Boston harbor. There was not a wave to be seen ; it was one white surge, one white mountain of foam breaking over the tops of the numerous islands in the harbor ; while, during the momentary lulling of the wind and subsiding of the waters, the surges broke upon the eye like so many gambolling sea-monsters, dancing to the ceaseless roar of Chelsea and Lynn beaches ; for the islands in the harbor were wholly enveloped, at times, with the spray that beat against

the rock-bound sides. It was a fearful day for Charlestown. The waters had already buried the wharves in their abyss. Charles River Bridge next disappeared, and was totally engulphed. Vessels might have sailed over it keel-safe. The flood was marching up Main Street to the square. Mothers seized their infants, and were preparing to fly to the uplands. Three days more and the heights of Boston and Charlestown would have appeared like islands in the Atlantic ocean. But, happily for Boston and the vicinity, this storm occurred in November and not in May, otherwise the numerous icebergs which annually appear off the coast, might have blockaded the harbor between Cape Ann and Cape Cod, and destroyed Boston and the neighboring seaports for many years.

In the last efforts of the storm, the little cottage of Martha Gardner began to tremble. The surge bore down on her tottering tenement, while the winds lashed every returning billow into new fury. The neighbors collected around her dwelling, and besought her to fly from instant ruin. She, nothing daunted, ascended to her chamber window, and opening it, addressed them : — "I will not fly," said she. "Let Lynn beach roar, and let the winds and the waves rage three more days ; if my house moves, it shall be my cradle ; I will move with it. I will neither fly from the storm nor look back, but will look up ! I have nothing to fear from the war of elements. My destruction comes not in the whirlwind nor in the tempest, but from a broken heart. Welcome, ye stormy winds and raging waves, ye are but ministers of Supreme Power, flying messengers ; and when your errand is done, ye are quiet as a landscape. When the storm is passed, all will smile again. Ye are now my diversion — ye are repose to my troubled spirit — ye lull me to rest ; when ye are quiet, the Great Corporation will trouble my sleep. All natural evils are playthings. This tempest shakes my dwelling, but not my soul ; the thunder is harmless the moment it is heard ; the earthquake brings impartial ruin ; but I, a poor widow, am singled out by the Great Corporation, and pursued to my dying bed-chamber. Yes, my soul enjoys this tempest ; I look down on it, I am lifted above it. I had rather see this tempest with open eyes than the Great Corporation in my sleep. This storm gives me new courage, a new spirit ; and raises me far above its idle rage. I am above the storm, I am on the top of Jacob's ladder, and see the heavenly blue. This storm quiets my soul, it has caused, for a

moment, Charles River Bridge to disappear. I am in a new element, I am at the gate of heaven, and hear a voice you cannot hear — I hear a voice above the storm saying, 'Martha Gardner shall be avenged, but not in her day.' The time is coming when there shall be no more passing over that Bridge than there is at this moment. It shall be desolate and forsaken — a fishing-place ; the curlew and grey gull, and stormy pettrel shall there rest in quiet. The traveller shall pass over another highway, and, turning his head, shall say, 'Behold the great highway of the North and of the East ; behold how desolate !' And it shall be desolate ; but neither storm, nor tempest, nor fire, nor earthquake shall destroy it. It shall be like a barren spot in a fertile valley. All around it shall flourish ; the voice of prosperity shall echo and re-echo across the river from all the hills of Boston, even to the heights of Charlestown, and thence among the islands. But that spot shall become a solitude, a barren streak in a green circle ; the grass shall spring from the crevices, but it shall wither before the mid-day sun. No living thing shall pass over it ; a lost child shall not be sought in that desolate path. The traveller shall shun it, and shall pass another way to the great city ; and they of the great city shall shun it and pass another way ; and they of the Great Corporation shall avoid it — turn from it, and pass another way. It shall disappear in all its glory, as the great highway of the North, and still remain visible, as an everlasting monument. And the stranger shall come from the uttermost parts of the earth to behold the beautiful city ; and he shall ascend the mount of my fathers, and shall view the beautiful city, begirt with mountains of emerald ; and he shall behold the thousand villas which shall stud the lawns like diamonds, and the distant hills pouring down plenty ; while the Atlantic, bearing on her bosom the harvest of the world, shall bow at her footstool. And the eyes of the stranger shall weary in beholding new beauties, and his senses sleep from weariness of beholding the ever-varying prospect changing with every passing cloud ; and he shall descend from the mount of my father and return to the beautiful city ; but when he shall cast his eye on this spot, the charm shall dissolve ; he shall stand amazed, and demand — 'Why that solitude 'mid universal life ?'"

Dimly seen through the spray, she now withdrew from the storm, and gently closed the window. All was silent ; for as she did not

appear to address the spectators, no one knew how to reply to her. At length, William Goodwin, a man of ardent temperament and generous feelings, said — "Truly, that was Martha Gardner's countenance, I cannot be deceived, for the flash of her eyes created, amid the storm, a rainbow around her head ; but it was not—no, it was not Martha Gardner's voice. This means something, here is a mystery ; some of us may live to see it unravelled ; but Martha Gardner never uttered all that."

The storm immediately died away. The next morning was fair weather. Martha Gardner soon after passed through her last conflict with the Corporation, and died.

The world know all the rest. The traveller who passes over Warren Bridge, and turns his eye over his shoulder and beholds the present desolation of Charles River Bridge, and sees the immense crowd passing over the new highway, if he hath any faith in moral re-action, will say, "In truth, Martha Gardner built Warren Bridge ;" and in other times it may be said, "as true as Martha Gardner built Warren Bridge."*

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* The public are familiar with the suit lately decided in the U. S. Supreme Court of Errors, between the proprietors of Charles River and Warren Bridges. The decision was against the Charles River bridge, and "the Great Corporation" have vainly petitioned the Massachusetts Legislature for a release from the conditions of their Charter. Their bridge is seldom or never passed, and must soon become impassable. The distant reader may ask — "Why is this ?" The answer is — Warren Bridge is free, so rendered by an act of the Legislature ; and few persons, not even the proprietors themselves, choose to pay toll for the privilege of crossing Charles River Bridge. — *Ed.*