CHAPTER VI.

VISITS TO AMERICA.

My first visit to the United States was paid in 1857–58, and lasted for about eight months; my second in February 1862, and extended until the close of 1865, a period of nearly four years. My first was undertaken on my own account, in connection with the *Illustrated London News*; the second was on a mission from the *Times*, to reside in New York as the correspondent of that journal, in succession to the American gentleman who had filled that post for many years, with satisfaction to its conductors, but whom it was considered desirable to replace by an Englishman, in view of the great interest excited in Great Britain, and throughout Europe, by the politics and incidents of the great Civil War, at that time in its infancy.

My first visit gave me more vivid impressions of the country, its people, its institutions, its manners, and its scenery, than the second; the second gave

me deeper knowledge and more lasting impressions of all that was both good and bad in that gigantic reproduction and extension of the civilisation of Europe, and especially of Great Britain, into new fields, and with almost unlimited opportunities of growth and development. The first brought me acquainted in the pleasantest manner with the literary and social characters of the Americans of the Northern and Southern sections of the country, and of the genial and hearty Canadians; the second gave me a less agreeable experience of the American people, when engaged in a bitter struggle among each other for what might have been called either dominion, independence, national existence, or liberty, according as reason, imagination, passion, or prejudice dictated the designation of the obstinate struggle, and which went by all these names during its continuance.

Victory at last decided the question, and sanctified as right what perhaps might have been originally wrong, as Victory in all ages, in all countries, and in all circumstances is in the habit of doing, and as it notably did, under the leadership of George Washington, in the struggle against Great Britain, originally a rebellion against a lawful sovereign, but no longer a rebellion when it became successful.

> Treason ne'er prospers. What 's the reason?
> 'Cause when it prospers none dare call it treason.

My first visit was devoted to lecturing in the great cities, amusing myself, and to making acquaintance with new people, new scenes, and new modes of life. My second visit had, in many respects, a wider object: to observe and to record in the columns of the first newspaper in the world the varying fortunes of two mighty combatants engaged in fratricidal strife, and waging with each other one of the most sanguinary wars of modern times, unsurpassed in the magnitude of its issues within the limits of the historical period, and only to be rivalled in the semi-fabulous records of mythology.

During my first visit I traversed the country, from Quebec on the St. Lawrence to New Orleans on the Mississippi, finding traces of the French at both extremities, of the French that were as great and peaceful colonisers as the English two centuries ago, and that now colonise no more in the English sense of the word, though they attempt, not always with success, to form dependencies rather than colonies in Africa or Asia. I lectured in Boston, Newport [Rhode Island], New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington; in Cincinnati, Yellow Springs, and Columbia (Ohio), in Louisville (Kentucky), in Charleston (South Carolina), St. Louis (Missouri), and New Orleans (Louisiana), and, retracing my steps towards the North, in Albany (New York), and finally in

Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Montreal, and Quebec in Canada. I received many scores of invitations to lecture in the Western States—then considered "Far West," but now classed as the Middle States—of Michigan, Kansas, Iowa, and still further towards the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, but was compelled to refuse them from want of time, and to hasten my return to the Strand, where the *Illustrated London News* was clamorous for my presence.

During my second visit and residence of four years in the country I travelled over less ground. My head-quarters were at New York, with a residence in Staten Island, varied by occasional trips on business rather than pleasure to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington on the south, and to Canada on the north.

I have already narrated the main incidents of my first visit in *Life and Liberty in America*, published in 1860, and will not go over the same ground again except to supply omissions and to supplement the facts there stated, to which the lapse of time has given new interest or importance. Many of the persons whose acquaintance I made in my first visit, and whose future eminence I had no reason to anticipate, were destined to play conspicuous parts in the great War of Secession, of which even at that time the seeds were sown and were germinating rapidly, though unnoticed and unsuspected.

Some of them became Ministers of State, others generals in the great army of the Potomac, others diplomatists accredited to foreign Courts, others senators or members of the House of Representatives, or distinguished orators who did their best to shape public opinion to great issues, and often succeeded in their efforts. Among those with whom I was brought into most familiar intercourse were the Honourable W. H. Seward, afterwards Secretary of State during the presidency of Mr. Lincoln; the Honourable Salmond P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, and subsequently Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; General Breckenridge, Vice-President under Mr. Buchanan; Senator John James Crittenden; Senator J. A. Bayard, of Delaware—his son, Mr. Thomas Bayard, now Secretary of State under President Cleveland; Mr. Stephen A. Douglas, a candidate for the Presidency when Mr. Lincoln was elected to that perilous honour; President Franklin Pierce, to whom I had a letter of introduction from Nathaniel Hawthorne, whom he had appointed American Consul at Liverpool, and whose powerful and painful novel of the *Scarlet Letter* had made him popular in England; the Honourable Anson Burlingame, afterwards Ambassador to China; the Honourable Charles Sumner, at that time an enthusiastic friend of Great Britain, but, during and after the war, one of the most rabid enemies of this country;

General Houston, the conqueror of Texas; General Fremont, called the "Pathfinder," afterwards entrusted with a command in the Federal army; General Scott, called "Old Fuss and Feathers," commander-in-chief of the United States army in the peaceful times before the Southern Secession; General Banks, Governor of Massachusetts, and once Speaker of the House of Representatives, who served as a General of Division under General McClellan in the army of the Potomac; and many others of conspicuous but of lesser note in the political and military life of the period.

I also enjoyed the friendship, which only ended with their lives, of Longfellow the poet, of Emerson the philosopher, of Prescott the historian, of Agassiz the scientist—all resident in Boston, and shining lights in the intellectual firmament of that city; of Theodore Parker, of Oliver Wendell Holmes, of the Honourable Josiah Quincey—all distinguished men; and of many others less eminent, whom it was nevertheless a pleasure and a privilege to know and to exchange ideas with.

Lecturing in America is almost as much entitled to be called a learned profession as that of the Law, the Church, or Medicine, though, unlike all of these, the avenues leading to it are not blocked and barred by a special education, or by rules, regulations, and fees to be paid by the neophytes. Lecturing is a free profession, though it needs great

and special qualifications to succeed in it; celebrity of some kind or other, a pleasant and trained voice, a certain amount of oratorical eloquence, good health, a power of enduring the fatigue of constant travelling over long distances, and, above all, something to say that will either instruct, interest, or amuse the public. The want of one or more of these qualifications, though not necessary fatal to success, tends very much to convert what might otherwise be a *succès fou*, such as attended Dickens, or a *succès enthousiaste*, such as attended Thackeray or Artemus Ward, into a mere *succès d'estime*, which is content to listen to the lecturer once, but cannot be induced to listen to him a second time. Whatever the Americans may be to their own native lecturers, they are always generous in their appreciation of lecturers from the old country; an appreciation which is, perhaps, due to curiosity in the first instance to see the men of whom they may have previously heard much; but is mainly due to courtesy and hospitality towards strangers who have come from a distance to visit them. The great Emerson, whose discourses, as a rule, were far above the comprehension of the common multitude, was not a good speaker, and certainly made no attempts to amuse, but, on the contrary, aimed to instruct his audiences, told me himself that he once lectured to seven people at Montreal. This he did to console me for the fact that I had mentioned

to him, that I had lectured to about thirty in Philadelphia.

Lecturing is an art, and, like other arts, must be studied by those who would excel in it. In some respects, indeed in many, it differs from speech-making, and, I should imagine, from preaching, though I never tried to preach, and trust I never shall. Speech-making only involves the making of the same speech on one occasion and *for* the one occasion; but lecturing, as a profession, involves the delivery of the same lecture many times, and, if successful, it may be scores or even hundreds of times, to different audiences, who may possibly all differ in their tastes or in their appreciative or even depreciative idiosyncrasies. I had to study all this by actual experience of American audiences, and, after a comparatively short apprenticeship, came to the conclusion that all large assemblages of people were very much alike in their habits of thought, and about as much of one mind as flocks of sheep under the influence of the bell-wether.

I learned a lesson after the very first lecture which I delivered. It was at Boston in Massachusetts, and the subject was "Poetry and Song." I dwelt upon the difference between poetry and mere verse, which the vulgar public, if not the great majority of people, persisted in thinking identical, considering that what was not prose was of necessity poetry, and was greeted with loud applause.

Impressed with my subject, and not heeding the applause, I continued to illustrate my meaning by citing specimens of popular verse, which could in no wise be considered poetical, and prose passages from the Bible and from well-known English authors, which were in the highest degree poetical, and could not possibly be improved by versification. I was again applauded, and again passed on to the further development of my theme. Next morning, the leading journal of Boston, in reporting and commenting upon the lecture, declared that it was a pity the lecturer was so deaf, as some of his remarks were lost to the audience amid the noise of the applause with which they were greeted. As I am not now, and never was, in the slightest degree deaf, the hint was not lost upon me, and on all future occasions I not only waited for the applause, which invariably greeted the same passages, but allowed it to have full vent before continuing my discourse. There was a double advantage in this, for dissatisfaction was often expressed that my lectures were too short. They usually lasted for three-quarters of an hour, which I considered quite long enough; but American audiences expect the full hour, which is considered the orthodox and legitimate duration. Of course I would much rather that the hostile verdict should have been guilty of being too short than guilty of being too long; but I was enabled to palliate the evil to some slight

extent by pausing a minute or two at due intervals to allow the plaudits to exhaust themselves, and thus extending the lecture from forty-five minutes to fifty or upwards, as near an approach to the full hour as I could make it without padding the lecture by extra matter or impairing the symmetry of the original design. After the third or fourth delivery of the lecture the subject began to pall upon me by the over familiarity induced by constant iteration; but after a time this uncomfortable feeling wore off, and my contempt for the performance was gradually converted into good-natured toleration, and finally into something nearly akin to affection. As the audiences began to love it, so did I; and on the twentieth repetition it became to me like a dear old friend, whose worth I had tried and taken to my heart, and from whom I would grieve to be parted.

Longfellow, Emerson, and the Boston Club.

When I was a very young man, and no doubt more or less a foolish one, I did what many young and foolish men have done before, and will do after me; I published a volume of poems.

I am not proud of that volume now! but I was proud of it then. Seven copies only were sold on its first appearance. After a month a friendly critic wrote a favourable notice of it for the *Times*. Thirty

copies were sold the same day. Ultimately, and by very slow degrees, the whole of the small edition disappeared from the shelves of my publisher, who brought me in a bill for the loss he had incurred in presenting it to the world. I must own that I was disappointed, and perhaps a little unhappy; for I found it somewhat difficult to scrape together the money to pay the account. I was very much surprised at the same time to learn that the sale of the whole edition was insufficient to cover the expenses, and to learn that the deficit was due to the heavy costs of advertising, which I had not authorised. But comfort amid my sorrow came to me from a wholly unexpected quarter, in the shape of a letter from Boston, Massachusetts. It was addressed, *Charles Mackay, Poet, England.* I thought to myself, on receiving it, after long delay, which had been brought to an end by some wide-awake official at the General Post Office, who had marked upon the envelope, "Try the *Morning Chronicle* office," that, after all, I must be somebody if a letter could reach me amid all the millions of London, without designating the street, or even the city in which I resided.

In this pleasant belief I was confirmed on opening the letter. It contained a modest request for my autograph, that the writer might add it to a collection which he was forming, of the autographs of the principal prose and poetic writers of the time.

It was the first time that ever such a request had been made to me, and, coming from a stranger and from a far country, it was all the more welcome. The letter was signed "James T. Fields." I did not know who James T. Fields was, but I sent him my signature, very proud to do so, as may well be supposed. I never forgot the name of the writer who had been the first person in all the world to address me by a title which, at the time, in the ignorance and hopefulness of youth, I valued above any other that could be bestowed upon me.

It was not until many years afterwards, when the first flush of youth had passed, that, on his first visit to Europe and to London, I made the welcome acquaintance, that afterwards ripened into friendship, of James T. Fields, who had long been an eminent publisher in Boston.

In the year 1857, when I visited Boston for the first time, the earliest call that I made upon anybody was upon my friend Mr. Fields, and was cordially welcomed to "the Hub of the Universe." Greatly to my gratification, I found that he was not alone, and that there stood by his side, in the act of taking his departure, a gentleman whom, by his likeness to his published portraits, I at once recognised as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a true poet, as I had long known, a true gentleman and genial companion, as I speedily found him to be.

A personal introduction and a cordial hand-

shaking were the immediate results, followed almost as immediately by an invitation to dine with him and Mr. Fields, at the next meeting of "The Club," on the Saturday following.

This being arranged and entered on the list of my engagements, Mr. Longfellow, who was returning to his home at Cambridge, insisted, with kindly pertinacity, that I should accompany him. Being in no wise loth, I took his proffered arm, and we proceeded to the cars together.

On our arrival he led me into the garden at the rear of his house, celebrated, before he added to its celebrity by inhabiting it, as the "Old Washington Head-quarters." The object of his leading me at once into the garden was to point out to my notice a row of picturesque and venerable pine-trees. "I want you to look particularly at these pines," he said, "because on their account I once took it into my head to hate you."

"I hope," I replied, "that the hatred did not last long."

"Oh, no; it soon passed over. I have not much if any hatred for my fellow-creatures, in my composition, and, perhaps, I exaggerate when I call the feeling that possessed me by so strong a word as hate. But I was angry with you, and with myself at the same time."

"But why? Had I done, said, or written anything that displeased you?"

"Yes! You had published a volume of poems some six or eight months before, to which you gave the excellent title of *Under Green Leaves.* It was for that I fancied I hated you; though, after all, I was only unreasonably annoyed."

"But why should my title annoy you?"

"Because I intended to give to a volume that I myself was about to publish the title of 'Under Pine Boughs.' I composed most of the small poems contained in it while pacing to and fro in the fine mornings and afternoons under the shadow of those very pine boughs that you see at the end of the garden. My title was not so fresh and suggestive of beauty as yours; and even if it had been, I could not adopt it, lest I should have been accused of imitating yours; and so I had to change it, and rack my brains to find another. That 's why I hated you, for a short—a very short time. But then I remembered that it was not your fault, and I loved you as I did before, and as I have since continued to do."

"And what was the title which you ultimately adopted?"

"*The Courtship of Miles Standish,* the name of the principal poem in the book. The title did not please me half as well as the old one, but I had to put up with it, and the public also."

Of course I did not fail to be present at the dinner of The Club, to which I was escorted by

Mr. Fields. Among the celebrated people who were present were Mr. Longfellow, Mr. Emerson, Mr. J. R. Lowell, Mr. Agassiz, Mr. W. H. Prescott, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, General N. P. Banks, the then Governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Ticknor, Mr. Fields, Mr. Theodore Parker, and the Rev. Starr King.

I was placed at the table, at my own request, and by arrangement with Mr. Fields, between Messrs. Longfellow and Emerson, with both of whom I conversed in the pauses of the feast.

I had met Mr. Emerson in London in 1848, and knew that, eloquent as he was with his pen, he was abnormally shy and retiring, and did not shine in conversation, or greatly care to indulge in it. Like Wordsworth, whom he visited at Rydal Mount, and of whom he spoke to me,

> He did not much or oft delight
> To season his fireside with personal talk,

though he could break through his natural undemonstrativeness upon occasion, when conversing with a companion after his own heart, with whom he could exchange ideas rather than re-echo commonplaces.

I told Mr. Emerson on this occasion that shortly before I quitted England I had passed three days at Knebworth, the country-seat in Hertfordshire of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the famous

novelist, dramatist and statesman, and that our conversation had turned upon him (Emerson), during one of our afternoon walks through the grounds.

Sir Edward had not read any of Emerson's works, and had only heard of him as a disciple and imitator of Thomas Carlyle—a mistake into which he had probably fallen from reading the *American Notes* of Charles Dickens, wherein it was said, "I found that the transcendentalists (of Boston) are followers of our friend Mr. Carlyle, or, I should rather say, of a follower of his, Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson."

I did not repeat to Mr. Emerson all that I had said to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton in vindication of his genius and of its utter independence of that of Mr. Carlyle, in answer to this ignorant depreciation, lest the praise which I had lavished upon him should have seemed to savour of adulation, when spoken in his presence, at second-hand, and without the stimulus to earnestness which Sir Edward's utter misconception had supplied.

I had said that the two writers were wholly dissimilar in their style and in the effect of their teaching, that Emerson shone by his original light and not by moon-like reflection from any superior planet. I had given the preference to Emerson, declaring that Emerson's two essays on *Love* and *Self-Reliance*, were worth all that Carlyle had ever written.

Sir Edward challenged me, if Mr. Emerson was so admirable and so original a genius, to cite some of his brilliant passages. This, I said, would be a matter of some difficulty, depending upon memory, which might not readily answer to so sudden a call upon its reserves. But during the course of our walk, I recollected one or two passages that had greatly pleased me, and these suggested others. Among others which I cited were:—

"In every work of genius we recognise our own rejected thoughts."

"We all read as if we were superior beings. The slip of a boy that reads Shakspeare in a corner sits in judgment upon Macbeth and Hamlet."

"The wise man in adversity is like a wounded oyster; he mends his broken shell with pearl."

"Very fine, indeed," said Sir Edward. "Carlyle merely declares himself to be a hater of shams, as we all are. He takes a great number of volumes to declare his opinion—to glorify truth and to worship strength—though he never said anything so good as Voltaire did, when he said that the Almighty always sided with the *gros bataillons*. The simile of the wounded oyster is highly poetical and apt, and, as far as I know, original."

A month later, on again visiting Knebworth, the great novelist took the opportunity to tell me that he was very grateful to me for having recommended Mr. Emerson to his notice. He had read his

Essays with delight and profit, some of them twice and even thrice, and each time with new gratification. Mr. Emerson seemed to be as pleased to hear what I told him of this conversation as I wished or expected him to be; for the greatest of authors, as well as the least, whatever may be said or thought to the contrary, are always pleased—I will not say flattered—by intelligent appreciation, perhaps more especially if the appreciation comes to them from a far country.

Mr. Emerson did not seem wholly indifferent to fame, but certainly did not attach any particular value or importance to it. He drew the proper distinction between fame and popularity. True and enduring Fame, he said, could never be acquired without merit; but popularity, which often proceeded from the mere whim and caprice of the multitude, was but too frequently the result of social rather than of intellectual judgment, and depended sometimes upon accident, and sometimes upon the action of an uncultivated or depraved taste.

"Nevertheless," he remarked, "fame and popularity are sometimes simultaneous, and are bestowed upon real merit, as in the cases of Walter Scott and Charles Dickens. But the writers are happiest and most to be envied who do not seek either fame, popularity, or reward for their writings, but who write or teach as the birds sing, or as the stars shine, because it is in their nature to do so."

I reminded Mr. Emerson that, as far as mere popularity was concerned, the street drama of Punch and Judy was more popular than *Hamlet* or the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and that a waxen figure of a king or a murderer was more to the taste of the multitude in all countries than the grandest and most beautiful statue of an Apollo or an Aphrodite chiselled by the art of a Phidias or a Praxiteles. Even the popularity to which many second or third rate poets attained in their lifetime was evanescent. Cowley in his day was called the "divine" and the "incomparable," and Milton, his contemporary, was unread, unknown, or slightingly spoken of; but Posterity and Justice between them consigned Cowley to comparative oblivion, and elevated Milton to one of the highest niches in the great gallery of "immortality."

"Very true," said Mr. Longfellow, who had been an attentive listener; "and popular poets, as I know to my sorrow, are too often popular for their worst compositions rather than for their best."

"Blessed are the larks and the nightingales," said I. "They don't depend on the popular verdict, and care nothing for book-buyers and book-publishers."

Theodore Parker, whose acquaintance I made at this dinner, was at this time in the decay of his health and reputation, but still a great power in

American politics and literature, though his theological influence was and had long been on the wane. He was a man of independent and original mind, and his "funeral oration on the death of Daniel Webster"—the greatest orator that America has ever produced—would, if he had produced nothing else, be quite sufficient to secure him a bright place in the page of his country's history. When the slavish multitude were singing the praises of the dead, many dazzled by the remembrance of his intellectual power, Theodore Parker stood up in his pulpit alone, unaided, defiant of the raging storm of popular opinion, and in eloquence equal to, if not in some respects superior to, that of the departed statesman, denounced him for playing false to his own conscience, to his own soul, in accepting a bribe to defend in the Senate, the platform, and the press, the slavery which he condemned in his heart, and against which his reason revolted.

It has long been the fashion to extol—and justly—the world-renowned oration of Demosthenes against Philip, and it needs no gift of prophecy to foresee that in a future day, which has dawned already, Parker's oration against Webster will extort equal admiration from all the lovers of truth, justice, fearlessness, and the highest order of oratory.

One year after my introduction to him, Theodore

Parker called upon me in London, on his way to Italy in search of health and a warmer climate than that of his native Massachusetts. It was the only call he found time to make in London. Poor Theodore did not regain his lost health, as he had hoped. He died, I think, in Italy, though I am not quite sure that he did not return to Boston. In his case, as in that of many other gifted men, whose spirits are willing but whose flesh is weak, he died of the over-strain of his mental faculties.

President Pierce.

Mr. Hawthorne, the novelist, who had written a Life of Mr. Franklin Pierce when that gentleman was a candidate for the Presidency—and who had been rewarded for the service by appointment to the United States Consulship at Liverpool—gave me a letter to the Ex-President, to be presented to him should I ever visit the State—I now forget which it was—in which he resided, and of which he was a native. During my short stay in Boston, Mr. Pierce happened to arrive in that city on a visit to some friends, and I took the opportunity of making his acquaintance, firstly, because of the high position he formerly held, and secondly and

more especially, because he was the friend of Mr. Hawthorne.

On presenting the letter, I was very cordially received by Mr. Pierce, who expressed his wonder that a man usually so cold, reticent, unenthusiastic, and undemonstrative as Mr. Hawthorne should have written in such warm and cordial terms of anybody as he had done of me, and asked me what I had done or said that had procured me such high favour ?

Mr. Pierce was a man of polished and courtly manners, of a cultivated mind, and of wide and varied information. He gave me a pressing invitation to dine with him on the following day, an invitation which, to my great regret, I was compelled to decline, on the ground of a previous engagement to pass that evening at the monthly meeting of a Social Club, the most exclusive and, if the word be permissible in its application to any society in so ultra-democratic a country as the United States, the most aristocratic in Boston. Mr. Pierce, after I had shown him the very cordial letter, in which the President of the evening invited me to the gathering, expressed a wish that he also might be invited, and hinted that perhaps, on my intimation of his desire to the hospitable gentleman at whose house the meeting was to be held, an invitation to him, who had once held the highest office in the State, and who was, like myself, a

stranger in the city, might be sent to him. I happened to meet the gentleman in question—one of the leading citizens of Boston—in the course of the afternoon, and frankly told him what Mr. Pierce had said. He courteously said, in reply, that as soon as he returned home he would send Mr. Pierce a card of invitation.

He kept his promise, and Mr. Pierce called upon me the following evening in order that we might proceed together to the social meeting. The President of the Club and master of the house welcomed us both cordially, and shook hands warmly with Mr. Pierce. There were at least thirty, perhaps forty, gentlemen present, numbers of whom expressed a desire to be introduced to me, and were introduced accordingly. Not one, however, made any attempt to obtain an introduction to Mr. Pierce, whom they suffered to enter the room unwelcomed, and almost unobserved, and some few were rude enough to turn their backs upon him, in so unmistakable and offensive a manner that it could not fail to attract his notice. Mr. Pierce was not slow to perceive that he was not welcome, and took an early opportunity to retire.

He was scarcely out of the room, when one of the guests, an old man of a sour, ultra-puritanical, and inquisitorial aspect, suddenly came up to me, and asked me, in the most abrupt and

insolent style, "Who was the *fellow* that you brought with you, and who has just left the room?"

Astonished and offended at the question, I replied, "I did not bring him, he came by special invitation"; and added, after a short pause, "It is possible that you did not know him: it was Mr. Franklin Pierce, formerly President of the United States."

My interlocutor, before turning on his heel in an evident ill-temper, replied, "Never saw the fellow before—never wish to see him again!"

This disagreeable incident surprised me greatly. The old man was evidently not a gentleman, and possibly a lunatic. I afterwards learned that he was a violent opponent of slavery—what the Americans at that time called a "malignant philanthropist" and a "nigger-worshipper"—and that his animosity against the ex-President was political as well as personal. Mr. Pierce had been elected to the Presidency by the Southern democratic and pro-slavery majority; and the defeated abolitionist and republican party of the North, whose head-quarters were in Boston, consoled themselves under their defeat by hatred of the victorious party, and especially of its chief. But that political rancour should take such a shape as that which was exhibited that evening in a friendly, social, and convivial meeting of gentlemen, and

men of high position, was new to my experience of men and manners. But I was fain to believe at the time—and continue in the belief—that the unseemly exhibition was confined to the one bigot and fanatic who was its author.

NEW YORK.—A NIGHT WITH THE KNICKERBOCKERS.

IT is known to many, but not to the "*oi polloi*," that includes *all* the many, that the great State of New York, the Empire State, as the Amerians call it, was originally colonised by the Dutch, by whom it was called New Amsterdam. On its transference to Great Britain in the year 1644, as one of the results of the war then subsisting between the two countries, its name was changed to New York, not, as is commonly supposed, in honour of the archie-piscal city of York in England, but of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., the wrong-headed and luckless brother of Charles II. Its surrender to the British was confirmed in 1667, by the treaty of peace concluded at Breda in that year. The peace was of short continuance, and New York was reconquered by the Dutch in 1673, but only re-tained by the Dutch till the following year, when it again fell into British possession, and received its name of New York. During the more than two

centuries which have since elapsed, the Dutch have almost ceased to be a colonising nation, and New York has received its enormous increment principally from British subjects, and, during the last half century, a still more enormous increase from the German immigration, driven from the Fatherland by poverty and by the grinding oppression of the conscription. By the combined operation of the steady influx of Irish and Germans, New York has lost its claim to be considered as pre-eminently occupied by people either of Dutch or of British descent and parentage.

But the citizens of English, Scotch, and Dutch extraction, however much they may be outnumbered in the great and growing city, though not perhaps in the whole State of New York, by the Irish and the Germans, look upon themselves as the true social aristocracy of the "Empire city," and their claim, though not admitted in a country where aristocracy of rank is unknown, is submitted to *nolens volens*, although theoretically denied. The English have no strong bond of union among themselves, although they celebrate St. George's Day with all the honours, and support a weekly journal, the *Albion*, to refresh their remembrance of the old country. The Scotch, more clannish and more hearty, cling together, as they invariably do, in whatever part of the world they may fix their abode, and strive, not ineffectually, to feed the

fires of their never-extinct patriotism, by remembrance of *Auld Lang Syne*, and by the hero-worship of Robert Burns, who may not inaptly be termed the chief patron saint of the Scottish nation, *vice* St. Andrew, not altogether deposed but relegated to the second rank.

The descendants of the original Dutch settlers, though not, perhaps, so enthusiastic in the pride of their nationality as the Scotch, inasmuch as they have no poet of equal popularity with Robert Burns, on whom they lavish their homage as the model and the representative of their race, do not lag very far behind, and in their less demonstrative way, consider themselves to be the "*crême de la crême de la haute société*," and call themselves, or permit themselves to be called, as *par excellence* "the Knickerbockers," as if that were a title of social nobility. The designation appears to be due to the late Washington Irving, and to the Diedrich Knickerbocker, whom he has rendered immortal in the pages of his amusing history of the city.

I had not been many days in New York before I was honoured with an invitation to attend the anniversary dinner of the "Knickerbockers," conveyed to me in very complimentary terms by Mr. Gulian Verplanck, the chairman of the evening, and the President of the Association. Mr. Verplanck was one of the best known, most popular, and most

highly esteemed of the citizens, not only amongst those of Dutch descent, but amongst all classes of the people, for his genial manners, his unblemished character and his eminent social position. I was assigned the place of honour at the banquet on the right of the chairman. There were, I believe, about one hundred and fifty persons present, all wearing three-cornered hats of the fashion worn by the burghers of Holland two hundred years ago, suggesting, if it had not been for the absence of the "doublets and trunk hose" of the same period, or a century earlier, a meeting of the "Hoogen Moogens" in the troublous era of the wicked Duke of Alva and the Spanish tyrants of the Netherlands, which the "Hoogen Moogens" so valiantly and successfully resisted. The three-cornered hat marked them out as Dutchmen, quite as plainly as the philabeg and tartan trews mark the Scottish Highlander. Among the company were Van der Deckens, Van der Auweras, Van Tromps, Van Rensellaers, Van Raaltes, Van der Bilts, Van Maanens, Van Halens, Van der Vyvers, and Van Zandts, as well as Rutgens, Voorhees, Schencks, Schuylers, and others, whose names were equally suggestive of the dams, the sluices, the canals, and the polders, and of the brave and picturesque old cities of Holland. There were, as far as I could learn, but three guests present who were not Knickerbockers, the Hon.

R. J. Walker, who had once been Secretary to the Treasury, the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, the well-known preacher, and myself.

The dinner was *recherché* and luxurious, and more varied in fish, flesh, fowl, and vegetables, than Holland or any European country could have supplied. Holland has no Spanish mackerel, one of the most excellent fish in American waters; no terrapin, no gumbo, no wild turkeys, no canvas-back ducks; but why run over the list of American table delicacies unknown in Europe? Suffice it to say, that every luxury that America could afford, or that money could purchase, was bountifully provided on this occasion, that the wines were of the rarest vintages, and that Schiedam Schnapps was no more forgotten than whisky would have been at a Scottish symposium.

After the dessert had been served by a whole battalion of negro waiters, almost the only, and by far the best servants at that time to be obtained in New York, long clay-pipes of the fashion commonly called "churchwardens" in England, were served to the guests. I noticed that few refused them, of which few I was one. I never before saw, and have never since seen, so curious and unique a sight as that which was presented to my eyes by the hundred and fifty "mynheers," each with his three-cornered hat on his head, his long white pipe in his mouth, doing his utmost in the

nineteenth century to imitate a veritable burgomaster of the seventeenth, fresh from the banks of the Maas, the Rotter, or the Zuydersee; most of them grave and sagacious looking, with rubicund faces, and the half-stolid half-happy expression that usually settles upon the countenances of inveterate smokers, in the stupefying clouds of their beloved tobacco.

I only remember one of the many speeches that were delivered on the occasion, and that mainly for the reason that I was unexpectedly called upon to reply to it. The speaker was the Hon. R. J. Walker, a perky little man, whose accent would have proclaimed him to be a "Yankee," so called in distinction from all other Americans in every society of English-speaking people in the world. He was an ex-Minister of the Great Republic, under President Polk, if I remember rightly, and was reputed to be an authority on all matters of finance. His theme was the growing greatness of the city of New York, on which he expatiated with a plethora of epithets in the extravagant style, which is known to Americans as "high falutin" and "spread-eagleism." "New York," he said, "although still so young, was already one of the greatest cities in the world, and manifestly destined at no distant period to be the very greatest, and to eclipse all the glories of Babylon and Nineveh in the old time, and of Rome, Paris, and

London in the new. Yes," he continued, warming with his subject as the splendid vision unfolded itself, unobscured by the clouds of tobacco-smoke that were rising around him, amid which his little figure was all but lost, and the brave voice appeared as if issuing from the misty chaos that enveloped him,—"in twenty, or, at the most, thirty, or forty years, New York will be the Metropolis of the Universe! It will be the fashionable, the social, the financial, the political centre of the civilised world in both hemispheres, the most beautiful, the most stately, the most populous, and the most wealthy city that ever adorned the earth. London, its only possible rival, will in that time gradually sink into decay, and will be reduced to the second or third rank among the cities of the world; and the nation of which it is the capital will share its fate, and cease to be the preponderating power of Europe. The claws of the Lion of Empire will be cut, its roar will dwindle into a whine, and its present exulting and offensive rampancy will be superseded by a paralytic crawl." There was much more to the same effect, due, perhaps, to champagne, to schiedam, or to the smoke, or, perhaps, merely evolved out of the inherent brag of the speaker, but which it were, perhaps, too wearisome to repeat after this lapse of time, the more especially as it was evidently wearisome to the audience to whom it was addressed, and that it fell compa-

ratively flat on the ears of the more or less phlegmatic descendants of the Dutch, who had left the banks of the sluggish canals of brave old Holland for the more picturesque banks of the Hudson and the East river.

At the conclusion there was a general call for me, as the only Englishman present, to say a few words in reply. This I did, amid considerable applause, by fooling Mr. Walker to the top of his bent, admiring the glowing picture which he had drawn of the future glories of New York, when the whole of the island of Manhattan and the opposite shores of Long Island and New Jersey would be covered with palaces of white marble, and when "rotten and toothless" old Europe would not dare to fire a gun in anger, without asking the consent of the Empire State and the Empire City, backed by that of Washington. I gently hinted a doubt whether he had not drawn his little bill on posterity at too short a date, and whether for twenty or forty years, which he had fixed as the culminating point of the time when his fervid anticipations should be realised, he ought not to have substituted two hundred or five hundred, or even a thousand, years as the period when the impatient young heir might expect to come into the magnificent heritage which in the course of nature would indubitably belong to him.

By this time, the dense, and continually growing

denser, fumes of the tobacco-smoke were becoming too oppressive for my brain and nervous system, and I felt myself compelled to retire. This I did as covertly as possible, after explaining the reason and making my excuses to my kindly host, Mr. Verplanck. He expressed his opinion of Mr. Walker's oratory to me, as he shook hands with me on my departure, "Tall talk and bunkum, sound and fury, signifying nothing, and scarcely an exaggerated specimen of the vapid stuff in which some Americans take pleasure. There are no reporters present, and not a word of it will appear in the papers to-morrow, at which I rejoice. Good-night! God bless you!"

Six Hundred Young Ladies and a Fairy Tale.

I was taken by one of the literary notabilities of New York to the annual examination of a girls' school, in order that I might see on how large a scale, and with what excellent results, the education of young women was conducted in that great city. I forget whether the school was a ward school or a State school, and only remember that on arrival I was accommodated with a seat, along with other visitors, on a raised platform in a large hall calculated to contain about eight hundred persons, and that it was apparently filled in every

part. The scholars were all girls, of ages varying from eight or nine to sweet seventeen; the elders ranged on one side and the juniors on the other. I was informed that there were at least six hundred young women present, of all conditions of life, but mostly the children of well-to-do and respectable people. They were all well and neatly dressed; some of the elders very stylishly, fashionably, and coquettishly. On my entrance, two young ladies of about seventeen, who were standing in their places, were engaged in the discussion of a subject which had been prescribed for them by the principal or one of the examiners, which was whether or not Oliver Cromwell was an honest man and a true patriot. One fair disputant had to take the affirmative and the other the negative side of this knotty question, and argue it to the best of their ability. The subject did not strike me as one that would have much interest, either for the disputants themselves or for their class-mates, or as one of which any young lady could be reasonably expected to have a satisfactory knowledge. As might have been expected in ultra-democratic America, the sympathy of the fair damsel (said to be the daughter of a bookseller) who supported the claim to honesty and patriotism of the great English Protector was earnestly and, indeed, volubly expressed; and Cromwell was not only endowed with the two specific virtues which she was more parti-

cularly called upon to prove and to vindicate, but of every other possible to be possessed by any human being, even if he had been elevated by her zealous admiration to the rank of a demi-god. The young lady on the other side had nothing to say, and reluctantly gave up the contest after a feeble attempt to show that Oliver was not honest, inasmuch as he had entertained the idea of making himself a king if his life had been spared, a fact which she considered to be proved by the elevation of his incompetent son Richard to the Protectorate after his decease, by which evil precedent the principle of heredity, the great defect in the pernicious institution of royalty and of a titled aristocracy, was sanctioned and imitated.

At the conclusion of this exercise, and before the dismissal to their homes or the play-ground of the young auditory, a reverend gentleman on the platform proceeded to address them, and to express his gratification at the results of the examination. This he did in a set speech, or rather sermon, which lasted for about twenty minutes. During this time I noticed that some of the younger children fell asleep, and that others took refuge from the drowsy monotony of his discourse in the best way they could, by under-currents of whispered conversation. No doubt the conversation turned on matters far less important than the exhortation to be good and religious girls in which the reverend

gentleman indulged with monotonous iteration, but of far greater attraction to their infantile minds than the dry though excellent lesson which he endeavoured to instil into them. At the conclusion, which was a relief even to me, who was more or less accustomed to hear such discourses, I was quite unexpectedly called upon, as "a distinguished stranger from England," to address a few words to the young ladies. I pleaded to my friends and the other occupants of the platform that I was quite unprepared, that I had really nothing to say, and that in any case I could add nothing to the excellent remarks of the reverend gentleman. But all my pleas were urged in vain; my excuses were received with incredulity, and my refusals were held to be conquerable by importunity. My suppliants were so unmerciful that I had to resign myself to my fate. Almost at my wit's end, a happy thought came to my relief. Rising to address my interesting audience, and looking straight at the youngest portion of them, I proceeded to say, in a few words of exordium, that, not being able to add anything to the eloquent discourse of the reverend gentleman who had preceded me, I would, nevertheless, do my best to engage their attention; and that in default of a more serious address, which I felt myself unprepared or incompetent to deliver at such short notice, *I would tell them a fairy story!* Such a sparkling of twelve hundred bright eyes all turned

towards me; such a rustling of silks and muslins; such a readjustment of positions on the seats which the fair young damsels occupied; such a spontaneous and unanimous assumption of a listening air and attitude, convinced me at once that the curiosity and the sympathies of my audience were pleasantly excited at the prospect of amusement which had so suddenly opened out before them. I thought I observed a frown on the face of the reverend gentleman whose soporific eloquence just concluded had sent many of his young and uninterested hearers into merciful slumbers; but what were his frowns to me? or to the innocent children, who naturally preferred amusement to instruction, as is the case too commonly in later life with those who are neither young nor innocent, and who habitually prefer a buffoon to a philosopher. So I told the delighted young ones the story of Smilie and Growlie, amid a silence so palpable and solid that, as an American funster who sat beside me said to me afterwards, "you might have cut it with a knife." I noticed that the reverend gentleman slid down quietly from the platform before my fairy story was more than two minutes old, and disappeared from the room, to show his disapprobation, no doubt, of the daring innovation which I had made on established routine, and I saw him no more. The story of Smilie, the cheerful, good-natured, amiable girl, and of Growlie, the disagreeable and dissatis-

fied one, and of the adventures that befel them in Fairy Land and at the "Enchanted Well," was new to them, as, indeed, it could not fail to be, inasmuch as it had never appeared in any book or collection, whether in the *Arabian Nights*, Madame D'Aulnoy, Hans Christian Andersen, or any other benefactor of credulous and imaginative childhood. It was an invention of my own, with which I had more than once previously charmed my own dear little daughter, for whose amusement I had drawn it from the stores of my fancy. It produced not merely what the French call a *succès d'estime*, but a *succès fou*.

It was pleasantly evident to me that the then rising generation of Americans, as far as they could be held to be represented by my auditors, had not been educated to be so wise in their own conceit as to have no faith except in hard mathematical fact, and that they had not lost all faith in the wild, the wonderful, the fantastic, or even in the preternatural or the supernatural It would be of evil augury for our immediate posterity if the tender infants and adolescents of the present day were to think themselves too wise and too clever, as they are in danger of doing, to take pleasure in a fairy tale, and turn up their scornful and precocious little noses at *Jack and the Bean Stalk*, *Jack the Giant Killer*, *Puss in Boots*, *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood*, *Tom Thumb*, *Aladdin*, and *Cinderella*, as

the grad-grinds and the stern professors of so-called useful knowledge would do their best to bring about, and transform, if it were possible, the young children into prigs when they arrived at maturity. I thought so then, I think so now, and will continue to think so, in spite of all the arguments that mathematical and scientific bigots may urge to the contrary.

> Let Wisdom guide us in our teens,
> And never fail to light us after;
> But oh! let children keep their faith,
> Their awe, their wonder, and their laughter!
> So shall their hearts be duly trained
> In opening Life's appropriate season,
> Nor Fancy, Sympathy, and Love
> Be starved upon the dregs of Reason!

New York to Washington.

In the business of lecturing in which I was engaged, it is absolutely necessary that the lecturer, especially if he have come from Europe, should be preceded or accompanied in his travels by an agent to manage the publicity of the press for him, to engage rooms at the hotels, to secure lecturing halls, to manage the advertising, and to print and dispose of the tickets of admission. I was fortunate enough to secure in this capacity the services of Colonel Hiram Fuller, formerly editor and proprietor of the *New York Mirror*, in partnership

with Mr. N. P. Willis, and well known in all the literary and journalistic society of New York. There are many colonels in the United States who have not and never had any connection with the army, and Colonel Fuller was one of them, deriving his title from an office in the Navy Yard bestowed upon him by a by-gone President for services rendered during the Presidential election. I found Colonel Fuller to be an efficient agent, a courteous gentleman, and an attached friend, and travelled many thousands of miles with him with pleasure and advantage, which I had reason to believe was mutual.

The first journey we took together was from New York to Washington, where we remained for several weeks. In the cars to Baltimore a little incident occurred, which I shall narrate as a characteristic of travelling manners in the United States.

With the usual aristocratic spirit of a travelling Englishman—who always thinks, if he has any money in his pocket, that he is to travel in a first-class carriage—I told Colonel Fuller, on our way to the *depôt*—for such is the American name for a railway-station—that we should require two first-class tickets.

"There is no first or second class," said the Colonel. "We are all equal in the cars, free and independent citizens, everybody as good as everybody else, and a great deal better."

"Colonel, excuse me for giving way to my British prejudices. When I go home again, I shall make it a rule to travel third-class, if it be but to show that I am a man of the people, and have travelled in a land of true liberty, equality, and fraternity. I admire the abolition of these class distinctions, and I don't see why, in fact, there should be first-class riding any more than there can be first-class walking."

"I don't quite agree with you," replied the Colonel. "If we travel by steam-boat up to Long Island Sound, for instance, from New York on the way to Boston, we can have a private state-room and cabin, if we choose to pay for it, and I don't see why we should not have the same sort of privacy on board of the cars, if we wish to indulge in the comfort and luxury of being free of the society of rowdies. I like the English system, and think ours bad. But you 'll be able to judge for yourself before we get to Baltimore."

And so I was. We had not gone five miles on our way in the long car, calculated to hold about sixty people, and quite full, when a woman—I cannot call her a lady—very stout, very coarse, very ugly, and very vulgar, and, I should say, about fifty years of age, stopped at my seat, where I was conversing with the Colonel, who sat alongside of me, and said abruptly, "I want your seat."

I am an admirer of the ladies, and nothing

gives me greater pleasure than to be courteous and kind to them, and do them any little service in my power; but I don't like to be dictated to. I like to offer my attentions; I like to be mutely appealed to by a sweet creature in distress or discomfort, whose distress and discomfort shall be speedily banished, if in my power to banish them from the bosom of gentle and confiding weakness. But to be commanded by an Amazon and a virago —no! decidedly No! I acted accordingly, and said, looking at the woman, who had the appearance of a cook or a scullery-wench: "Madam, I have found a place for myself along with my friend, with whom I wish to talk, and shall not resign it. If there is no place for you, I am sorry, but I can't help it. Why do you not try in another car?"

"I want *your* place," she replied.

"Then you shall not have it!"

"Really," said the Colonel, appealing to the company, "the nuisance of unwomanly women is intolerable in this country, and I applaud and support my friend in his determination to keep his seat."

A loud buzz of applause ran through the carriage as the Colonel spoke, showing that the sympathy of the travellers was with us and not with the woman. She, however, defiant and insolent, and turning up her nose, muttered something about "brutal Englishmen!" to which the Colonel, standing straight up, replied: "Madam, *I* am not

an Englishman, but an American, proud of my country; and my advice to you is to look about for a vacant seat, and secure it for yourself for the remainder of your journey. And if my friend will retain possession of my place against man and woman during my absence, I will cheerfully endeavour to get accommodation for you in another car."

The woman had discretion enough to act upon his hint. The Colonel went out with her into another car (the reader should know that there is communication between carriage and carriage through the whole length of the train), and returned alone in less than three minutes, proclaiming loudly enough to be heard by all in our compartment that he had found a vacant place for her and made her "comfortable." The announcement elicited a cheer for the Colonel.

When he took his place beside me once again, he deplored that the unreasoning gallantry of his countrymen to everyone wearing petticoats had produced the worst results in the minds of vulgar women, and had made them vain, supercilious, insolent, and, in one word, unwomanly.

"I can give my homage freely," he said, "but no one can extort it from me; and I hope my countrymen will sooner or later avoid the mistake of treating all women, whatever their culture or want of culture, as superiors. A woman is man's

equal, nor more nor less. If there are occasions when she is weaker, let it be the man's duty—nay, his pleasure, his delight—to lend her the aid of his strength. I hate mock gallantry, just as I hate anything that is mock, except mock turtle. The aristocracy of rank and privilege may or may not be bad; but the aristocracy of sex, in perversion of natural law, is intolerable."

As I agreed with the Colonel and the Colonel with me, we came to the silent conclusion, I suppose, that we were both very sensible people. But I could not help reflecting, nevertheless, that this stilted affectation of woman worship was not a proof of a high degree of civilisation, but of a stupid and uneducated youthfulness on the part of the Americans, only to be paralleled by the similar stupidity of a raw clodhopper of nineteen, who looks upon every woman as a goddess, even though she may be a brazen hussey not fit to exchange a word with. Nothing, to my mind, is so beautiful as a kind, tender-hearted woman, young or old, who knows that God and nature have made man and woman for mutual support and comfort, and rendered it the man's supreme pleasure to be pleasant to her, and to be subdued, not by her might, but by her love—not by her arrogance, but by her quiet and unconquerable gentleness.

The Shadow of a Duel.

Once, and once only during my life, I was on the brink of being challenged to fight a duel—a practice of which I have the utmost abhorrence. My grandfather, a Captain of Marines on board of the ill-fated *Royal George*, had the misfortune to be challenged by his superior officer, Colonel Campbell, of Glen Feochan, in the island of Mull, and the still greater misfortune to kill the challenger. The result was the death-blow to his professional career, and threw a dark shade over all his prospects in life, and, in a minor degree, over those of my father. For the last thirty years or more, duelling—once as common in England as in other countries—has gone out of fashion. On this subject a recent author has some remarks which require notice and explanation.

"How is it," says Mr. Percy Fitzgerald in his *History of the Life and Times of William IV.*, "that England, of all civilised countries, is the only one in which duelling is not tolerated? In Germany it is sanctioned in the army by a particular decree of the present venerated Emperor. In France, Belgium, and America, it is the regular mode of settling a quarrel. In England there is no pretence made to superior piety or greater sense in the matter,

neither is it due to a greater respect for the laws, as these were in full force when duelling was a custom. It may be that such a practice would be distasteful to a nation of business men and traders; while duelling was chiefly patronised by the upper classes, and the former section of the community did not obtain its full influence till the Reform Bill was passed. This may seem rather an imperfect and halting explanation, but it is the best that can be suggested for so curious a problem."

Mr. Fitzgerald appends a note to this passage, in which he informs his readers that "what gave the *coup de grâce* to duelling in England was the fatal encounter between two brothers-in-law, Colonels Fawcett and Munro, which took place about forty years ago"—or about 1840.

Mr. Fitzgerald is in error in attributing the undoubted fact of the decline and ultimate cessation of the practice of duelling in England to the fatal encounter which he mentions, the last but by no means the first of the tragedies due, not to a mistaken sense of honour, but to the mistaken, irrational, and indefensible mode of vindicating it, which so-called civilisation has borrowed from so-called barbarism. It was fashion, not horror, not remorse, not reason, which gave the *coup de grâce* to the *duello* in England.

Closely following upon the fatal duel between Fawcett and Munro, and another duel not fatal,

fought shortly before or after that event, between the Earl of Cardigan and Captain Harvey Tuckett, and which created at the time what would be now called a "great sensation," a similar encounter between two retail tradesmen doing business as linen-drapers, and keeping shops in Tottenham Court Road, filled with its details a large space in the newspapers of London. Until that time duelling was jealously looked upon as the privilege of the aristocracy, and of officers in the military or naval service of the nation—not a privilege merely, but a strict monopoly.

Society—the *crême de la crême* of it, at all events—considered that middle-class people should resort to the law, if they felt aggrieved, in vindication of their honour if aspersed, or, if the aspersion were such as the law was powerless to remove, to the horsewhip or the stick, if such a mode of punishment would be a relief to their angry feelings, but not to the *duello;* and that the lower classes had in reality the law in their own hands to redress their wrongs, real or imaginary, by means of their clenched fists in fair stand-up fight. But that shopkeepers should resort to duelling was a *reductio ad absurdum* as gross as if costermongers or navvies should take it into their heads to vindicate their honour by swords or pistols, and all the accessories, seconds and doctors included, of the fashionable duel. Such a ridiculous extreme was not to be

tolerated. So Fashion from that time forward set its face against the *duello* steadily and persistently, and it consequently fell into disrepute. Law had denounced the practice in vain; but Fashion, far more powerful than Law, supported as it was by reason and common-sense—which is not always the case—found no difficulty in enforcing obedience to its unwritten decrees; and duelling died the death, not, perhaps, altogether unlamented by the over-sensitive autocrats of society.

Once, and once only in my life, I found myself in the shadow of a possible challenge, not in England, where the *duello* has not been practised since the days of my youth, but in the United States, where it still flourishes, and may be threatened or resorted to by anybody except a negro. It was at Washington, in 1858, where I was lodging at Willard's, the principal Hotel of the legislative capital, where I made the acquaintance of, and was more or less intimate with, a gentleman of political and literary note, who held the position of editor of an influential daily journal. We frequently met at breakfast or dinner, or in the drawing-room or "parlour" of the hotel in the evening, and invariably shook hands on these occasions, as is the common custom in America, as every foreign traveller must have remarked.

On one particular day we had met three or four

times and shaken hands with each other, when it happened that I met the gentleman in Pennsylvania Avenue, and stopped to talk with him. Deeming that the usual hand-shaking was inevitable, though it was the fifth time of the performance, I held out my hand to him, when he said: "No; I won't shake hands with you this time; my hands are dirty."

I replied in a jocular and friendly manner, thinking no evil: "Ah! I suppose you have been writing a leading article!"

He laughed, as I thought, with the utmost good-humour, and as if he fully understood the very poor joke; and so we parted. I had forgotten all about the matter, when, about 11 o'clock at night, just as I was about retiring to my bedroom, I was waited upon by a stranger of semi-military appearance and costume, who informed me, after a few courteous preliminaries, that he came upon behalf of Mr. ——, the Editor of the ——, to demand satisfaction, or an immediate apology, for the insult I had passed upon him and upon his vocation in the insinuation which I had thrown out, when we met in Pennsylvania Avenue, that the writing of leading articles was a dirty business! I was so utterly taken aback by the ridiculous nature of this demand, and with a dim vision of pistols for two, and the measuring of twelve paces at some retired spot in

Virginia, immediately over the Potomac, that I was for a few seconds at a loss for a reply.

"Insulting him in his vocation!" I said at last. "I meant no insult at all. As the vocation happens to be my own, it is the last in the world that I should think of disparaging. The silly remark—for I own it was silly—was a very poor joke, but was uttered in pure innocence and thoughtlessness; and if Mr. —— thinks it needs an apology, I apologise most fully. I regret that he should have misunderstood, not my joke—for that was as palpable as it was foolish—but my meaning, or, rather, my want of meaning."

After a few more words of a similar purport, the messenger—and probable second, if my apology had not been satisfactory to his principal—took his departure, and I thought the affair was ended. Not so, however. The aggrieved party thought a verbal apology insufficient, however ample it might have been, and insisted upon a written one. After a variety of *pourparlers*, which lasted for a whole day, on the part of the friend of the sensitive editor with a friend whom I was advised to call to my aid, a satisfactory but not humiliating apology in writing was mutually agreed to. The results, as far as I was concerned, were, first, that the affair of honour, so-called, was finally disposed of; and, second, that I ceased to look upon my former "friend" and acquaintance as either the one or

the other, and that we became for the future better strangers than we were before.

A third though a minor result of the incident was that I was confirmed in my previous belief that the Rev. Sidney Smith was in error in attributing to the Scotch the monopoly of the incapacity to understand the meaning of a joke, unless it were driven into their brains by a surgical operation. The Scotch, it is true, have a hatred of the vulgar form of joking called "chaff," though they appreciate wit and humour as well as any people under the sun; but, even were the libel of the reverend funster founded in truth, no possible Scotsman that ever lived could have exhibited a more impervious insensibility to a joke than the American editor with whom I had this slight misunderstanding.

Washington.

During my stay at Washington, the city was visited by deputations of three tribes of Red Indians from the praires of the Far West, who came to seek an interview with President Buchanan, in the hope that he would do something to relieve the misery under which they suffered from the injustice and encroachments of their white neighbours. They did not seem to know that they were themselves to blame to a large extent for the undoubted misery that they endured, by the hostile attitude they assumed towards the settlers, by their almost insane love for the rum-bottle and the whisky-bottle, by their predatory habits, and by their incurable hatred of civilised work of any and every kind. A sight of them in their tawdry finery, and of their melancholy faces, half-ferocious, half-stolid, was quite sufficient to dispel from the most romantic minds any feeling of tenderness or pity towards them, that might have been inspired by the reading of the *Last of the Mohicans*, or any other of the fascinating Indian novels of Fenimore Cooper. The whole number of the forlorn remnants of a once noble though savage race now remaining on the North American Continent, within the limits of the United States, amounted in this year (1857) to little more than 300,000, less than the population

of the city of Brooklyn, one of the many suburbs of New York, and less than one half of that of Philadelphia.

One of these disreputable but proud and untameable warriors, prowling about Pennsylvania Avenue, the great, long, fashionable, and dreary lounge of the idlers of Washington, was smitten by the personal charms of the comely Mrs. Slidell, wife of the Mr. Slidell who afterwards, in conjunction with Mr. Mason, became famous in Europe and America, on the outbreak of the Civil War, by their seizure, contrary to all law and international right, on board of a British ship. The circumstances, as may be remembered, threatened to lead to a war between Great Britain and the United States, which, had it broken out, would have infallibly led to the recognition of the Confederate States and the permanent disruption of the Union. The Indian savage was so struck by the beauty of the lady, and the desirability of adding her to the number of his squaws in the wilderness, that he persistently dogged her steps whenever she ventured to stir out of doors, following behind her if she were on foot, and running by the side of her carriage if she rode, that his conduct became such a nuisance as to be absolutely intolerable. He was told by the interpreter in charge of the Indian delegation, that such behaviour, if persisted in, after due warning, would infallibly lead to his

imprisonment in the common gaol. Nothing daunted by the threat, and acting like a man accustomed to face difficulties, and to conquer them, he resolved to appeal at once to Mr. Slidell, and negotiate with him, if possible, for the *sale* of the lady. The price of a squaw on the prairies was one horse. So deeply was he enamoured of Mrs. Slidell, that he was prepared to offer two horses for her; and if the price were not considered liberal enough, he would even go the length of three. He was told by the interpreter that neither three horses, nor three hundred, nor three thousand, could purchase a Christian woman, and that his best plan would be to banish the idea from his mind, and go back again to the prairies as fast as he could. The dark inamorato was philosopher enough to be resigned to his fate, and after ejaculating "Ugh! Ugh!" with stoical sorrow, and possibly a long pull at the whisky-bottle, ceased to act the part of a gay Lothario, and was seen no more in Pennsylvania Avenue. The whisky, however, was difficult to procure in Washington, as the most peremptory commands had been issued by the police authorities to all publicans, bar-keepers, public-houses, grocery stores and groggeries, forbidding the sale or gift of spirituous liquors of any kind to the Indians. But laws are easily evaded in the United States, and rum and whisky dealers are not scrupulous, and the lower

class rowdies, generous in treating themselves or their friends to drink, and caring nothing for police regulations, treated the salutary prohibition with contempt, and too often took a wicked delight in making a poor Pawnee or Pottowattamie drunk. But as a rule the Pawnee and Pottowattamies had extra hard heads, and could imbibe, without feeling any bad effect, three times as much bad whisky as would render a white man insensible.

A Visit to Lola Montes. 1859.

Forty years ago, or upwards, a beautiful and fascinating person, a young English woman, named James, who for stage purposes wished to be known as a Spaniard, and by the more romantic and euphonious appellation of the Señora Lola Montes, burst upon the world of London like a meteor, and astonished the frequenters of the Italian Opera by her appearance on the boards of Her Majesty's Theatre. In that day Mr. Benjamin Lumley, the enterprising lessee, found by his banking account that the ballet was even more popular than the opera, to which it was an adjunct; and the fair Lola's graceful, though somewhat unconventional and inartistic performances as a dancer divided the opinion of the town, after the first night, into two irreconcileable factions. The one looked upon her with enthusiastic favour;

the other, true to their training and convictions, but with a woeful lack of gallantry towards a charming woman, denounced her as a charlatan, and a false pretender to the choreographic art, then and recently adorned by such celebrated and consummate dancers as Marie Taglioni, Fanny Ellsler and Rose Cerito. The dissentients ultimately carried the day, and Mr. Lumley refused to prolong her engagement, even if he did not bring it to a sudden and peremptory close, and Lola consequently, after a short and fitful but fiercely contested triumph, disappeared from the London stage, to achieve a different and more splendid success in another sphere. At Munich, undeterred and undaunted by her failure to be appreciated in London, she appeared in a Ballet in the presence of King Ludwig of Bavaria, who went specially to the theatre to witness her performance, and met with such brilliant and boisterous success as might have justified her in repeating to herself the words of Cæsar, *Veni, vidi, vici*, with pardonable exultation. The susceptible heart of the old King was not a very strong fortress ; but strong or weak, whatever it was, she captured it, if not by a *coup de main*, by a *coup des pieds* and a series of pirouettes which delighted the amorous monarch, the eccentric father of an equally eccentric but more moral son, whose craze was for the music of Wagner. The elderly Sovereign wooed and won the fair young lady, who yielded not at

all reluctantly to his importunity, and became his wife in everything but the name. She exercised such influence over his mind and actions as to make him her slave, her worshipper, and herself the powerful but unsuspected arbiter of his destiny. He created her Countess of Lansfeldt, loaded her with favours and with gold, and was so governed by her advice and opinions on public affairs as speedily to weaken the loyalty of his subjects, and prepare the way for his downfall and abdication in the German revolutions that were the consequences of the great French cataclysm of 1848, which sent King Louis Philippe to England a hopeless exile under the name of Mr. William Smith.

Lola possessed not only a brave heart and a beautiful face, but very considerable talent, and the downfall of her royal lover and her consequent banishment from the scene of her splendour, still left her with courage and the hope of a career. She did not, however, relapse into the immorality which had raised her so high in station and sunk her so low in character; and perhaps scorning, after having been the mistress of a king, to become the mistress of any meaner person, she resolved to turn her intellectual rather than her physical gifts to pecuniary advantage, and become a public lecturer both in England and in the United States. She did not achieve any very brilliant success in England, but in America, which then had, and still

has, a kindly welcome for European, especially for British, celebrities of every kind, she created a highly favourable impression, and appeared in all the principal cities of the United States and Canada.

It was in the year 1859, after my return from my first visit to America, and in connection with her career as a lecturer, that I one day received at the *Illustrated London News* office a letter from Lola, with whom I had no personal acquaintance, inviting me to call upon her at 26 Park Lane, on a matter of important business. My curiosity was excited. I could not imagine what she could possibly want with me, and had for a short time considerable doubts as to the propriety or expediency of responding to her call. But at last my curiosity got the better of my not very strong objection, and I resolved to visit the celebrated lady, as she had so earnestly requested. Mr. W. H. Seward, Senator for New York, and afterwards Secretary of State under President Lincoln, was dining with me, *tête-à-tête*, on the evening of the day when the letter reached me, and, on mentioning the matter to him, he expressed an earnest wish to be allowed to call on the lady with me. Knowing from experience the free, easy, and informal manner in which Americans introduce themselves to anyone of whom they desire to make the acquaintance, I consented to the proposition, which I would not

have done had he been an Englishman, and fixed on the following afternoon for the visit.

Mr. Seward provided a brougham and a pair of horses for the occasion, and we proceeded together to Park Lane, not without some surprise on my part that Lola could afford to be lodged or could find accommodation in such a highly aristocratic quarter. On applying at No. 26 Park Lane, the gate of a princely mansion was opened by a gorgeous flunkey, radiant in plush and gold lace, with shapely and unexceptionable calves, whose eye and whole demeanour expressed the extreme of astonishment when I drew out my card-case and inquired if Madame Lola Montes was within. He evidently knew the name, and replied very haughtily, if not impertinently, that I had been wrongly directed by someone who ought to have known better, and that the house was that of the Duchess of Somerset. On looking again at Lola's letter, which I had in my pocket, I found the address plainly and unmistakeably written, Twenty-six Park Lane. Under the circumstances there was nothing to be done but to explain to the magnificent menial that I was not to blame, and to drive off, with instructions to the coachman to signal to the first policeman we met, and to ask him for information. He had never heard of the lady, but told us that perhaps at the Piccadilly end of Park Lane, where the street is narrow and the

houses of an inferior character, many of them let in lodgings, we might perhaps find another twenty-six. We acted on this information and found that the policeman was right. We discovered the abode of Lola, and, knocking at the door, learned from the servant-girl—not a flunkey this time—that she was within. I asked Mr. Seward to give me his card that I might send it up with mine; but he said that he no longer desired to see the lady, that he would not be announced, and that he would not enter, but would wait for me in the brougham until I had had my interview. On asking him why, at the last moment, he had changed his mind, he replied that second thoughts were best, that he fully expected a nomination at Chicago for the Presidency of the Republic in succession to Mr. Buchanan, and that it would damage his prospects if it became known and published in the American papers that he had visited such a woman as Lola Montes. So I went up alone, and found the lady still beautiful, but pale and thin, and evidently very ill, though her eyes, large almost as those of a gazelle, sparkled and shone, and seemed as if they were capable of performing the feat, recorded in one of the Irish songs of Samuel Lover, of burning a hole in the waistcoat of an admirer. She was lying on a sofa, from which she was unable to rise, and explained that she had been seriously ill and was slowly recovering, and hoped to be able to leave the

depressing atmosphere of London in a week or two, either for the sea-side, or, better still, for the South of France. She then proceeded to explain the business on which she had taken the liberty to send for me, which she would not have done, she said, had she been able to go out in a carriage to find me at the *Illustrated London News* office. She had not long returned, she added, from a tolerably successful lecturing tour in America, and on endeavouring to settle accounts with one of her travelling agent, she had discovered that he had defrauded her, or at all events endeavoured to defraud her, of a considerable sum of money which he had received on her account. Whether the accusation were just or not I had no means of ascertaining, but Lola was deeply impressed with its truth, and with the heartless robbery attempted, if not consummated, by a man to whom she had given her confidence. He on his part as vehemently denied that he had done her any wrong, and affirmed that his accounts would bear the strictest investigation. "No doubt," she said, "his accounts as far as they went would be found accurate enough to satisfy any arithmetician or accountant; he was quite clever and cunning enough for that; but she was positive that he had received sums which he had appropriated to his own use, as he could but too easily have done, unless she had acted as her own money-taker at the doors of her lecture-

rooms, which it was manifestly impossible for her to do." The result was a violent quarrel between them, in which hard words were interchanged, concluding with a threat on his part that he would set the whole press of London against her, and naming me particularly as one with whom he was intimately acquainted, and whom he could influence in her disfavour by the insertion of an article in the *Illustrated London News* that would damage her reputation as a lecturer, and do her irreparable injury both in England and America, if ever she attempted to lecture again. He also mentioned the names of other persons connected with the *Times*, the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Spectator*, and the *Athenæum*, whom he pretended he could influence in like manner. This, however, she said she did not believe, and had requested this interview with me to inform me by word of mouth of the unfair use that had been made of my name, and to put me on my guard if the agent were cowardly enough to resort to such ungentlemanly means to injure a defenceless woman. Lola was much relieved when I informed her that I did not know the person she complained of, that I was ignorant even of his name, and that even if I had known or been ever so intimate with him, any attempt he might have made to influence my opinion or that of the journal I conducted would have led to no other result than the cessation

of my intercourse with him, if any such had existed. I also expressed my belief that he had used the names of all the other gentlemen he had specified in an equally unwarrantable manner, and that she needed not to fear the effects of his hostility if it strove to exert itself in the manner indicated. She thanked me very cordially, and said I had taken a weight off her mind and given her strength to defy her enemy. She did not expect, however, that she could compel him to refund, or even to confess that he had wronged her, but she was resigned to the loss and would bear it as best she could.

In taking my leave of her, I expressed my regret that our interview had been so brief, and that I was compelled to take my departure more abruptly than I could have wished, because I had a friend waiting for me at the door in a brougham whom I had intended to come up with me, but who had refused. When I mentioned the name of Mr. Seward, Lola smiled, and said, " I know him, and have met him in New York, the sly old fox; he need not have been afraid."

I afterwards told Mr. Seward what Lola had said, omitting " the sly old fox "; and he remarked that had he not been a candidate for the Presidency he would not have been in the least afraid, adding, " but New York papers and the American press have long ears, and can hear across the Atlantic.

And one cannot be too careful when the popular vote is concerned."

This was my first and last interview with the fair enslaver of King Ludwig: a great celebrity in her day—a brilliant day while it lasted, and a very short one.