

Sear, blistering sun, these temple veins,
Blind, icy moon, these coldest eyes,
And drench me through, you winter rains, —
Swell, if ye can, my miseries.

Those dark, deep orbs are meeting mine,
That white hand presses on my brow,
That soft, sweet smile I know, 't is thine, —
I see thee standing by me now.

CROMWELL.

THOUGH we grant Oliver to have been but a patching tailor at constitution-mending, we must claim for him a larger fraction of humanity than the ninth, which tradition awards to that useful, man-making class of artisans. Manhood, — real, soul-inspired manhood must have abounded more than ordinary under the buff jerkin of that sturdy yeoman. Else how should he, in times when manliness was far from rare, have stood out in bold relief beyond all other figures carved in that pannel of England's history? That portion too, be it remarked, which is of all the most soul-stirring in the perusal. Place the record before the mind of generous youth or aspiring man, and whether coinciding with the Commonwealth doctrines, or not, he shall not fail to be touched by the recital of those twenty years' events.

Great action speaks to all. The universal perception of heroism in Cromwell's character grants him the stamp of true greatness. Great was he in the outward, for in political rank none stood above him; great must he have been in the inward, for of exterior advantages to raise him to outward eminence he had none. His years of education dissipated, his fortune mean, his dress slovenly, his speech disagreeable, his person coarse, how happened it that to the topmost round of ambition's ladder he was enabled to climb?

Never can it be permitted, that we may conclude the whole English nation at any period to have been so besot-

ted, as to be deceived by pretensions for a longer time than is usually given to a nine-days' wonder. At this era, moreover, there was too much acuteness, intelligence, and determination in activity, to allow a hollow usurper to defraud us of our good opinions. If impartiality will not aid Englishmen to see this, nationality must. The cosmopolitan asserts it; the patriot admits it.

Destiny is the sternest master, the blandest friend, the most puzzling guide which men can have. His scholars, at times the most active, are anon the most inert of the human race. He accepts neither assistance nor resistance from his pupils; and when one appears most to be instructing his fellows, the great teacher is most instructing and constructing him. Kings and republicans are equally pupils of a power which, now through external circumstances, now through central life, influences human action to some great event.

Why do they not suffer the embarkation of that moneyless, rough, active, zealous puritan to the more congenial shores of New England? He stands there on the wharf, the ship is about to sail, happy society in perspective is beheld on the other side of the ocean, warm and wealthy friends will accompany him. He may thus escape from a country in which it is difficult to earn one's bread, offensive to express one's thoughts, almost impossible to live a pure life, to one where the outward burdens are lighter, and the new conception, if not the new birth of freedom is realized. He will cease longer to be oppressed by royalty and episcopacy in their strongholds. He aims at a land and a brotherhood where long prayers may consist with long purses, and he may wait duly on the Lord without neglecting his crops.

But no; the sharp, gray-eyed fanatic, humble as he is, must be detained. They issue that royal order in council, sad council for royalism, and he must remain. Thus goes on the work of Destiny. The ball then passes to the other side, and Cromwell becomes the player. Earnestness is a thing not to be annihilated by order in council; and if you will not allow its activity to be manifested in emigration, which is its quiet, natural course in this man, it takes another, and for you more troublesome, form. He is now member of Parliament for the town of Cambridge. Just

the character to be chosen by a town, which is too near a neighbor of a protestant Rome to be ignorant of its corruptions.

Providence has evidently adopted him as an instrument for its end. That bronze mind is roughly cast, and little polished; but there is that in him which will not let him be turned aside from his purpose. Moreover he has a purpose. Reverie is, for the moment, past for him. He has the revelation, and now he comes forth to action. To frail argument and long-drawn speech he never descends. His tactics are not talkative, but active. To place his cause on the rotten stage of logical precision were to forecast defeat. He gives facts, — huddled, truly, like a basket of many-colored yarns entangled, but still facts. Evils he recounts, needless of exaggeration, for they are known to all. Abuses he exposes, of which all are convinced, for the proof is in their own suffering. Rights and just wants he asserts, and the assertion suffices, for they find a sympathy in every bosom. Zeal, too, he displays; the earnestness, the sincerity, which cannot be feigned, is seen in him by the thousands, the millions, who cannot be deceived by the zeal, the earnestness, the sincerity they are self-conscious of.

Here lies the point. We all see, we all feel eternal rectitude, but we do not all act it. We do not even verbally affirm it. In the dark and troublous hour, when the flame of liberty is all but extinguished, when it most demands a bold hand to add replenishing oil, then are fewer spirits found to take the foremost place. When again the lamp burns highly, multitudes, gladdened by its brightness, can talk of heroism, and applaud the actor, but can no more.

Action is the assertion of greatness. Nobility is essentially epic. Man himself is the darkened glass through which he darkly sees. Children and nations, while they are the most open to fraud, are the last to be deceived. They know while they are cheated where integrity lies. They award no honor to the man who says but does not, who talks largely but does little, who speculates freely, and in his being or doing is narrow.

Turned from dissipation to married life by the reforming spirit; averted from gambling fury to religious zeal; forced

by liberal expenditure to farming; debarred from emigration by royal ordinance; chosen as the representative of wronged citizens, he attacks jobbing lords; yet here finding not the exact sphere for action, he suffers not himself to be clipped of his fair proportions; he is not to be the victim of circumstances, he will at least select them. At the age of forty-three years he enters the army. Until then the idle student, the domestic husband, the struggling farmer, the religious zealot, the quiet, humble emigrant, the talking legislator. Employments all distant enough from that of military leader. Yet this is the chosen path for his exertions.

How deep must be that feeling, how sincere those convictions, how lively that indignation, which permits men, having the Christian Scriptures in one hand, to take up the sword with the other. We laugh at the joke, "say your prayers and keep your gunpowder dry;" but the union of these two spirits in act is no frivolous matter to the actor. Mistaken the actor may be, nay, must be, whether the deeply indignant wealth-producer at the plough or in the shop, or the flighty spendthrift in the senate or the church. No vote in form of parliament can hallow this union; and a blind, depressive man-teaching only can calm the nervous trembling, which comes over the Christ-taught mind at the mere suggestion to unite violence and love.

Sincerity, however, is quite consistent with this unholy blindness. Sincere are kings, sincere are people. Blind both. Sincere too is Cromwell. No sophistry can deprive him of this negative merit. Politicians, who know no other value in social science than to make a trade of it, will vainly endeavor to sneer this attribute out of countenance. If Cromwell throws the ink about at the signing of the bloody warrant, or urges the bottle at convivial meetings, there is a deeper purpose in it than a dirty face or a drunken man. In an age of sincerity, activity, and consciousness, he alone is the greatest, who is most sincere, most active, most conscious.

Tested by the measure of success, who doubts the mastery in this mind? Have we not the many discordant elements in England brought to something like discipline? Are not, for the first time, Scotland and Ireland subjugated,

like younger brothers by the elder, in order to be compacted into one family? Look at the foreign relations. Are not all nations standing respectfully hating or admiring the new wonder, the alarming precedent? Do we not originate lasting treaties with Portugal, highly advantageous to our commerce? Do we not successfully battle with the Dutch, and fight them into fellowship? Is not Spain a suitor for England's favor? Is not mighty France at least civil; and rising Sweden on good terms? Let it be hypocrisy which controls the puritanical zealot; let it be cleverness only which guides the state-vessel so pleasantly over the wide ocean; still he must have the wreath entwined for him who is greatly clever.

The clever-minded world knows only of cleverness, and enjoys only its triumphs, appreciates only its principles; ignorant that the cleverness it so well knows, and so much enjoys, stands on a much deeper basis. The clever hero himself is not always aware of this, and consents to be defrauded of his nobler claim, by accepting renown for the witty usufruct which should be given to the moral capital. Not so, rely upon it, is it with Cromwell. Beneath contradictory appearances, confused utterance, and rough manners, there are the noble purpose, the clear conception, the straightforward action. Originality, creativeness, sincerity, perhaps ever lack polish.

Unless there be some yet unadmitted pusillanimity in royal armies, a victory, by 8,000 undisciplined zealots over 20,000 well drilled hirelings, bespeaks some eminence for the leader, as well as for those he leads. The greater number, too, make a brave resistance. How much braver the assailants. Heroism, or sincerity, or some deep quality must be here at work to produce such results. Spite of the desire to blot out all remembrance of these facts, or to distort or to discolor them, they there remain trophies of what a people can do, when the season ripens their ideal purpose into seed-bearing action.

But destiny changes the hands, and the other players now are to have an inning. Providence toys with souls, when souls would toy with it. Whosoever plays frivolously is no longer an initiative; he is discharged from again starting the ball, but has to repel it as best he may. So long as our hero keeps his heart unviolated, preserves the

promises which in the sanctuary of his soul he made to the eternal spirit, his power is intact. He coquets to his ruin, and plays false to himself.

Cromwell, with a robust frame, which might have served him twenty years longer, quits his earthly tenement at fifty-nine. So soon fails the body, when the soul is derelict from its high purpose; as, on the other hand, a lofty aim, an infinite inspiration, fills out existence and prolongs our time. At mature age, when calm judgment should mellow youthful zeal, when domestic opposition is mastered, and foreign relations are amicably secured, why is not the leader in these events elevated to a Lyncurgus height, and induced to excel in brilliant utility all his previous acts, by the stamp of permanency, as far as holy, unreserved devotion can bestow it? Fatal shortsightedness! He errs not so much in fighting with the book of peace in his hand, as in courting his opponents with the words of peace on his lips. The former might be unconscious zeal, but must succeed; the latter is conscious diplomacy, which must fail. Adherence to principle is the sole security for the attainment of manhood or its preservation. Why, after so much success, does this action-loving man tamper in his position, and condescend to parley with the speculative oppressors whom he has under his feet? The reality for whose development a whole nation were too small a sphere, has he narrowed it down to a family name? Is posterity for him bounded to such a nutshell?

After the people have shown several years' successful experience of self-government, is he about to theorize concerning a two-fold legislature, and to make concessions to an enemy, who is at least consistent in implacability, as well as in the determination not to learn? We dare not believe it. Mental imbecility could not so soon come over that energetic soul. Traitor to himself dares he be?

Fortunately perhaps for man that he has another lesson not to rely on man, it appears even thus. The high tide of success is often fatal to souls whom no adversity can subdue. Cromwell, paltering with a double purpose, hopes to retain the power and fame built on his spirit-founded actions, and to superadd the power and fame, which delusive imagination leads men to suppose can be acquired by calculation and intrigue. Men cannot become great by

courting the title of greatness ; greatness itself alone can make them great.

Oscillating between the substance and the shadow, true to neither, he is no longer heart-whole. Royalism,— Popularity ? The World,— the Spirit ? Which seems to bid higher ? The day of unbought enthusiasm is past ; prudence now usurps the throne of love. Fears of the assassin, guilty tremors, shake that iron frame. Alarmed, he hurries from place to place ; restless, the load of public business augments upon him ; in a few weeks the least courtly of ambassadors cuts short all argument and doubt.

Rest, therefore, may these two-hundred year old bones in their antiquated tomb ; for neither can the bones build new men, nor the grave new houses. We need the new Cromwell. We will rather *be* the new, than recount the rights and wrongs of the old. What have we to do with them ? Let us attend to the existing. The wrongs he temporarily redressed have not yet passed away ; the rights he claimed are not yet conceded. Old England is still corrupt ; New England is still the land of hope. The waters still lie between ; and if aught is changed, it is perhaps only that emigration is prevented, not by royal order in council, but by the decree of want.
