

perhaps a century or two later—is of very doubtful authenticity, and was probably compiled from legendary poems that had been transmitted from generation to generation, and often rehearsed, to the sound of music, at the banquets of the great.

2. The historian Macaulay has aimed to reconstruct some of these poetic legends, which he has given to the world under the title of "Lays of Ancient Rome," and which are supposed to have been recited by ancient minstrels who were in no wise above the passions and prejudices of their age and country. It is stated by all the Latin historians that, a few years after the expulsion of the Tarquins for their despotism and crimes, the neighboring Etruscans, to which nation they belonged, endeavored to restore the tyrants to power, and came against Rome with an overwhelming force. The Romans, repulsed at first, fled across a wooden bridge over the Tiber, when the Roman consul ordered the bridge to be destroyed, to prevent the enemy from entering the city. The continuation of the legend is supposed to have been narrated by one of the Roman minstrels, at a period one hundred years later than the events there recorded.

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LX.

PATRICIAN AND PLEBEIAN CONTESTS.

1. During several hundred years after the overthrow of royalty, the history of the Roman republic is filled

with accounts of the fierce civil contests which raged between the patrician aristocracy and the common people or plebeians, relieved by an occasional episode of a war with some of the surrounding people. At first, the patricians were the wealthy and ruling class: they held all the high military commands; they made the laws; and they reduced the plebeians to a condition differing little from the most abject slavery.

2. At length, in the year 493 B. C., after an open rupture between these two classes, and the withdrawal of the plebeians from the city, a reconciliation was effected, and magistrates, called tribunes, were allowed to be chosen by the people to watch over their rights, and prevent abuses of authority. About forty-five years later, however, ten persons, called decemvirs, who were appointed to compile a body of laws for the commonwealth, having managed to get the powers of the government into their own hands, ruled in the most tyrannical manner, and oppressed the plebeians worse than ever.

3. But an unexpected event—a private injury—accomplished what wrongs of a more public nature had failed to effect. The wicked Appius Claudius, a leading decemvir, had formed the design of securing the person of the beautiful Virginia, daughter of Virginius; but, finding her betrothed to another, in order to accomplish his purpose he procured a base dependent to claim her as his slave. As had been concerted, Virginia was brought before the tribunal of Appius himself, who ordered her to be surrendered to the claimant. It was then that the distracted father, having no other means of saving his daughter, stabbed her to the heart in the presence of the court and the assembled people.

The people arose in their might; the power of the "wicked ten" was overthrown; and Appius, having been impeached, died in prison, probably by his own hand.

4. About eighty years after the death of Virginia the plebeians succeeded, after a struggle of five years against every species of fraud and violence (especially on the part of Claudius Crassus, grandson of the infamous Appius Claudius), in obtaining the full acknowledgment of their rights, and all possible legal guarantees for their preservation. It is during this struggle that a popular poet (as Macaulay supposes),<sup>200</sup> a zealous adherent of the tribunes, makes his appearance in the public market-place, and announces that he has a new song that will cut the Claudian family to the heart. He takes his stand on the spot where, according to tradition, Virginia, more than seventy years ago, was seized by the base dependent of Appius, and there relates the story.

## LXI.

### THE CARTHAGINIAN WARS.

1. After the Romans had reduced all Italy to their dominion, about 270 years before the Christian era, they began to extend their influence abroad, when an interference with the affairs of Sicily brought on a war with Carthage, at that time a powerful republic on the

<sup>200</sup> Segun lo supone Macaulay.

northern African coast,<sup>201</sup> superior in strength and resources to the Roman. The Carthaginians were originally a Tyrian colony from Phœnicia; and not only had they, at this time, extended their dominion over the surrounding African tribes, but they had foreign possessions in Spain, and also in Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Malta, and other islands of the Mediterranean.

2. In the year 263 before Christ the first Punic war began; and, after it had continued eight years with varied success, the Romans sent the Consul Regulus, at the head of a large army, to carry the war into Africa. On the passage across the Mediterranean, the Carthaginian fleet, bearing not less than a hundred and fifty thousand men, was met and defeated; but in a subsequent battle on land the Romans themselves were defeated with great loss, and Regulus himself, being taken prisoner, was thrown into a dungeon. Five years later, however, the Carthaginians were in turn defeated in Sicily, with a loss of twenty thousand men, and the capture of more than a hundred of their elephants, which they had trained to fight in the ranks.

3. It was then that the Carthaginians sent an embassy to Rome with proposals of peace. Regulus was taken from his dungeon to accompany the embassy, the Carthaginians trusting that, weary of his long captivity, he would urge the senate to accept the proffered terms; but the inflexible Roman persuaded the senate to reject the proposal and continue the war, assuring his countrymen that the resources of Carthage were already nearly exhausted. Bound by his oath to return if

<sup>201</sup> Seria mas correcto decir; *the northern, ó north, coast of Africa.*

peace were not concluded, he voluntarily went back, in spite of the prayers and entreaties of his friends, to meet the fate which awaited him. It is generally stated that after his return to Carthage he was tortured to death by the exasperated Carthaginians.

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LXII.

THE NEWSPAPER.

1. Nothing which is familiar to us strikes us as wonderful. Were miracles repeated every day, we should come to glance at them very heedlessly. We get used to rainbows, and stars, and sunsets, and the flashing fires of the north. Surprise wears away in time from the greatest discoveries and inventions; and we send thought through the air, and ride in carriages without horses, and in ships against the wind, just as carelessly and composedly as though such things had always been.

2. Fletcher, the old dramatist, was counted as half crazy when he put into the mouth of Arbaces this ranting promise:

“He shall have chariots easier than air,  
Which I have invented; and thyself,  
That art the messenger, shalt ride before him,  
On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,  
That shall be made to go with golden wheels,  
I know not how yet.”

3. The wonder of the promise has long ago been realized; and, if the poetry of the dream should yet come to pass, and locomotives cut from solid diamonds, and car-wheels wrought from gold, should become common, we should ride after them with as little surprise as now we talk beneath the azure and the gold of God's glorious firmament. Who can forget the feeling of awe which came over him, when, for the first time, he received a telegraphic dispatch from a distant city, transmitted from New York to New Orleans, actually<sup>262</sup> in advance of time itself! This approaches spiritual power more nearly than anything we have seen and handled.

4. The times of which we are writing are remarkable for the extension of periodical literature, especially for the ubiquity of the newspaper. The authors of the Spectator, the Tatler, the Rambler, had no conception of the modern newspaper. It seems like putting the gravity of our readers to the test, when we name this as one of the most wonderful and powerful agents of our times. It is made of rags, ropes, rushes, and lamp-black.

5. Great pains are taken in fitting up the visitant to make a respectable appearance in our mansions; but, in its best trim, its pretensions are very humble. It is dumb, yet it tells us of all which is done upon the earth. It bears, in its own name, the initials of the four points of the compass, N. E. W. S.<sup>263</sup>—*news*. Reeking, in hot haste, as if out of breath, it delivers its message, and then is crumpled up, and thrown into the waste-paper

<sup>262</sup> Positivamente.

<sup>263</sup> *North*, norte; *East*, este; *West*, oeste; *South*, sur.

basket, to ignite the morning's fire. Yet is there nothing more worthy of preservation; for it is the great dial-plate on the clock of time.

6. An artist expends great time and labor in painting a panorama, and crowds find delight in gazing upon the canvas; yet it is of a limited space,—a ruin, a river, a city—Thebes or Jerusalem, the Nile, the Hudson, or the Mississippi. But a newspaper is a daguerreotype of the whole world,—its warrings and diplomacies, its buyings and sellings, its governments and revolutions, its marryings, births, and deaths.

7. A newspaper is a real microcosm,—the world made smaller, held in the hand, and brought under the eye. The huge telescope of Sir John Herschel is so swung, that it reflects all the distant wonders of the sky, which sweep across its lenses, upon a small horizontal table under the eye of the observer; and analogous to this, a newspaper brings all the occurrences of remote continents, incidents at the North Pole and the Antipodes, under the light of your reading-lamp, and within the space of your parlor table. The evening has come, the damp sheet is spread out before you, and with an ill-concealed impatience you sit down to see what new spectacle "Time, the scene-shifter" has prepared for your astonished and delighted eye.

8. The whole world is in motion before you. This is no small gossip about what took place under your own windows; but as Isaiah, in the visions of prophecy, beheld the concourse from all quarters of the earth, the dromedaries from Midian and Ephah, the ships of Tarshish, and the forces of the Gentiles hastening to the rendezvous, so, in sober fact, the most remote and improbable agencies, from the four winds under heaven,

are hurrying through the air and over the sea, to deliver their separate tidings in that small sheet of paper which you now hold in your hand.

WILLIAM ADAMS.

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LXIII.

SUPERIORITY OF WISDOM.

1. Every other quality<sup>264</sup> is subordinate and inferior to wisdom, in the same sense as the mason who lays the bricks and stones in a building is inferior to the architect who drew the plan and superintends the work. The former executes only what the latter contrives and directs. Now, it is the prerogative of wisdom to preside over every inferior principle, so as to regulate the exercise of every power, and limit the indulgence of every appetite, as shall best conduce to one great end.

2. It being the province of wisdom to preside, it sits as umpire on every difficulty, and so gives the final direction and control to all the powers of our nature. Hence, it is entitled to be considered as the top and summit of perfection. It belongs to wisdom to determine when to act, and when to cease; when to reveal, and when to conceal a matter; when to speak, and when to keep silence; when to give, and when to receive; in short, to regulate the measure of all things.

<sup>264</sup> Obsérvese bien la construcción tan diferente de la española: toda otra cualidad, y quiere decir, todas las demás cualidades.  
*every other quality*, literalmente:

as well as to determine the end, and provide the means of obtaining the end pursued in every deliberate course of action.

3. Every particular faculty or skill, besides, should be under the direction of wisdom; for each is quite incapable of directing itself. The art of navigation, for instance, will teach us to steer a ship across the ocean; but it will never teach us on what occasions it is proper to take a voyage. The art of war will instruct us how to marshal an army, or to fight a battle to the greatest advantage; but we must learn from a higher school when it is fitting, just, and proper to wage war or to make peace.

4. The art of the husbandman is to till the earth and bring to maturity its precious fruits: it belongs to another skill to regulate the consumption of these fruits by a regard to our health, fortune, and other circumstances. In short, there is no faculty we can exert, no species of skill we can apply, that does not require a superintending hand—that does not look up, as it were, to some higher principle for guidance, and this guide Wisdom.

ROBERT HALL.

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LXIV.

ROMANTIC STORY.

1. There is a cavern in the island of Hoonga, one of the Tonga islands, in the South Pacific Ocean, which can only be entered by diving into the sea, and which has no other light than that which is reflected from the

bottom of the water. A young chief discovered it accidentally while diving after a turtle, and the use which he made of his discovery will probably be sung in more than one European language, so beautifully is it adapted for a tale in verse.

2. There was a tyrannical governor of Vavaoo, against whom one of the chiefs formed a plan of insurrection. It was betrayed, and the chief, with all his family and kin, was ordered to be destroyed. He had a beautiful daughter, betrothed to a chief of high rank, and she also was included in the sentence. The youth who had found the cavern, and had kept the secret to himself, loved this damsel. He told her the danger in time, and persuaded her to trust to him. They got into a canoe: the place of her retreat was described to her on the way to it,—those women swim like mermaids,—she dived after him, and rose in the cavern. In the widest part, it is about fifty feet; its medium height being about the same, and it is hung with stalactites.

3. Here he brought her the choicest food, the finest clothing, mats for her bed, and sandal-oil to perfume herself with. Here he visited her as often as was consistent with prudence; and here, as may be imagined, this Tonga Leander wooed and won the maid, whom, to make the interest complete, he had long loved in secret, when he had no hope. Meantime he prepared, with all his dependents, male and female, to emigrate in secret to the Figi<sup>266</sup> Islands.

4. The intention was so well concealed that they embarked in safety, and his people asked him, at the point of their departure, if he would not take with him

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<sup>266</sup> Pronúnciase *fídhí*.

a Tonga wife; and accordingly, to their great astonishment, having steered close to the rock, he desired them to wait while he went into the sea to fetch her, jumped overboard, and just as they were beginning to be seriously alarmed at his long disappearance, he rose with his mistress from the water. This story is not deficient in that which all such stories should have, to be perfectly delightful—a fortunate conclusion. The party remained at the Fijis till the oppressor died, and then returned to Vavaoo, where they enjoyed a long and happy life.

ANONYMOUS.

## LXV.

## THE CHINESE PRISONER.

1. A certain emperor of China, on his accession to the throne of his ancestors, commanded a general release of all those who were confined in prison for debt. Among that number was an old man, who had fallen an early victim to adversity, and whose days of imprisonment, reckoned by the notches he had cut on the door of his gloomy cell, expressed the annual circuit of more than fifty suns.

2. With trembling hands and faltering steps he departed from his mansion of sorrow: his eyes were dazzled with the splendor of light, and the face of nature presented to his view a perfect paradise. The jail in which he had been imprisoned stood at some distance from Pekin, and to that city he directed his course, impatient to enjoy the caresses of his wife, his children, and his friends.

3. Having with difficulty found his way to the street in which his decent mansion had formerly stood, his heart became more and more elated at every step he advanced. With joy he proceeded, looking eagerly around; but he observed few of the objects with which he had been formerly conversant. A magnificent edifice was erected on the site of the house which he had inhabited; the dwellings of his neighbors had assumed a new form; and he beheld not a single face of which he had the least remembrance.

4. An aged beggar, who, with trembling limbs, stood at the gate of an ancient portico, from which he had been thrust by the insolent domestic who guarded it, struck his attention. He stopped, therefore, to give him a small pittance out of the amount of the bounty with which he had been supplied by the emperor, and received, in return, the sad tidings that his wife had fallen a lingering sacrifice to penury and sorrow; that his children were gone to seek their fortunes in distant or unknown climes; and that the grave contained his nearest and most valued friends.

5. Overwhelmed with anguish, he hastened to the palace of his sovereign, into whose presence his hoary locks and mournful visage soon obtained admission; and, casting himself at the feet of the emperor, "Great Prince," he cried, "send me back to that prison from which mistaken mercy has delivered me! I have survived my family and friends, and even in the midst of this populous city I find myself in a dreary solitude. The cell of my dungeon protected me from the gazers at my wretchedness; and whilst secluded from society I was the less sensible of the loss of its enjoyments. I am now tortured with the view of pleasure in which

I cannot participate, and die with thirst, though streams of delight surround me." PERCIVAL.

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LXVI.

REPLY TO SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

1. The atrocious crime of being a young man, which the honorable gentleman has, with such spirit and decency, charged upon me, I shall neither attempt to palliate nor deny; but content myself with hoping, that I may be one of those whose follies cease with their youth, and not of that number<sup>266</sup> who are ignorant in spite of experience. Whether youth can be imputed to a man as a reproach, I will not assume the province of determining; but surely age may become justly contemptible, if the opportunities which it brings have passed away without improvement, and vice appears to prevail when the passions have subsided. The wretch who, after having seen the consequences of a thousand errors, continues still to blunder, and whose age has only added obstinacy to stupidity, is surely the object either of abhorrence or contempt, and deserves not that his gray hairs should secure him from insult. Much more is he to be abhorred, who, as he has advanced in age, has receded from virtue, and become more wicked, with less temptation; who prostitutes himself for money which he cannot enjoy, and spends the remains of his life in the ruin of his country.

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<sup>266</sup> Esta construcción es precisamente lo opuesto de la española; el inglés dice literalmente: y no de aquel número que; mientras en español se diría: y no del número de aquellos que.

2. But youth is not my only crime; I am accused of acting a theatrical part. A theatrical part may either imply some peculiarity of gesture, or a dissimulation of my real sentiments, and an adoption of the opinions and language of another man. In the first sense, the charge is too trifling to be confuted; and deserves only to be mentioned that it may be despised. I am at liberty, like every other man, to use my own language; and though, perhaps, I may have some ambition to please this gentleman, I shall not lay myself under any restraint, nor very solicitously copy his diction or his mien, however matured by age, or modelled by experience.

3. But if any man shall, by charging me with theatrical behavior, imply that I utter any sentiments but my own, I shall treat him as a calumniator and a villain; nor shall any protection shelter him from the treatment he deserves. I shall on such an occasion, without scruple, trample upon all those forms with which wealth and dignity intrench themselves, nor shall anything but age restrain my resentment; age, which always brings one privilege, that of being insolent and supercilious, without punishment.

4. But with regard to<sup>267</sup> those whom I have offended, I am of opinion, that if I had acted a borrowed part, I should have avoided their censure: the heat that offended them was the ardor of conviction, and that zeal for the service of my country which neither hope nor fear shall influence me to suppress. I will not sit unconcerned while my liberty is invaded, nor look in silence upon public robbery. I will exert my endeavors,

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<sup>267</sup> En cuanto á.

at whatever hazard, to repel the aggressor, and drag the thief to justice, whoever may protect him in his villainies, and whoever may partake of his plunder.

PITT.

LXVII.

THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

1. Harley sat down on a large stone by the wayside to take a pebble from his shoe, when he saw, at some distance, a beggar approaching him. He had on a loose sort of coat mended with different-colored rags, among which the blue and russet were predominant. He had a short, knotty stick in his hand; and on the top of it was stuck a ram's horn; he wore no shoes, and his stockings had entirely lost that part of them which would have covered his feet and ankles; in his face, however, was the plump appearance of good-humor; he walked a good round pace, and a crooked-legged dog trotted at his heels.

2. "Our delicacies," said Harley to himself, "are fantastic; they are not in nature! That beggar walks over the sharpest of these stones barefooted, whilst I have lost the most delightful dream in the world from the smallest of them happening to get into my shoe!" The beggar had by this time come up, and pulling off a piece of a hat, asked charity of Harley. The dog began to beg too. It was impossible to resist both; and, in truth, the want of shoes and stockings had made both unnecessary, for Harley had destined sixpence for him before.

3. The beggar, on receiving it, poured forth blessings without number; and, with a sort of smile on his countenance, said to Harley "that if he wanted to have his fortune told"—Harley turned his eye briskly upon the beggar; it was an unpromising look for the subject of a prediction, and silenced the prophet immediately. "I would much rather learn," said Harley, "what it is in your power to tell me. Your trade must be an entertaining one; sit down on this stone, and let me know something of your profession; I have often thought of turning fortune-teller for a week or two, myself."

4. "Master," replied the beggar, "I like your frankness much; for I had the humor of plain-dealing in me from a child: but there is no doing with it in this world; we must do as we can; and lying is, as you call it, my profession. But I was in some sort forced to the trade, for I once dealt in telling the truth. I was a laborer, sir; and gained as much as to make me live. I never laid by, indeed; for I was reckoned a piece of a wag, and your wags, I take it, are seldom rich, Mr. Harley." "So," said Harley, "You seem to know me." "Ay, there are few folks in the country that I don't know something of: how should I tell fortunes else?"<sup>288</sup> "True; but go on with your story; you were a laborer, you say, and a wag: your industry, I suppose, you left with your old trade; but your humor you preserved to be of use to you in your new."

5. "What signifies sadness, sir? a man grows lean on't. But I was brought to my idleness by degrees; sickness first disabled me, and it went against my stomach to work ever after. But in truth I was for a

<sup>288</sup> ¿Cómo, de otra manera, podría yo decir la buena fortuna?



long time so weak, that I spit blood whenever I attempted to work. I had no relation living, and I never kept a friend above a week, when I was able to joke. Thus I was forced to beg my bread, and a sorry trade I have found it, Mr. Harley. I told all my misfortunes truly, but they were seldom believed; and the few who gave me a half-penny as they passed, did it with a shake of the head, and an injunction not to trouble them with a long story. In short, I found that people don't care to give alms without some security for their money; such as a wooden leg or a withered arm, for example. So I changed my plan, and instead of telling my own misfortunes, began to prophesy happiness to others.

6. This I found by<sup>269</sup> much the better way. Folks will always listen when the tale is their own, and of many who say they do not believe in fortune-telling, I have known few on whom it had not a very sensible effect. I pick up the names of their acquaintance; amours and little squabbles are easily gleaned among servants and neighbors; and, indeed, people themselves are the best intelligencers in the world for our purpose. They dare not puzzle us for their own sakes, for every one is anxious to hear what they wish to believe; and they who repeat it, to laugh at it when they have done, are generally more serious than their hearers are apt to imagine. With a tolerably good memory, and some share of cunning, I succeed reasonably well as a fortune-teller. With this, and showing the tricks of that dog there, I make shift to pick up a livelihood.

7. My trade is none of the most honest, yet people

<sup>269</sup> Podria omitirse la preposicion *by*.

are not much cheated after all, who give a few half-pence for a prospect of happiness, which I have heard some persons say is all a man can arrive at in this world. But I must bid you good-day, sir; for I have three miles to walk before noon, to inform some boarding-school young ladies whether their husbands are to be peers of the realm or captains in the army; a question which I promised to answer them by that time."

8. Harley had drawn a shilling from his pocket; but Virtue bade him consider on whom he was going to bestow it. Virtue held back his arm; but a milder form, a younger sister of Virtue's, not so severe as Virtue, nor so serious as Pity, smiled upon him; his fingers lost their compression; nor did Virtue appear to catch the money as it fell. It had no sooner reached the ground, than the watchful cur (a trick he had been taught) snapped it up; and, contrary to the most approved method of stewardship, delivered it immediately into the hands of his master.

MACKENZIE.

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LXVIII.

THE TOURNAMENT.

1. \* \* \* The music of the challengers breathed, from time to time, wild bursts, expressive of triumph or defiance; while the clowns grudged a holiday which seemed to pass away in inactivity; and old knights and nobles lamented the decay of martial spirit, and spoke of the triumphs of their younger days. Prince John began to talk to his attendants about making ready the banquet, and the necessity of adjudging the