

leon himself will be better known for his laws than his battles, and the victory of Waterloo prove less momentous than the opening of the first Mechanics' Institute.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

Beneath the rule of men entirely great
The pen is mightier than the sword. Behold
The arch enchanter's wand!—itself a nothing!
But taking sorcery from the master hand
To paralyze the Cæsars and to strike
The loud earth breathless! Take away the sword—
States can be saved without it.

Lytton.

XCVIII.

ANECDOTES AND INCIDENTS.

1. KNOW, BEFORE YOU SPEAK.—It is related of Sheridan, that once in the House of Commons he apparently quoted a passage from a Greek poet, when in reality he only uttered a gabble resembling Greek. An honorable gentleman who spoke after him fully assented to the application of the passage to the case in question. How ineffably ridiculous must that man have appeared when Sheridan disclosed the trick! To the dishonor of such an exposure every one is liable, who, in any way, however slight or negative, affects to appear knowing where he is ignorant.

2. PERFECTION NO TRIFLE.—A friend called on Michael Angelo, who was finishing a statue. Some time afterward he called again; the sculptor was still at his

work: his friend looking at the figure, exclaimed, "You have been idle since I saw you last."—"By no means," replied the sculptor; "I have retouched this part, and polished that; I have softened this feature, and brought out this muscle; I have given more expression to this lip, and more energy to this limb."—"Well, well," said his friend, "but all these are trifles."—"It may be so," replied Angelo, "but recollect that trifles make perfection, and that perfection is no trifle."

3. TRUE GENEROSITY.—Sir Philip Sidney, at the battle near Zutphen, displayed the most undaunted courage. He had two horses killed under him; and, whilst mounting a third, was wounded by a musket-shot out of the trenches, which broke the bone of his thigh. He returned about a mile and a half on horseback to the camp; and, being faint with the loss of blood, and parched with thirst from the heat of the weather, he called for drink. It was presently brought him; but, as he was putting the vessel to his mouth, a poor wounded soldier, who happened to be carried along at that instant, looked up to it with wistful eyes. The gallant and generous Sidney took the flagon from his lips, just when he was going to drink, and delivered it to the soldier, saying, "Thy necessity is greater than mine."

4. MORAL AND PHYSICAL COURAGE.—At the battle of Waterloo, two French officers were advancing to charge a much superior force. The danger was imminent, and one of them displayed evident signs of fear. The other, observing it, said to him, "Sir, I believe you are frightened."—"Yes," returned the other, "I am; and if you were half as much frightened, you would run away." This anecdote exhibits in a happy light the difference between moral and physical courage.

The brave man is not he who feels no fear,
For that were stupid and irrational ;
But he whose noble soul its fear subdues,
And bravely dares the danger nature shrinks from.

5. RELIGION THE CEMENT OF SOCIETY.—Religion is the cement of all virtue, and virtue the moral cement of all society. A society composed of none but the irreligious could not exist. It is related that three German robbers, having acquired by various robberies what amounted to a very valuable booty, agreed to divide the spoil, and to retire from so dangerous a vocation. When the day which they had appointed for this purpose arrived, one of them was dispatched to a neighboring town to purchase provisions for their last carousal. The other two secretly agreed to murder him on his return, that they might come in for one-half of the plunder instead of a third. They did so. But the murdered man was a closer calculator even than his assassins, for he had previously poisoned a part of the provisions, that he might appropriate unto himself the whole of the spoil. This precious triumvirate were found dead together,—a signal instance that nothing is so blind and suicidal as the selfishness of vice.

6. HABITS OF OBSERVATION.—The ignorant have often given credit to the wise for powers that are permitted to none, merely because the wise have made a proper use of those powers that are permitted to all. The little Arabian tale of the dervis shall be the comment of this proposition. A dervis was journeying alone in the desert, when two merchants suddenly met him. "You have lost a camel," said he to the merchants.—"Indeed, we have," they replied.—"Was he not blind

in his right eye, and lame in his left leg?" said the dervis.—"He was," replied the merchants.—"Had he not lost a front tooth?" said the dervis.—"He had," rejoined the merchants.—"And was he not loaded with honey on one side, and wheat on the other?"

"Most certainly he was," they replied, "and as you have seen him so lately, and marked him so particularly, you can, in all probability, conduct us to him."—"My friends," said the dervis, "I have never seen your camel, nor ever heard of him, but from you."—"A pretty story truly!" said the merchants; "but where are the jewels which formed a part of his cargo?"—"I have neither seen your camel nor your jewels," repeated the dervis. On this they seized his person, and forthwith hurried him before the *cadi*, where, on the strictest search, nothing could be found upon him, nor could any evidence whatever be adduced to convict him either of falsehood or of theft. They were then about to proceed against him as a sorcerer, when the dervis, with great calmness, thus addressed the court:

"I have been much amused with your surprise, and own that there has been some ground for your suspicions; but I have lived long and alone, and I can find ample scope for observation, even in a desert. I knew that I had crossed the track of a camel that had strayed from its owner, because I saw no mark of any human footstep on the same route; I knew that the animal was blind in one eye, because it had cropped the herbage only on one side of its path; and I perceived that it was lame in one leg, from the faint impression which that particular foot had produced upon the sand; I concluded that the animal had lost one tooth, because, wherever it had grazed, a small tuft of

herbage was left uninjured in the centre of its bite. As to that which formed the burden of the beast, the busy ants informed me that it was corn on the one side, and the clustering flies that it was honey on the other."

7. GOOD ADVICE.—A certain khan of Tartary, traveling with his nobles, was met by a dervis, who cried, with a loud voice, "Whoever will give me a hundred pieces of gold, I will give him a piece of advice." The khan ordered the sum to be given to him, upon which the dervis said, "Begin nothing of which thou hast not well considered the end." The courtiers, hearing this plain sentence, smiled, and said with a sneer, "The dervis is well paid for his maxim." But the khan was so well pleased with the answer, that he ordered it to be written in golden letters in several parts of his palace, and engraved on all his plate.

Not long after,³⁴⁷ the khan's surgeon was bribed to kill him with a poisoned lancet, at the time he bled him. One day, when the khan's arm was bound, and the fatal lancet in the hand of the surgeon, the latter read on the basin, "Begin nothing of which thou hast not well considered the end." He immediately started, and let the lancet fall out of his hand. The khan, observing his confusion, inquired the reason: the surgeon fell prostrate, confessed the whole affair, and was pardoned; but the conspirators were put to death. The khan, turning to his courtiers, who had heard the advice with disdain, told them that the counsel could not be too highly valued which had saved a khan's life.

8. HUMOROUS RETALIATION.—A nobleman, resident at

³⁴⁷ Poco tiempo despues.

a castle in Italy, was about to celebrate his marriage-feast. All the elements were propitious except the ocean, which had been so boisterous as to deny the very necessary appendage of fish. On the very morning of the feast, however, a poor fisherman made his appearance with a turbot so large that it seemed to have been created for the occasion. Joy pervaded the castle, and the fisherman was ushered with his prize into the saloon, where the nobleman, in the presence of his visitors, requested him to put what price he thought proper on the fish, and it should instantly be paid him. "One hundred lashes," said the fisherman, "on my bare back, is the price of my fish, and I will not bate one strand of whip-cord on the bargain." The nobleman and his guests were not a little astonished; but our chapman was resolute, and remonstrance was in vain.

At length the nobleman exclaimed, "Well, well, the fellow is a humorist, but the fish we must have; so lay on lightly, and let the price be paid in our presence." After fifty lashes had been administered, "Hold, hold!" exclaimed the fisherman; "I have a partner in this business, and it is fitting that he should receive his share." "What! are there two such madcaps in the world?" cried the nobleman. "Name him, and he shall be sent for instantly." "You need not go very far for him," said the fisherman; "you will find him at your gate, in the shape of your own porter, who would not let me in until I promised that he should have the half of whatever I received for my turbot." "O ho!" said the nobleman, "bring him up instantly; he shall receive the stipulated moiety with the strictest justice." This ceremony being finished, he discharged the porter, and amply rewarded the fisherman.

XCIX.

GIL BLAS AND THE ARCHBISHOP.

Archbishop. What is your business with me, my friend?

Gil Blas. I am the young man who was recommended to you by your nephew, Don Fernando.

Arch. O! you are the person of whom he spoke so handsomely. I retain you in my service; I regard you as an acquisition. Your education, it would seem, has not been neglected; you know enough of Greek and Latin for my purpose, and your handwriting suits me. I am obliged to my nephew for sending me so clever a young fellow. So good a copyist must be also a grammarian. Tell me, did you find nothing in the sermon you transcribed for me which shocked your taste?—no little negligence of style, or impropriety of diction?

Gil B. O, sir! I am not qualified to play the critic; and if I were, I am persuaded that your Grace's compositions would defy censure.

Arch. Ahem! well, I do flatter myself that not many flaws could be picked in them. But, my young friend, tell me what passages struck you most forcibly.

Gil B. If, where all was excellent, any passages more particularly moved me, they were those personifying hope, and describing the good man's death.

Arch. You show an accurate taste and delicate appreciation. I see your judgment may be relied upon. Give yourself no inquietude,³⁴⁸ Gil Blas, in regard to

³⁴⁸ Descuide V.

your advancement in life. I will take care of that. I have an affection for you, and, to prove it, I will now make you my confidant. Yes, my young friend, I will make you the depositary of my most secret thoughts. Listen to what I have to say. I am fond of preaching, and my sermons are not without effect upon my hearers. The conversions of which I am the humble instrument ought to content me. But—shall I confess my weakness?—my reputation as a finished orator is what gratifies me most. My productions are celebrated as at once vigorous and elegant. But I would, of all things, avoid the mistake of those authors who do not know when to stop—I would produce nothing beneath my reputation; I would retire seasonably, ere that is impaired. And so, my dear Gil Blas, one thing I exact of your zeal, which is, that when you shall find that my pen begins to flag and to give signs of old age in the owner, you shall not hesitate to apprise me of the fact. Do not be afraid that I shall take it unkindly. I cannot trust my own judgment on this point; self-love may mislead me. A disinterested understanding is what I require for my guidance; I make choice of yours, and mean to abide by your decision.

Gil B. Thank Heaven, sir, the period is likely to be far distant when any such hint shall be needed. Besides, a genius like yours will wear better than that of an inferior man; or, to speak more justly, your faculties are above the encroachments of age. Instead of being weakened, they promise to be invigorated, by time.

Arch. No flattery,³⁴⁹ my friend. I am well aware

³⁴⁹ Basta de lisonjas.

that I am liable to give way at any time, all at once. At my age, certain infirmities of the flesh are unavoidable, and they must needs affect the mental powers. I repeat it, Gil Blas, so soon as you shall perceive the slightest symptom of deterioration in my writings, give me fair warning. Do not shrink from being perfectly candid and sincere; for I shall receive such a monition as a token of your regard for me.

Gil B. In good faith, sir, I shall endeavor to merit your confidence.

Arch. Nay,³⁵⁰ your interests are bound up with your obedience in this respect; for if, unfortunately for you, I should hear in the city a whisper of a falling-off in my discourses—an intimation that I ought to stop preaching—I should hold you responsible, and consider myself exempted from all care for your fortunes. Such will be the result of your false discretion.

Gil B. Indeed,³⁵¹ sir, I shall be vigilant to observe your wishes, and to detect any blemish in your writings.

Arch. And now tell me, Gil Blas, what does the world say of my last discourse? Think you it gave general satisfaction?

Gil B. Since you exact it of me in so pressing a manner, to be frank——

Arch. Frank? O, certainly, by all means; speak out, my young friend.

Gil B. Your Grace's sermons never fail to be admired; but——

Arch. But—Well? Do not be afraid to let me know all.

³⁵⁰ Como que.

³⁵¹ Se lo juro.

Gil B. If I may venture the observation, it seemed to me that your last discourse did not have that effect upon your audience which your former efforts have had. Perhaps your Grace's recent illness——

Arch. What! what! Has it encountered, then, some Aristarchus?

Gil B. No, sir; no. Such productions as yours are beyond criticism. Everybody was charmed with it; but—since you have demanded of me to be frank and sincere—I take the liberty to remark that your last discourse did not seem to me altogether equal to your preceding. It lacked the strength³⁵²—the— Do you not agree with me, sir?

Arch. Mr. Gil Blas, that discourse, then, is not to your taste?

Gil B. I did not say that, sir. I found it excellent—only a little inferior to your others.

Arch. So! Now I understand. I seem to you to be on the wane—eh? Out with it! You think it about time that I should retire?

Gil B. I should not have presumed, sir, to speak so freely, but for your express commands. I have simply rendered you obedience; and I humbly trust that you will not be offended at my hardihood.

Arch. Offended! O! not at all, Mr. Gil Blas. I utter no reproaches. I don't take it at all ill that you should speak your sentiments; it is your sentiment only that I find ill. I have been duped by supposing you to be a person of any intelligence—that is all.

Gil B. But, sir, if, in my zeal to serve you, I have erred in——

³⁵² No tenia aquel vigor—aquel—

Arch. Say no more—say no more! You are yet too raw to discriminate. Know that I have never composed a better sermon than that which has had the misfortune to lack your approbation. My faculties, thank Heaven, have lost nothing of their vigor. Hereafter I will make a better choice of an adviser. Go, tell my treasurer to count you out a hundred ducats, and may Heaven conduct you with that sum. Adieu, Mr. Gil Blas! I wish you all manner of prosperity—with a little more taste.

DRAMATIZED FROM LE SAGE.

SELECTIONS IN VERSE:

I.

GOD IS LOVE.

1. When, courting slumber,
The hours I number,
And sad cares cumber
My wearied mind;
This thought shall cheer me,
That thou art near me,
Whose ear to hear me
Is still inclined.
2. My soul thou keepest,
Who never sleepest;
'Mid³⁵³ gloom the deepest³⁵⁴
There's light above.
Thine³⁵⁵ eyes behold me,
Thine arms enfold me,
Thy word has told me
That God is love.

³⁵³ 'Mid, abreviatura de *amid*, preferencia á la segunda persona del singular, *thou, thee*, etc., tú, ti, etc. *Thine* suena mejor que *thy* delante de las palabras que principian por vocal.

³⁵⁴ Inversion á causa de la rima: 'Mid the deepest gloom, seria la construccion en prosa.

³⁵⁵ En poesía suele darse la