

Is idle nature laughing at her sons?

Who conscience sent, her sentence will support,  
And God above assert *that* God in man.

Thrice happy they, who enter now the court  
Heav'n opens in their bosoms: but, how rare!

Ah me! that magnanimity how rare!

What hero, like the man who stands himself;

Who dares to meet his naked heart alone;

Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings,

Resolv'd to silence future murmurs there?

The coward flies; and flying is undone.

(Art thou a coward? No.) The coward flies;

Thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, but fears to *know*;

Asks "What is truth?" with Pilate; and retires;

Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng;

Asylum sad! from reason, hope, and heaven!

Shall all, but man, look out with ardent eye,

For that great day, which was ordain'd for man?

O day of consummation! Mark supreme

(If men are wise) of human thought! nor least

Or in the sight of angels, or their King!

Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,

Order o'er order rising, blaze o'er blaze,

As in a theatre, surround this scene,

Intent on man, and anxious for his fate:

Angels look out for thee; for thee, their Lord,

To vindicate his glory; and for thee,

Creation universal calls aloud,

To disinvolve the moral world, and give

To Nature's renovation brighter charms.

THE

THE DISSIPATED OXFORD STUDENT, A DIALOGUE  
BETWEEN A BROTHER AND HIS TWO SISTERS.

LIONEL, LAVINIA, and CAMILLA.

Lionel. **H**OW do you do, girls? how do you do?  
I am glad to see you, upon my soul I am.  
[Shaking them hard by the hand.]

Lavinia. I thought, brother, you had been at Dr. Marchmont's!

Lionel. All in good time, my dear; I shall certainly visit the old gentleman before long.

Lavinia. Gracious, Lionel!—If my mother—

Lionel. My dear little Lavinia, [Chucking her under the chin] I have a mighty notion of making visits at my own time and appointment, instead of my mamma's.

Lavinia. O Lionel! and can you just now—

Lionel. Come, come, don't let us waste our precious moments in this fulsome moralizing. If I had not luckily been hard by, I should not have known the coast was clear. Pray where are the old folks gone tantivyng?

Camilla. To Cleves.

Lionel. To Cleves! What a happy escape! I was upon the point of going thither myself. Camilla, what is the matter with thee, my little duck?

Camilla. Nothing—I am only thinking—Pray when do you go to Oxford?

Lionel. Poh, poh, what do you talk of Oxford for? you are grown quite stupid, girl. I believe you have lived too long with that old maid of a Margland. Pray how does that dear creature do? I am afraid she will grow melancholy from not seeing me so long. Is she as pretty as she used to be? I have some notion of sending her a suitor.

Lavinia. O brother, is it possible you can have such spirits?

Lionel.



*Lion.* O hang it; if one is not merry when one can, what is the world good for? Besides, I do assure you, I fretted so consumedly hard at first, that for the life of me I can fret no longer.

*Cam.* But why are you not at Dr. Marchmont's?

*Lion.* Because, my dear soul, you can't conceive how much pleasure those old doctors take in lecturing a youngster who is in any disgrace.

*Cam.* Disgrace!

*Lav.* At all events, I beseech you to be a little careful; I would not have my poor mother find you here for the world.

*Lion.* O, as to that, I defy her to desire the meeting less than I do. But come, let's talk of something else. How go on the classics? Is my old friend, Dr. Orkborne, as chatty and amusing as ever?

*Cam.* My dear Lionel, I am filled with apprehension and perplexity. Why should my mother wish not to see you? And why—and how is it possible you can wish not to see her?

*Lion.* What, don't you know it all?

*Cam.* I only know that something is wrong; but how, what, or which way, I have not heard.

*Lion.* Has not Lavinia told you, then?

*Lav.* No; I could be in no haste to give her so much pain.

*Lion.* You are a good girl enough. But how came you here, Camilla? and what is the reason you have not seen my mother yourself?

*Cam.* Not seen her! I have been with her this half hour.

*Lion.* What! and in all that time did she not tell you?

*Cam.* She did not name you.

*Lion.* Is it possible! Well, she's a noble creature, I must confess. I wonder how she could ever have such a son. And I am still less like my father than I am like her. I believe in my conscience I was changed in the cradle. Will you own me, young ladies, if some villanous

villanous attorney or exciseman should claim me by and by?

*Cam.* Dear Lionel, do explain to me what has happened. You talk so wildly, that you make me think it important and trifling twenty times in a minute.

*Lion.* O, a horrid business! Lavinia must tell you. I'll withdraw till she has done. Don't despise me, Camilla. I am confounded sorry, I assure you. [*Going; and then immediately returning.*] Come, upon the whole I had better tell it you myself; for she'll make such a dismal ditty of it, that it won't be over this half year. The sooner we have done with it the better. It will only put you out of spirits. You must know I was in rather a bad scrape at Oxford last year—

*Cam.* Last year! and you never told us of it before!

*Lion.* O, 'twas about something you would not understand; so I shall not mention particulars now. It is enough for you to know, that two or three of us wanted a little cash! Well, so—in short, I sent a letter—somewhat of a threatening sort—to old uncle Relvil; and—

*Cam.* O Lionel!

*Lion.* O, I did not sign it. It was only begging a little money, which he can afford to spare very well; and just telling him, if he did not send it to a certain place which I mentioned, he would have his brains blown out.

*Cam.* How horrible!

*Lion.* Poh, poh; he had only to send the money, you know, and then his brains might keep their place. Besides, you can't suppose there was gunpowder in the words; though, to be sure, the letter was charged with a few vollies of oaths. But, would you believe it! the poor old gull was fool enough actually to send the money where he was directed.

*Lav.* Hold, hold, Lionel! I cannot endure to hear you speak in such disgraceful terms of that worthy man. How could you treat that excellent uncle in



such a cruel manner! How could you find a heart to swear at so meek, so benevolent, so indulgent——

*Lion.* My dear little chicken, don't be so precise and old maidish. Don't you know it's a relief to a man's mind to swear a few cutting oaths now and then, when he's in a passion? when all the time he would no more do harm to the people he swears at, than you would, who mince out all your words as if you were talking treason, and thought every man a spy that heard you. It is a very innocent refreshment to a man's mind, my dear. But the difficulty is, you know nothing of the world.

*Cam.* Fie, brother! You know how sickly our uncle has always been, and how easily he might be alarmed.

*Lion.* Why, yes, Camilla; I really think it was a very wicked trick; and I would give half my little finger that I had not done it. But it's over now, you know; so what signifies making the worst of it?

*Cam.* And did he not discover you?

*Lion.* No; I gave him particular orders, in my letter, not to attempt any thing of that sort; assuring him there were spies about him to watch his proceedings. The good old simpleton took it all for gospel. So there the matter ended. However, as ill luck would have it, about three months ago, we wanted another sum——

*Lav.* And could you again——

*Lion.* Why, my dear, it was only taking a little of my own fortune beforehand, for I am his heir; so we all agreed it was merely robbing myself; for we had several consultations about it; and one of us is to be a lawyer.

*Cam.* But you give me some pleasure here, for I had never heard that my uncle had made you his heir.

*Lion.* Neither had I, my deary; but I take it for granted. Besides, our little lawyer put it into my head. Well, we wrote again, and told the poor old soul, for which I assure you I am heartily penitent, that, if he did not send me double the sum, in the same manner, without delay, his house was to be set on fire, while he and all  
his

his family were in bed and asleep. Now don't make faces nor shruggings; for I promise you, I think already I deserve to be hung for giving him the fright; though I would not really have hurt the hair of his head for half his fortune. But who could have guessed that the old codger would have *bitten* so readily? The money, however, came; and we thought the business all secure, and agreed to get the same sum annually.

*Cam.* Annually! O horrible!

*Lion.* Yes, my darling. You have no conception how convenient it would have been for our extra expenses. But unluckily, uncle grew worse, and went abroad; and then consulted with some crab of a friend, and that friend, with some demagogue of a magistrate, and so all is now blown. However, we had managed it so cleverly, that it cost them nearly three months to find it out; owing, I must confess, to poor uncle's cowardice, in not making his inquiries before the money was carried off, and he himself beyond the sea. The other particulars Lavinia must give you; for I have talked of it now till I have made myself quite sick. Do tell me some diverting story to drive it a little out of my head. But, by the way, pray what has carried the old folks to Cleves? Have they gone to tell this sad tale to uncle Hugh, so that I might lose him too?

*Lav.* No; your afflicted parents are determined not to name it. They are striving that nobody else shall know any thing of the matter, except Dr. Marchmont.

*Lion.* Well, they are good souls, it must be acknowledged. I wish I deserved them better. I wish too it was not such plaguy dull business to be good. I confess, girls, it wounds my conscience to think how I have afflicted my parents, especially my poor mother, who is not so well able to bear it. But when one is at Oxford, or in London—your merry blades there, I can't deny it, my dear sisters, your merry blades there are but sad fellows. Yet there is such fun, such spirit,  
such



such genuine sport among them, I cannot, for my life, keep out of the way. Besides, you have no conception, young ladies, what a bye-word you soon become among them, if they find you *finching*. But this is little to the purpose; for you know nothing of life yet, poor things.

*Lav.* I would not for the world say any thing to pain you, my dear brother; but if this is what you call life, I wish we never might know any thing of it. I wish more, that you had been so happy as never to have known it. You pity our ignorance, we pity your folly. How strangely infatuated you are! But yet I will hope, that, in future, your first study will be to resist such dangerous examples, and to shun such unworthy friends. Pray reflect one moment on the distressing situation of your dear parents, who cannot endure your presence, through the poignancy of grief! What labours and hardships has your poor father encountered, to gain wherewithal to support you at the University! And what is your return! Such, my dear brother, as will soon bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. As for your poor mother, it is quite uncertain whether any of us ever see her again, as your much injured uncle has sent for her over sea to attend him in his sickness; and to-morrow she sets out. She has left it in solemn charge with me, to deliver you a message from her, which, if you have any sensibility remaining, will cut you to the heart.

*Lion.* I know she can have said nothing worse than I expect, or than I merit. Probe me, then, Lavinia, without delay. Keep me not in a moment's suspense. I feel a load of guilt upon me, and begin sincerely to repent. She is acting towards me like an angel; and if she were to command me to turn hermit, I know I ought to obey her.

*Lav.* Well, then, my mother says, my dear Lionel, that the fraud you have practised—

*Lion.* The fraud! what a horrid word! Why it was a mere trick! a joke! a frolic! just to make an  
old

old hunk open his purse-strings to his natural heir. I am astonished at my mother! I really don't care whether I hear another syllable.

*Lav.* Well, then, my dear Lionel, I will wait till you are calmer: my mother, I am sure, did not mean to irritate, but to convince.

*Lion.* [*Striding about the room.*] My mother makes no allowances. She has no faults herself, and for that reason she thinks nobody else should have any. Besides, how should she know what it is to be a young man? and to want a little cash, and not to know how to get it?

*Lav.* But I am sure, if you wanted it for any proper purpose, my father would have denied himself every thing, in order to supply you.

*Lion.* Yes, yes; but suppose I want it for a purpose that is *not* proper, how am I to get it then?

*Cam.* Why, then, my dear Lionel, surely you must be sensible you ought to go without it.

*Lion.* Aye, that's as you girls say, who know nothing of the matter. If a young man, when he goes into the world, were to make such a speech as that, he would be pointed at. Besides, whom must he live with? You don't suppose he is to shut himself up, with a few musty books, sleeping over the fire, under pretence of study, all day long, do you? like young Melmond, who knows no more of the world than either of you?

*Cam.* Indeed, he seems to me an amiable and modest young man, though very romantic.

*Lion.* O, I dare say he does! I could have laid any wager of that. He's just a girl's man, just the very thing, all sentiment, and poetry, and heroics. But we, my little dear, we lads of spirit, hold all that amazingly cheap. I assure you, I would as soon be seen trying on a lady's cap at a glass, as poring over a crazy old author. I warrant you think, because one is at the University, one must be a book-worm!

*Lav.*



*Lav.* Why, what else do you go there for but to study?

*Lion.* Every thing else in the world, my dear.

*Cam.* But are there not sometimes young men who are scholars, without being book-worms? Is not Edgar Mandlebert such an one?

*Lion.* O yes, yes; an odd thing of that sort happens now and then. Mandlebert has spirit enough to carry it off pretty well, without being ridiculous; though he is as deep, for his time, as e'er an old fellow of a college. But then this is no rule for others. You must not expect an Edgar Mandlebert at every turn, my dear innocent creatures.

*Lav.* But Edgar has had an extraordinary education, as well as possessing extraordinary talents and goodness; you too, my dear Lionel, to fulfil what may be expected from you, should look back to your father, who was brought up at the same University, and is now considered as one of the first men it has produced. While he was respected by the learned for his application, he was loved even by the indolent for his candour and kindness of heart. And though his income, as you know, was very small, he never ran in debt; and by an exact but open economy, escaped all imputation of meanness.

*Lion.* Yes; but all this is nothing to the purpose. My father is no more like other men than if he had been born in another planet; and my attempting to resemble him would be as great a joke, as if you were to dress up in Indiana's flowers and feathers, and expect people to call you a beauty. I was born a bit of a buck; and have no manner of natural taste for study, and poring, and expounding, and black-letter work. I am a light, airy spark, at your service, ladies; not quite so wise as I am merry. I am one of your eccentric geniuses; but let that pass. My father, you know, is firm as a rock. He minds neither wind nor weather, nor fleerer nor sneerer, nor joker nor jeerer; but his firmness he has kept all to himself; not a whit

of

of it do I inherit. Every wind that blows veers me about, and gives me a new direction. But with all my father's firmness and knowledge, I very much doubt whether he knows any thing of real life. That is the main thing, my dear hearts. But, come, Lavinia, finish your message.

*Lav.* My mother says, the fraud you have practised, whether from wanton folly to give pain, or from rapacious discontent to get money, she will leave without comment; satisfied that if you have any feeling at all, its effects must bring remorse; since it has dangerously increased the infirmities of your uncle, driven him to a foreign land, and forced your mother to forsake her home and family in his pursuit, unless she were willing to see you punished by the entire disinheritance with which you are threatened. But—

*Lion.* O, no more! no more! I am ready to shoot myself already! My dear, excellent mother, what do I not owe you! I had never seen, never thought of the business in this solemn way before. I meant nothing at first but a silly joke; and all this mischief has followed unaccountably. I assure you, I had no notion at the beginning he would have minded the letter; and afterwards, Jack Whiston persuaded me, that the money was as good as my own, and that it was nothing but a little cribbing from myself. I will never trust him again! I see the whole now in its true and atrocious colours. I will devote all the means in my power to make amends to my dear incomparable mother. But proceed, Lavinia.

*Lav.* But since you are permitted, said my mother, to return home, by the forgiving temper of your father, who is himself, during the vacation, to be your tutor, after he is sufficiently composed to admit you into his presence, you can repay his goodness only by the most intense application to those studies which you have hitherto neglected, and of which your neglect has been the cause of your errors. She charges you also to ask yourself, upon what pretext you can justify the wast-

ing



ing of his valuable time, however little you may regard your own. Finally——

*Lion.* I never wasted his time! I never desired to have any instruction in the vacations. 'Tis the most deuced thing in life to be studying so incessantly. The waste of time is all his own affair, his own choice, not mine. Go on, however, and open the whole of the budget.

*Lav.* Finally, she adjures you to consider, that if you still persevere to consume your time in wilful negligence, to bury all thought in idle gaiety, and to act without either reflection or principle, the career of faults which begins but in unthinking folly, will terminate in shame, in guilt and in ruin! and though such a declension of all good must involve your family in your affliction, your disgrace will ultimately fall but where it ought; since your own want of personal sensibility will neither harden nor blind any human being beside yourself. This is all.

*Lion.* And enough too. I am a very wretch! I believe that, though I am sure I can't tell how I came so; for I never intend any harm, never think, never dream of hurting any mortal! But as to study, I must own to you, I hate it most deucedly. Any thing else; if my mother had but exacted any thing else, with what joy I would have shown my obedience! If she had ordered me to be horse-ponded, I do protest to you, I would not have demurred.

*Cam.* How you always run into the ridiculous!

*Lion.* I was never so serious in my life; not that I should like to be horse-ponded in the least, though I would submit to it by way of punishment, and out of duty: but then, when it was done, it would be over. Now the deuce of study is, there is no end to it! And it does so little for one! one can go through life so well without it! there is but here and there an old codger who asks one a question that can bring it into any play. And then, a turn upon one's heel, or looking at one's watch, or wondering at one's short memory

ory, or happening to forget just that one single passage, carries off the whole in two minutes, as completely as if one had been working one's whole life to get ready for the assault. And pray now tell me, how can it be worth one's best days, one's gayest hours, the very flower of one's life, all to be sacrificed to plodding over musty grammars and lexicons, merely to cut a figure just for about two minutes, once or twice in a year?

*Cam.* Indeed, Lionel, you appear to me a striking example of what a hard thing it is to learn to do well, after one has been accustomed to do evil. How volatile! how totally void of all stability! One minute you exhibit appearances of repentance and reformation, and the next minute, all fair prospects vanish. How I lament that you were so early exposed to a vicious world, before you had gained sufficient strength of mind to withstand bad examples!

*Lion.* Forbear, Camilla. You hurt me too much. You excite those severe twinges of remorse, which, I am obliged to own, I have never been wholly free from, since I joined my merry companions, and began to learn the world. Notwithstanding my gaiety, and my apparent contentment, I confess there is something within, which constantly admonishes me of my errors, and makes me feel unhappy: so that, if it were not for *fashion's* sake, I can truly say, I could wish I were in your reclusive situation; here to remain, in my once pleasant abode, and never more mingle with the world.

*Lav.* Dear brother, I cannot leave you, without once more calling your attention to your parents, your family, and your friends. Think of their present situation. If you have no regard for your own character, your present, or future happiness, I entreat you to have some pity for them. Let not the tyrant fashion bring you into abject slavery. Pardon me when I tell you, your pretended friends are your worst enemies. They have led you into a path which will carry you directly to inevitable ruin, unless you immediately forsake it. That knowledge of the world, of which you so vainly



boast, is infinitely worse than the ignorance which you so much despise. Believe me, my dear brother, it is a knowledge, which, by your own confession, never has produced you any happiness, nor will it ever; but will guide you to wretchedness and misery.

*Lion.* My dear sisters, I am convinced. Your words have pierced my very soul. I am now wretched and I deserve to be so. I am determined from this moment to begin my reformation, and, with the assistance of Heaven, to complete it. Never more will I see my vile companions, who have enticed me to go such lengths in wickedness. What do I not owe to my amiable sisters for their friendly and seasonable advice! I will go directly to my father, and, like the prodigal son, fall on my knees before him, beg his forgiveness, and put myself entirely under his direction and instruction; and, so long as I live, I never will offend him again.

*Lav.* May Heaven assist you in keeping your resolutions!

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EXTRACT FROM A SPEECH IN CONGRESS, APRIL, 1796, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE TREATY WITH GREAT-BRITAIN.

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**I**F any, against all these proofs which have been offered, should maintain that the peace with the Indians will be stable without the Western Posts, to them I will urge another reply. From arguments calculated to produce conviction, I will appeal directly to the hearts of those who hear me, and ask whether it is not already planted there? I resort especially to the convictions of the Western gentlemen, whether, supposing no Posts and no Treaty, the settlers will remain in security? Can they take it upon them to say, that an Indian peace, under these circumstances, will prove firm? No, Sir, it will not be peace, but a sword; it will be no better than a lure to draw victims within the reach of the tomahawk.

On

On this theme, my emotions are unutterable. If I could find words for them, if my powers bore any proportion to my zeal, I would swell my voice to such a note of remonstrance, it should reach every log-house beyond the mountains. I would say to the inhabitants, Wake from your false security. Your cruel dangers, your more cruel apprehensions are soon to be renewed. The wounds, yet unhealed, are to be torn open again. In the day time, your path through the woods will be ambushed. The darkness of midnight will glitter with the blaze of your dwellings. You are a father; the blood of your sons shall fatten your cornfield. You are a mother; the war-whoop shall wake the sleep of the cradle.

On this subject you need not suspect any deception on your feelings. It is a spectacle of horror which cannot be overdrawn. If you have nature in your hearts, they will speak a language, compared with which, all I have said or can say, will be poor and frigid. Will it be whispered that the treaty has made me a new champion for the protection of the frontiers? It is known that my voice as well as vote have been uniformly given in conformity with the ideas I have expressed. Protection is the right of the frontiers; it is our duty to give it.

Who will accuse me of wandering out of the subject? Who will say that I exaggerate the tendencies of our measures? Will any one answer by a sneer, that all this is idle preaching? Will any one deny that we are bound, and I would hope to good purpose, by the most solemn sanctions of duty for the vote we give? Are despots alone to be reproached for unfeeling indifference to the tears and blood of their subjects? Are republicans irresponsible? Have the principles on which you ground the reproach upon cabinets and kings no practical influence, no binding force? Are they merely themes of idle declamation, introduced to decorate the morality of a newspaper essay, or to furnish pretty topics of harangue from the windows of that State-house?

I trust



I trust it is neither too presumptuous nor too late to ask, Can you put the dearest interest of society at risk, without guilt, and without remorse?

By rejecting the posts, we light the savage fires; we bind the victims. This day we undertake to render account to the widows and orphans whom our decision will make, to the wretches that will be roasted at the stake, to our country, and I do not deem it too serious to say, to conscience, and to God. We are answerable; and if duty be any thing more than a word of imposture; if conscience be not a bugbear, we are preparing to make ourselves as wretched as our country.

There is no mistake in this case; there can be none. Experience has already been the prophet of events, and the cries of our future victims have already reached us. The Western inhabitants are not a silent and uncomplaining sacrifice. The voice of humanity issues from the shade of the wilderness. It exclaims, that while one hand is held up to reject this treaty, the other grasps a tomahawk. It summons our imagination to the scenes that will open. It is no great effort of the imagination to conceive that events so near are already begun. I can fancy that I listen to the yells of savage vengeance and the shrieks of torture. Already they seem to sigh in the western wind; already they mingle with every echo from the mountains.

Let me cheer the mind, weary, no doubt, and ready to despond on this prospect, by presenting another, which is yet in our power to realize. Is it possible for a real American to look at the prosperity of this country without some desire for its continuance, without some respect for the measures, which, many will say, produced, and all will confess, have preserved it? Will he not feel some dread that a change of system will reverse the scene? The well-grounded fears of our citizens, in 1794, were removed by the treaty, but are not forgotten. Then they deemed war nearly inevitable; and would not this adjustment have been considered at that day as a happy escape from the calamity?

The

The great interest and the general desire of our people was to enjoy the advantages of neutrality. This instrument, however misrepresented, affords America that inestimable security. The causes of our disputes are either cut up by the roots, or referred to a new negotiation, after the end of the European war. This was gaining every thing, because it confirmed our neutrality, by which our citizens are gaining every thing. This alone would justify the engagements of the government. For, when the fiery vapours of the war lowered in the skirts of our horizon, all our wishes were concentrated in this one, that we might escape the desolation of the storm. This treaty, like a rainbow on the edge of the cloud, marked to our eyes the space where it was raging, and afforded at the same time the sure prognostic of fair weather. If we reject it, the vivid colours will grow pale; it will be a baleful meteor portending tempest and war.

Let us not hesitate then to agree to the appropriation to carry it into faithful execution. Thus we shall save the faith of our nation, secure its peace, and diffuse the spirit of confidence and enterprise that will augment its prosperity. The progress of wealth and improvement is wonderful, and, some will think, too rapid. The field for exertion is fruitful and vast; and if peace and good government should be preserved, the acquisitions of our citizens are not so pleasing as the proofs of their industry, as the instruments of their future success. The rewards of exertion go to augment its power. Profit is every hour becoming capital. The vast crop of our neutrality is all seed wheat, and is sown again, to swell, almost beyond calculation, the future harvest of prosperity. And in this progress, what seems to be fiction is found to fall short of experience.

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EXTRACT