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PERICLES AND PRESIDENT LINCOLN

by

H.M. Alden.

in

Atlantic Mon. March, 1863

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the Azoic beds do not lie horizontally along the base of the Laurentian Hills in the position in which they must originally have been deposited, but are lifted and rest against their slopes. They have been more or less dislocated in this process, and are greatly metamorphized by the intense heat to which they must have been exposed. Indeed, all the oldest stratified rocks have been baked by the prolonged action of heat.

It may be asked how the materials for those first stratified deposits were provided. In later times, when an abundant and various soil covered the earth, when every river brought down to the ocean, not only its yearly tribute of mud or clay or lime, but the *débris* of animals and plants that lived and died in its waters or along its banks, when every lake and pond deposited at its bottom in successive layers the lighter or heavier materials floating in its waters and settling gradually beneath them, the process by which stratified materials are collected and gradually harden into rock is more easily understood. But when the solid surface of the earth was only just beginning to form, it would seem that the floating matter in the sea can hardly have been in sufficient quantity to form any extensive deposits. No doubt there was some abrasion even of that first crust; but the more abundant source of the earliest stratification is to be found in the submarine volcanoes that poured their liquid streams into the first ocean. At what rate these materials would be distributed and precipitated in regular strata it is impossible to determine; but that volcanic materials were so deposited in layers is evident from the relative position of the earliest rocks. I have already spoken of the innumerable chimneys perforating the Azoic beds, narrow outlets of Plutonic rock, protruding through the earliest strata. Not only are such funnels filled with the crystalline mass of granite that flowed through them in a liquid state, but it has often poured over their sides, mingling with the stratified beds around. In the present state of our knowledge, we can explain such appearances only by supposing that the heated materials within the earth's crust poured out frequently, meeting little resistance,—that they then scattered and were precipitated in the ocean around, settling in successive strata at its bottom, — that through such strata the heated masses within continued to pour again and again, forming for themselves the chimney-like outlets above mentioned.

Such, then, was the earliest American land, — a long, narrow island, almost continental in its proportions, since it stretches from the eastern borders of Canada nearly to the point where now the base of the Rocky Mountains meets the plain of the Mississippi Valley. We may still walk along its ridge and know that we tread upon the ancient granite that first divided the waters into a northern and southern ocean; and if our imaginations will carry us so far, we may look down toward its base and fancy how the sea washed against this earliest shore of a lifeless world. This is no romance, but the bald, simple truth; for the fact that this granite band was lifted out of the waters so early in the history of the world, and has not since been submerged, has, of course, prevented any subsequent deposits from forming above it. And this is true of all the northern part of the United States. It has been lifted gradually, the beds deposited in one period being subsequently raised, and forming a shore along which those of the succeeding one collected, so that we have their whole sequence before us. In regions where all the geological deposits, Silurian, Devonian, Carboniferous, Permian, Triassic, etc., are piled one upon another, and we can get a glimpse of their internal relations only where some rent has laid them open, or where their ragged edges, worn away by the abrading action of external influences, expose to view their successive layers, it must, of course, be more difficult to follow

their connection. For this reason the American continent offers facilities to the geologist denied to him in the so-called Old World, where the earlier deposits are comparatively hidden, and the broken character of the land, intersected by mountains in every direction, renders his investigation still more difficult. Of course, when I speak of the geological deposits as so completely unveiled to us here, I do not forget the sheet of drift which covers the continent from North to South, and which we shall discuss hereafter, when I reach that part of my subject. But the drift is only a superficial and recent addition to the soil, resting loosely above the other geological deposits, and arising, as we shall see, from very different causes.

In this article I have intended to limit myself to a general sketch of the formation of the Laurentian Hills with the Azoic stratified beds resting against them. In the Silurian epoch following the Azoic we have the first beach on which any life stirred; it extended along the base of the Azoic beds, widening by its extensive deposits the narrow strip of land already upheaved. I propose in my next article to invite my readers to a stroll with me along that beach.

PERICLES AND PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

Ancient history is forever indispensable to the speculative historian. The ground of its value is the very fact of its antiquity; by which we mean, not simply distance in time, but distance as the result of separate construction,—distance as between two systems of reality, each orbicularly distinct from the other. One system—that with which our destiny is concurrent—is still flying its rounds in space; the other has whirled itself out of space, and through a maze of scattered myths and records, into human remembrances. This latter system, though hermetically sealed to the realities of outward existence, still, and by this very exclusion from all practical uses, becomes of paramount interest to the philosophic historian; indeed, it is only because the shadowy planets of the ancient cycle still repeat their revolutions in human thought, that the philosophy of history is at all possible. Philosophy, in its ideal pretensions, frequently forgets its material conditions: it claims for itself the power of constructing wholes in thought where only parts have been given in reality, as if, dispensing with material supports, it could bridge over a chasm in Nature. And so it seems to do, but so in fact it never does; it never builds but on models; it never in any system gives ideal completeness, until a real completeness is furnished, either through this system or some other that is analogous. There can, therefore, be no speculative anticipation in history, save as it makes its way into the blank future along the line of diagrams furnished by the past; the splendid composition, in our thoughts, of realities as yet undeveloped, is set up in the skeleton types left us of realities that not only have themselves been accomplished, but which belong to a system that is concluded.

Else,—if the philosophy of history does not thus depend upon some sort of *real* conclusions for its *notional* ones,—why is it that no such philosophy existed, even in name, among the ancients? It may be said that some prevailing practical motive is necessary to the existence of philosophy in any field, and that no such motive was present to the ancient mind in this particular field

of history. Admitted; yet this does not at all disturb our position. No motive would have sufficed for so grand an aim, short of a sublime consciousness regarding the destiny of the human race. But whence was this consciousness to be derived? To the ancient mind, the development of the human drama, considered strictly as human, moved within narrow boundaries; traced backward through a number of generations so limited that they might be counted on one's fingers, the human *personæ* did not absolutely disappear, but they emerged again, and in a precedent cycle, only as divinities. The consciousness of human destiny was thus elevated by infinite grades, but not of this destiny *as* human, as depending for its splendors upon the human will. It was an exaltation that consisted in the sacrifice of humanity. No definite records existed through which any previous cycle of human events could be translated into thought; and in default of a human, there was substituted a divine cycle. From this mythologic past of the ancients was reflected upon their present every-day existence a peculiar glory; but it was not the glory of humanity. To celestial or infernal powers were attributed the motives and impulses out of which their life was developed, not to the human will. The future, as a matter of course, partook of this divine investment; so that history to the ancients was something which in either direction was lost in mystery, not a system to be philosophically analyzed, or to be based on principles of any sort. It is true that in the time of Herodotus, when nations, hitherto insulated, came to know each other better, an interest began to be awakened in history as resting upon a human basis; but this is to be accounted for only by the fact, that each nation coming in contact with another received from it the record of a development differing from its own in the details of outward circumstances, yet similar in certain general features; and in some cases, as in that of Egypt, there was presented an historic *epos* anterior in time. But in no case were furnished hints so suggestive as those which ancient history furnishes to us, nor any which would answer the purposes of philosophy; in no case was there presented a completed arch, but only antecedent parts of a structure yet in suspense respecting its own conclusion. Fate uncourteously insisted upon making her disclosures by separate instalments; she would advance nothing at any rate of discount. What, therefore, was the ancient philosopher to do? His reflections concerning the past must of necessity be partial; how much more would his anticipations of the future fail of anything like demonstrative certitude!

We moderns, on the other hand, are eminently fortunate, because within the cycle of our thoughts revolves the entire *epos* of the ancient world. Here there is the element of *completeness:* it is our privilege to look upon the final *tableau* before the curtain falls, to have gathered in the concluding no less than the prelusive signals, to have seen where the last stone in the arch bottoms upon a real basis. Let it be that to us it is a drama of shadows; yet are none of the prominent features lost; indeed, they are rather magnified by the distance; our actors upon the ancient *proscenium* walk in buskins and look upon us out of masks whose significance has been intensified by remoteness in time. This view of the case yields an ample refutation of those arguments frequently adduced of late, in certain quarters, to prove the inutility of classical studies. Thus, it is urged, that, in every department of human knowledge, we transcend the most splendid acquirements of the ancients, and therefore that it is so much time wasted which we devote towards keeping up an acquaintance with antiquity. But how is it that we so far overtop the ancients? Simply by preserving our conscious connection with them, just as man-

hood towers above childhood through the remembered experiences of childhood. As an evidence of this, we need only note the sudden impulse which modern civilization received through the revival of ancient literature. As it is by resolving into constellations the *nebulæ*, disconnected from the earth by vast intervals of space, that we conjecture the awful magnitude of the universe, so do we conjecture the magnitude of human life by resolving into distinct shapes the nebulous mist of antiquity separated from us by vast intervals in time. The profoundest lessons, such as are heeded by the race, such as are universally intelligible, have this obliquity of origin. Thus, in the distractions of the present, no relief is found through compensatory consolations from the present; but we turn to the figures of the past, — figures caught in the mind, and held fixed, as in bas-relief,—figures in the attitude of antagonistic strife or of sublime rest,—figures that master our intellects as can none from the tumultuous present, (excepting the present of dreams,) and that out of their eternal repose anticipate for us contingencies that do not yet exist, but are representatively typified through such as have existed and passed away.

It is a fact well ascertained in physical geography, that the New World and the Old stand over against each other, not merely as antipodal opposites, but so corresponding in outline that a promontory in one is met by a gulf in the other, and sinuous seas by outstanding continents, (so that over against the Gulf of Mexico, for instance, is opposed the projection of Western Africa,) as if the gods had, in the registry of some important covenant, rent the earth in twain for indentures. In this way, also, do the two great hemispheres of Time stand opposed; so that, from the shaping of the ancient, we may anticipate even the undeveloped conformation of the modern: in place of the direct reality, which is of necessity wanting, we have the next best thing to guide us even in our most perilous coastings, namely, its well-defined *analogue* in the remote past.

Thus, considering merely this *analogism*, might one have prophetically announced, even in the generations immediately succeeding to Christ, when Christianity bade fair to become a world-power in a new civilization, that here, indeed, was a new planting of Mysteries, which, although infinitely transcending them in fulness and meaning, were yet the counterparts of mysteries which had hitherto swayed the human heart, — but that, pure and holy as were these mysteries, they should yet, in their human connections, share the vicissitudes of the old, — that, like them, they should march through tribulations on to triumph, — that, like them, once having triumphed and become a recognized source of power, they should be linked with hierarchical delusions and the degradations of despotism,—that, like them, too, in some future generation, they should, through the protesting intellect, be uplifted from these delusions and degradations. Thus, also, and following the same guidance, might our prophet have foretold the *political* shapings of the newly emerging hemisphere of Christendom. He would thus, through a precise analogy in ancient history, have anticipated the conjunction of principles so novel in their operation as were those of Christianity with the new races, then lying in wait along the skirts of the Roman Empire, and biding their time. From a necessity already demonstrated in the ancient world, he would have foreseen the necessity of Feudalism for the modern, as following inevitably in the train of barbarian conquest, the recurrence of which had been distinctly foreshadowed. In connection with the Protestantism of intellect in religious matters, he would have anticipated a similar movement in politics; he would have prefigured the conflict that was to be renewed between the many and the few for power; and if by some miracle his material vision

could have been made coextensive in space with the scope which was possible for him in thought, if he could have followed the sails of Columbus across the Atlantic, then, in connection with the transference of European civilization to the New World, and foreseeing the revulsion in habits and institutions that must follow such local separation, he might have indicated the arena which *representatively* was to stand for Christendom, and in which, if anywhere, the great problem of human freedom should be solved, either by a success so grand that the very reflex of its splendor should illumine the universal heart of man, or by a failure so overwhelming and disastrous that the ruinous impulse should be communicated with the crushing effect of a thunderbolt through the whole structure of Christian civilization.

Standing, as we do, face to face with the crisis in which this problem is to be solved, and through one part or the other of the alternative just stated, it is evident, from what has already been said, that no light can so fully illustrate the position and its contingencies as that which reaches us from antiquity, and through analogies such as we have hinted at in the preceding paragraphs.

In the first place, in order properly to understand the specific analogy which we now proceed to develop and apply to the case in hand, it is absolutely necessary that the reader should fix Hellas in his mind's eye as the counterpart of Christendom. Let it be understood, then, that all that preceded Hellenism in the ancient world was but the vestibule of its magnificent temple, and that the sole function of the Roman Empire, which came afterwards, was to tide the world over from Hellenic realities to the more sublime realities of Christianity. The mighty deeds of Egyptian conquerors, the imperial splendors of Persian dynasties, — these were but miniature gems that gilded the corridors and archways in the *propylæa* of ancient civilization; and on the other side, the brilliancy of the Cæsars was not that of an original sun in the heavens, since, in one half of their course, they did but reflect the sunset glories of Greece, and, in the other, the rising glories of Christianity. From Macedonia, then, in the North, southward to the sea, and from the heroic age to the Battle of Pydna, (168 B. C.,) extended, in space and time, the original and peculiar splendors of antiquity.

But two of the Hellenic States were consecrated to a *special* office of glory. These two were Athens and Sparta; and the sublime mission which it was allotted them to fulfil in history was this, that they, within limited boundaries, should concentrate all ante-Christian excellence, — that these two States, opposite in their whole character, should, through the conflict between their antagonistic elements, test the strength and worthiness of ante-Christian principles. Precisely in the same relation to Christendom stands America, with her two opposite types of civilization arrayed against each other in mortal conflict. Here must be tested the merits of modern civilization, just as in Peloponnesus and Attica were tested those of the old; here, too, must be tested the strength even of Christianity as a practical power in the political world. Where Ionic and Doric Greece stood twenty-three centuries ago, stand today the Northern and Southern sections of this country; they hold between them, as did their Hellenic prototypes, the heritage of laborious ages, and to their eyes alone have the slowly growing fruits of time seemed ready, from very ripeness, to fall into the lap of man. In either case, Hellenic or American, we look upon generations totally different in circumstance from those which came before them, — generations, freed not only from the despotic tutelage of Nature, (from whom they exact tribute, instead of, as formerly, paying it to her,) but also from the still more galling tutelage of ignorance and of the social necessities

imposed by ignorance, — generations which, in either the ancient or modern instance, stand representatively for the whole race, and by necessity, since they only could fairly be said, unimpeded by external conditions, perfectly to represent themselves. It matters not whether we take the particular generation contemporary with Pericles or with President Lincoln (his modern *redivivus*); each stands illustrious as the last reach upward of the towering civilizations that respectively pushed them to this eminence; the highest point is in each case reached, and all that remains is to make this sublime elevation tenable for the race universally, so that, instead of the pyramidal mountain, we shall have the widely extended *plateau*.

Here we will anticipate a question which the reader, we imagine, is already about to put. He will readily admit that Greece, in her palmiest era, politically, grasped, in form and conception at least, the highest ideal of rational liberty; but why, he will ask, was not this divine boon made universally available? Why was it not extended to Persia, and to the Asiatic hosts that for security hid themselves in the folds of her garments? why not to the dwellers on the Nile? Why was it that it was not even retained by Greece herself? The truth is, that no sooner was the golden fleece in the hands of the adventurers that had sought it so zealously than it was rent by their discords. Elements of barbarism had run uncurbed alongside of intellectual and artistic refinements. Mingled with high-minded heroes were a set of treacherous Iscariots. But why, it will naturally be asked, had there not been *hitherto* some outbreak of these discordant elements? That question is easily answered, if we consider that up to this time there had existed certain external elements, which, by arousing incessantly the patriotic feelings of all Greece against hostilities from without, had administered an opiate to the Cerberus of domestic strife. The terrible storm was maturing its thunderbolts treacherously and in subterranean chambers; but its mutterings were effectually silenced by the more audible thunderings that burst across the Ægean from the Persian throne. Treachery was lulled to sleep, while the nobler sentiment which united Greece against Asiatic despotism was perpetually stung into activity in the popular heart, and inspired the utterances of eloquence. Thus it might not have been, if Greece had first come within hail of Persia through the ordinary commerce of peace; since, in that case, after receiving from the latter her treacherous gifts, her voluptuous effeminacies, she would easily have fallen into the vast net-work that already trammelled all Asia, and would then, through her own entanglement, include the whole world. But it was not in peace that they met. The first question put to Hellas by her Oriental neighbor was in effect this: — Are you willing, without going to the trouble of subjecting the matter to the test of actual conflict, to consider yourself as having been whipped? This, it must be confessed, was a shivering introduction to the world for Greece, — something like a Lacedæmonian baptism, — but it stood her in good stead. Like the dip in the Styx, it insured immortality. The menaces of despotism, coming from the East, gave birth to the impulses of freedom in the West; and the latter sustained themselves at a more exalted height, in proportion as the former were backed by substantial support. Subtract anything from that deafening chorus of slaves which follows in the train of Xerxes, and we must by the same amount take from the pæans of aspiring Greece. Abolish the outlying provinces that acknowledge a forced allegiance to the Persian monarch, or turn out of their course the tributary streams that from every part of Asia swell the current of Eastern barbarism, and there arises the necessity, also, of circumscribing within narrower limits the glories of the Western civilization. Against the dangers of

external invasion, against all the menaces of barbarians, Greece was secure through the forces which by opposition were developed in herself, — and for so long a period was she secure against herself. But the very rapidity and decisiveness of her triumphs over the barbarian cut this period short, and cut short also the rising column of Hellenic power. At the same time that Cimon is finishing up the fleet of Persia, Pericles is preparing for the culmination of Greece. In all this there seemed nothing final; from the serenity of the Grecian sky, and from the summer silence which inwrapt her statues and Pentelic colonnades, there was heralded the promise of a ceaseless æon of splendor. Resting from one mighty effort, and, in the moment of rest, clothing herself in the majesty of beauty, Hellas yet seemed ready to burst forth out of this rest into an effort more gigantic, to be followed by a more memorable rest as the reflex of a destiny more nearly consummated. But in this promise there was the very hollowness of deception. Just because the intense strain against external barbarism had relaxed, those elements which common necessity had made tributary to success and triumph began to suffer dissolution; each separate interest became a prominent centre of a distinct political crystallization; and it was in this way that certain elements of barbarism, inherent in Spartan civilization, now for the first time arrayed it in direct opposition to the Athenian. It was this defection, on the part of Sparta, from the cause of freedom, which cut the world off from those benefits that it was in the power of Greece to confer. Athens, whatever other faults she may have had, stood ready to extend these benefits. As she alone had awakened for herself an echo of Hellenic victory in her world of Art, so was she alone prepared, through a world-wide extension of this victory over slavery, to multiply the intellectual reflexes of so splendid a triumph; hers it was to disinthrall and illuminate the world. And here, where she had a right to look for the coöperation of all Greece, as hitherto, was she thwarted; here, holding the van in a procession of triumph, which, as carrying forward a glorious disinthralment into Asia and into Egypt, and as outfacing the most inveterate of all despotisms, should far out-rival the fabled procession of Dionysus, — here was she not merely hindered by the *vis inertiæ* of her southern neighbor, but was actually stopped in her movement by a newly revealed force of opposition, was flanked by an ancient ally, now turned traitor, in the summer-time of a most auspicious peace; and in her efforts to disembarrass herself of this enemy in the rear, were her energies totally exhausted.

A position precisely similar, in its main features, does Republican America hold to-day. She has established her own freedom against all European intrusion; and in her efforts to do this she arrived at political union as an indispensable necessity, and merged all separate interests in a common one. That interest, already vindicated for herself, has become world-wide in its meaning; so that, in virtue of what she has accomplished in the cause of freedom, she takes an authoritative position of leadership in modern civilization. And what is it that hinders the fulfilment of her exalted mission? She, too, has been flanked in her march by a traitor within her own borders; against her, and doing violence to her high office, are opposed the backward-tending elements of barbarism, which, if not immediately neutralized, if not summarily crushed, will drag her to the lowest stages of weakness and exhaustion.

A very minute parallel might be drawn between the opposing civilizations that are to-day in this country contending for the mastery and those which were engaged in a similar conflict in the days of Pericles. New England would be found to be the Attica of America; while, on the other

hand, the Southrons would most exactly correspond to the ancient Lacedæmonians. As the Cavaliers who first settled Virginia helped on the Puritan exodus, so did the Dorians that settled Sparta, through the tumult of their overwhelming invasion, drive the Ionians from their old homes to the barren wastes of Attica, — barren as compared with the fertile valleys of the Eurotas, just as New England would be considered sterile when contrasted with Virginia or the Valley of the Mississippi. Like the Ionian Greeks, the "Yankees" stand before the world as the recognized advocates and supporters of a pure democracy. The descendants of the Cavaliers, on the contrary, join hands, as did the ancient Dorians, in favor of an oligarchy, and of an oligarchy, too, based on the institution of slavery. Upon this difference rested the political dissensions of Greece, as do now those of our own country. The negro plays no more important part in the difference between the North and South than did the Helot in the contests between the Spartans and the Athenians. It is not in either case the simple fact of human slavery which necessitates the civil strife, but it is the radical opposition between *a government that is founded upon slavery* and one which is not. The Athenians had slaves; and so, for that matter, might New England have to-day: yet, for all that, the civil strife would have been inevitable, because both in Greece and America this strife evidently arises out of the conflict between the interests of an oligarchy based upon slavery and a democracy in which slavery, if it exists at all, exists as a mere accident that may be dispensed with without any radical social revolution. Slavery, as opposed to divine law or to abstract justice, never has brought, nor ever will bring, two countries into conflict with each other; but slavery made indispensable as *a peculiar institution*, as an organized fact, as a fundamental social necessity, *must* come into conflict with the totally opposite institutions of democracy, and that not because it is merely or nominally slavery, but because it is a political organ modifying the entire structure of government. Slavery, as it existed in Athens, slavery, as it existed formerly in the Northern States, was in everything, except its name and accidents, consistent with democracy; and, in either case, to dispense with the institution was to introduce no radical change, but only to do away with the name and accidents.*

In Sparta, or in the South, the case was far otherwise. Here, slavery existed in its strict severity; it came into being in connection with material conditions, — that is, in connection with a soil especially favorable to agriculture, — and it maintained its existence by reason of its fitness, its indispensableness, to certain social conditions; it could not, therefore, be changed or annulled without running counter both to the inveterate tendencies of Nature and the still more inveterate tendencies of habit. This difference between the two estates of slavery is evident also from the fact, that, while, in the one case, the law would admit of no emancipation, in the other, the emancipation was effected legally, either in the lump, as in New England, or by instalments, as in Athens; and in the latter State we must remember that the process was rendered the more easy and natural by the fact that the slaves were, in the first instance, generally prisoners taken in war, and not unfrequently stood upon the same social level, before their capture, with their captors, while in Sparta the slaves were taken as a subject race, and held as inferiors.

Much glory has been given to Lacedæmon on the score of her martial merits. To ourselves this glory seems rather her shame, since these merits are inseparable from her grand political mistake. We might as justly exalt Feudalism on the ground of its military estab-

* Here, however, the reader must understand that the infernal system of slave-stealing is left entirely out of the account.

lishment, which, after all, we must admit to be an absolute necessity in the system. To the Spartan oligarchy it was equally necessary that the whole State should exist perpetually under martial law. In the first place, it was necessary, if for nothing else, for the intimidation of the Helots, who were continually watching their opportunity for insurrection, as is shown in that memorable attempt made in connection with the Messenian War. It was, moreover, necessary for a government not strong by sea to extend its boundaries by military conquest; for by each successive conquest a possible enemy is actually forced into subjection, and made to contribute to the central power which subdues it.

Indeed, it is true that every feature of the State polity which that old rascal Lycurgus gave to Sparta must be considered and judged in connection with this grand martial establishment, upon which the Lacedæmonian oligarchy was based, and through which the nefarious attempt to establish oligarchies in all the rest of the world was supported. The establishment itself was barbarous, and could not possibly have thrived under the art-loving, home-protecting eye of the Athenian Pallas. All domestic sanctities were rudely invaded, and even the infant's privilege to live depended upon its martial promise; the aspirations of religion were levelled down into sympathy with the most brutal enthusiasm, as afterwards happened in the case of Rome; the very idea of Beauty was demolished, and with it all that was sacred in human nature, and all hope of progress. The whole State was sacred to the idea of Military Despotism.

Thus it happened that Sparta, from her first introduction in history to her exit, was at a stand-still in whatever involved anything higher than brute force. In this respect she differed from Athens as much as the South at this day differs from the North, and from precisely the same causes, the principal of which, in each case, was barbarism, — barbarism deliberately organized, and maintained in conscious preference to intellectual refinement.

And yet it is remarkable that both Lacedæmon and the South, as compared with their respective rivals, started in life at an immense advantage, and seemingly with a far more auspicious prospect before them. The early Virginian turned up his nose at Plymouth as a very despicable affair, and wondered that the Puritans did not set sail *en masse* for the Bahamas. Gorgeous were the descriptions of Virginia sent home by some of the first settlers, in which lions and tigers, and a whole menagerie of tropical animals, came in for no small share of wonder; and, as an offset to this summer luxuriance of life, most disparaging pictures were drawn of the bleak sterility of New England, — and even that which was the only compensation for this barrenness of the earth, namely, the abundance of fish in the sea, was, as respects the revenue derived from it, made an especial subject of derision. Thus, doubtless, did the ancient Peloponnesian look upon Attica in the small beginnings of her infinite growth; he had exactly the same topics for his ridicule, — sterility, fishery, and all; and just as in the case of the South, was the laugh in the end turned against himself. But to the very last there was one stinging jest on the lips of the Spartan, — the very same which the modern slaveholder flings with so great gusto against the unfortunate Yankee, — and that was Athenian cupidity. The ancient and the modern jester are alike condemned on their own indictment, since upon cupidity the most petulant, upon cupidity the most voracious in its greedy demands, rested the whole Spartan polity, as does the system of slaveholding in the South. The Spartan, like the Southern planter, might protest that money was of no consequence whatever, that to him it was only so much iron, — but why? Only because that, by the satisfaction of a

cupidity more profound, he was able to dispense with the ordinary necessities of an honest democrat.

In peace, Sparta was a nonentity; in the resources which enrich and glorify the time of peace she was a bankrupt. Fine arts or education she had none: these centred in Athens. These were elements of progress, and could no more be tolerated in Peloponnesus than in our Gulf States. Taking our Southern civilization or that of Lacedæmon, we must say of each that it is thoroughly brutalized; we may challenge either to show us a single master-piece of intellect, whether in the way of analysis or of construction,—but none can they show.

Even in a military sense, the forces which Democracy could marshal, either in ancient Greece or in modern America, were more than a match for the corresponding oligarchical factions. Athens, like New England, was a commercial centre, and therefore a prominent naval power; and this naval prominence, in each instance, was so great as to give a decisive superiority over a non-commercial rival. Sparta used her influence and power to establish oligarchic institutions in the various provinces of Greece, which generally corresponded to our Territories,—in which latter the South has, with an equally unworthy zeal, been for several years seeking to establish her peculiar institutions. Epidamnus proved a Grecian Kansas. As in our own country, the hostile factions refrained from war as long as human nature would allow; but, once engaged in it, it became a vital struggle, that could be terminated only by the exhaustion of one of the parties.

Athens was the stronger: why, then, did she not conquer her rival? With equal pertinence we might ask, Why have not we, who are the stronger, subjugated the South? The answer to both questions is the same. Political prejudice overmasters patriotism. Neither ourselves nor the ancient Athenians appear to have the remotest idea of the importance of the cause for which we are contending. To us, as to them, the avenue to future glory lies through the blood-red path of war, of desperate, unrelenting war. Nothing else, no compromise, no negotiations of any sort, would suffice. This the Athenians never realized; this *we* do not seem to understand. Among ourselves, as among them, the peace-party—a party in direct sympathy with the aims and purposes of the enemy—blusters and intrigues. President Lincoln meets with the same embarrassments in connection with this party that Pericles met in his campaigns against Sparta: it was his coming into power that precipitated the violence of war; his determined action against all sympathizers with the enemy draws down upon him the intensified wrath of these sympathizers; the generals whom he sends into the field, if, like Alcibiades, they are characterized by any spirit in their undertakings, are trammelled with political entanglements and rendered useless, while some slow, half-brained Nicias, with no heart in the cause, is placed at the head of expeditions that result only in defeat.

There is the same diffusiveness connected with our military plans which characterized the operations of the Athenians against Sparta. We do not make the special advantage which we have over the South through our naval superiority available against her special vulnerability. We intimidate her, as Pericles did the Peloponnesians, by circumnavigating her territories with a great display of our naval power; we effect a few landings upon her coasts; but all these invasions lead to no grand results, they do not subdue our armed enemy. What with these errors in the general conduct of the war, and the lack of energy which characterizes every part, our prospects of ultimate success are fast being ruined. Unless some change be quickly effected, unless political sentiment can be made to give place to the original enthusiasm with which

we commenced the war, and this enthusiasm be embodied in military enterprise, our case is a hopeless one. On the other hand, if things go on as they have been going on, the political opposition to the war will rise to such a height as to overturn the Administration, and in its place install those who are desirous of a reconstruction of the Union on a Southern basis. The same errors on the part of Athens led to just this result in Greece; an oligarchy came at last to rule even over the democratic city itself. The consequence was the downfall of Greece, and in her ruin was demonstrated the failure of ancient civilization. In a like event, nothing could save us, nothing could save modern civilization, from the same disastrous ruin.

The barbarism which at successive intervals in history has swept southward over Asia was, at the least, something fresher and better than that which it displaced. The Gothic barbarians were, in very truth, the scourges of God to the inferior and more despicable barbarians of Southern Europe. The former exemplified a barbarism unconscious of itself, and carrying in its very rudeness the hope of the world; and the more complete and overwhelming its revolutions, the more glorious the promise involved in them. But, from the establishment over a continent of a system so deliberately barbarous that it dares to array its brutal features against the sunlight of this nineteenth century, that it dares even to oppose itself, with a distinct confession of its base purposes, against the only free, beneficent, and hope-giving government in the world, — from the triumph of such a system and over such a government there is not the shadow of a hope, but rather the widest possible field for dismal apprehension. From this barbarism we have everything to fear; and the only way to successfully oppose it is through the movements of war. Only through a triumph gained in the battle-field, and held decisive for all future time, can we, as a nation, make our way out of the fatal entanglements of this present time into the bright and glorious heritage of the future.

REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

My Diary, North and South. By W. H. Russell. Boston: T. O. H. P. Burnham. pp. xxii., 602.

Plutarch, as a patriotic Bœotian, felt called on to write a tract concerning the malice of Herodotus in having told some unpleasant truths about the Thebans; and many of our countrymen have shown themselves as Bœotian, at least, if not as patriotic, in their diatribes against Mr. Russell, who is certainly very far from being an Herodotus, least of all in that winning simplicity of style which made him so dangerous in the eyes of Plutarch. It was foolish to take Mr. Russell at his own valuation, to elevate a clever Irish reporter of the London "Times" into a representative of England; but it was still more foolish, in attacking him, to mistake violence for force, and sensible people will be apt to think that there must have been some truth in criticisms which were resented with such unreasoning clamor. It is only too easy to force the growth of those national antipathies which ripen the seeds of danger and calamity to mankind; for there are few minds that are not capacious enough for a prejudice, and it has sometimes seemed as if, in our hasty resentment of the littlenesses of Englishmen, we were in danger of forgetting the greatness of England. A nation risks nothing in being underrated; the real peril is in under-

rating and misunderstanding a rival who may at any moment become an antagonist, — who will almost certainly become such, if we do our best to help him in it. Especially in judging the qualities of a people, we should be careful to take our measure by the highest, and not the lowest, types it has shown itself capable of producing. In moments of alarm, danger, or suffering, a nation is apt to relapse into that intellectual and moral condition of Mob from which it has slowly struggled upward; and this is especially true in an age of newspapers, where Cleon finds his way to every breakfast-table. It is her mob side that England has been showing us lately; but this should not blind us to the fact that in the long run the character of a nation tends more and more to assimilate itself to that ideal typified in its wisest thinkers and best citizens. In the qualities which historians and poets love to attribute to their country, national tendencies and aspirations are more or less consciously represented; these qualities the nation will by-and-by learn to attribute to itself, until, becoming gradually traditional, they will at length realize themselves as active principles. The selfish clamor of Liverpool merchants, who see a rival in New York, and of London bankers who have dipped into Confederate stock, should not lead us to conclude, with M. Albert Blanc, that the foreign policy of England is nothing more or less than *une haine de commerçants et d'industriels, haine implacable et inflexible comme les chiffres.**

Mr. Russell's book purports to be, and probably is in substance, the diary from which he made up his letters to the London "Times"; and it is rather amusing, as well as instructive, to see the somewhat muddy sources which, swelled by affluents of verbiage and invention, gather head enough to contribute their share to the sonorous shallowness of "the leading journal of Europe." When we learn, as we do from this "Diary," what a contributor to that eminent journal is, when left to his own devices,—that he does not know the difference between *would* and *should*, (which, to be sure, is excusable in an Irishman,) that he believes *in petto* to mean *in miniature*, uses *protagonist* with as vague a notion of its sense as Mrs. Malaprop had of her derangement of epitaphs, and then recall to mind the comparative correctness of Mr. Russell's correspondence in point of style, we conceive a hearty respect for the proof-reader in Printing-House Square. We should hardly have noticed these trifles, except that Mr. Russell has a weakness for displaying the cheap jewelry of what we may call *lingo*, and that he is rather fond of criticizing the dialect and accent of persons who were indiscreet enough to trust him with their confidences. There is one respect, however, in which the matter has more importance, — in its bearing on our estimate of Mr. Russell as a trustworthy reporter of what he saw and heard. Conscientious exactness is something predicable of the whole moral and intellectual nature, and not of any special faculty; so that, when we find a man using words without any sense of their meaning, and assuming to be familiar with things of which he is wholly ignorant, we are justified in suspecting him of an habitual inaccuracy of mind, which to a greater or less degree disqualifies him both as observer and reporter. We say this with no intention of imputing any wilful misstatements to Mr. Russell, but as something to be borne in mind while reading his record of private conversations. A scrupulous fidelity is absolutely essential, where the whole meaning may depend on a tone of voice or the use of one word instead of another. Any one accustomed to the study of dialects will understand what we mean, if he compare Mr. Olmsted's extracts from his diary with Mr. Russell's. The latter represents himself as constantly hearing the word *Britisher* used seriously and in good faith, and remarks expressly on an odd pronunciation of *Europe* with the accent on the last syllable, which he noticed in Mr. Seward among others. Mr. Russell's memory is at fault. What he heard was *Européan*; and *Britisher* is not, and never was, an Americanism.

We do not, however, mean to doubt the general truthfulness of Mr. Russell's reports. We find nothing in his book which leads us to modify the opinion we expressed of him more than a year ago.* We still think him "a shrewd, practised, and, for a foreigner, singularly accurate observer." We still believe that his "strictures, if rightly taken, may do us

* *Mémoires et Correspondence de* J. De Maistre, p. 92.

* *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. VIII., p. 765.