

Neglected health.

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NEGLECTED HEALTH.

TELL him of an intent that's coming towards him.' The British citizen was told on various occasions early in the present session, that there were six or eight sanitary measures to be made payable to him in the course of a few months. Bills were, indeed, duly drawn, but they have all been most unduly withdrawn. For, to finish the quotation we had just begun, 'Promising is the very air o' the time; to promise is most courtly and fashionable: performance is a kind of will or testament, which argues a great sickness in his judgment that made it.' If this be true philosophy, the judgment of the House of Commons upon matters that concern the public health is very sound indeed.

The end of the session brings our patience to an end. We have been quiet. Trusting in those who should know what is good for us, we have heard, seen, and said nothing; but now we must speak.

We will not pain ourselves by uttering the names of the eight or nine measures, great and small, more or less bearing upon the improvement of the public health, that we have seen, during this spring and summer, perishing before their prime. We were friends to them, and they are lately dead, all barbarously murdered in the House of Commons. Surely it was not the time for a national assembly, far removed from barbarism, to declare that a time of war—a time when the rich of necessity must suffer more than usual pressure, and the poor be more than ever crushed—was not a right time for removing burdens on our social state. Deliberations on the conduct of the war have formed a very small part of the business of Parliament; no topic of debate was less welcome to ministers, or, except as touching a few points, less relished by the country. The war has not thriven or gained weight an ounce for having eaten up the other business of the session. Let some German critic, with a German constitution able to endure the work, read the debates of the year through, and he will find that, allowing to war-topics all the hours they occupied,

there remained an abundance of time spent in declaring there was no time. His decision will be, that it took as much strength to push on one side the work of the country as would have sufficed to push it to a useful extent forward.

We believe that an abuse of the privilege of faction is in some degree responsible for the late stoppage of all domestic legislation; but whatever may be the cause or causes of it, we do not believe that statesmen have been justified in excusing their own inaction by the sluggishness of public interest in any other than the leading topic of the day. The filth that swims in his back-yard and oozes through his bedroom floor is infinitely nearer to the poor inhabitant of Rotherhithe or Bethnal Green than the corruption of the Russian Government. The labourer who has been earning his own bread for years, and in some chance week (fallen, perhaps, under the pressure of war times) needs parish aid, is thereupon, by the unamended laws of poor removal, carried away, and set down naked with his household in some place where he finds the legal fiction of a settlement, but no home, and no face of friend or place of work. This man thinks more of his boys and girls in the workhouse than of the ships in the Baltic; he turns his face to Westminster for help—it might as well be turned to Mecca. But these men, and millions in the same or some other way not less concerned in the measures that have been ostentatiously neglected during the past session; these, it may be, are not the people who express the public interest in one thing or another. It has often been said, that if eels and lobsters were not dumb, but could express their sufferings by shrieks, they never would be skinned or boiled alive. Something of the same kind may be said of the dumb classes in society; there is no active desire to give them pain, or to prolong any pain they feel, and there is some heed paid to their sufferings, but not enough. The tongue being an unruly member, lawgivers legislate for that. At present it ap-

when opportunity might have allowed of them, in abeyance. I will not say they never happened, but only occasionally; for requisite practice sufficient movements occurred before the enemy. The great point is not to worry men, or exact from them more than is positively necessary, and above all to preserve their health and save their shoes. A certain number of 'pipe-clay officers' evaded this general understanding, but never did so with impunity; for their divisions, brigades, or battalions, as the case might be, did not face the enemy when they 'came to the scratch,' either in such condition or numbers as the troops of those commanders whose foresight had been more considerate and conservative. About this time, wonderful to be said, the government at home sent us out raw battalions, or the remains of regiments freshly recruited from the Walcheren fever expedition—not to reinforce our army, but to replace veteran and well-tested battalions which the Horse Guard military authorities intended to withdraw from us and send to the colonies or somewhere else. On this, Lord Wellington wrote as follows to the Secretary of War and Colonies, Lord Liverpool:—'Your lordship and his Royal Highness (the Commander-in-Chief) are the best judges of what description of troops it is expedient that this army should be composed. I beg leave, however, to submit that some of the best and most experienced soldiers in this army—the most healthy and capable of bearing fatigue—are in the 2nd battalions. The 2nd battalions of the 53rd, 31st, and 66th, for instance, are much more efficient, and have always more men fit for duty in proportion to their numbers, and fewer sick than any of the 1st battalions recently arrived which have been in Walcheren, and it is certain that this army will *not* be so strong by the exchange of new for old soldiers.' It was, I presume, on the Aladdin's wonderful lamp principle of ex-

changing new lamps for old, that the authorities in England proposed to exchange Lord Wellington's old soldiers for new. Unfortunately at home they never got hold of the magic lamp, or any other light likely to be useful to us, even when they wished it. As another proof of this, I may mention that our army was without the most essential corps requisite for siege operations; we had no sappers and miners. Lord Wellington wrote on this subject, previous to or during the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, to Lord Liverpool, representing the positive necessity of such an arm; but still no such corps was supplied to him, or even organized. In consequence, he wrote again on the subject to Colonel Torrens (the Military Secretary at the Horse Guards) in relation to the operations and storming of Badajos; he says, 'Our loss has been *very* great, and I send you a letter to Lord Liverpool which *accounts for it*.* The truth is, that equipped as we are, the British army is not capable of carrying on a regular siege.' Having now once more an army on the continent, it may be as well to show the mischief arising from the want of proper attention to the requisites of supply, both as to men, matériel, and the *means* of transport by *land* as well as sea, without which last necessity and a *good commissariat*, any force, however efficient, must be paralyzed when they come to move. Lord Wellington had previously wished to strike a blow at Soult, and bring his corps to a general action, but he writes to Lord Liverpool, 'It will be quite impossible for me to go into Andalusia till I have secured Ciudad Rodrigo,' which place had been left insufficiently repaired and unprovisioned by the Spaniards. Ballasteros having approached Seville, occasioned Soult, after retiring from before us, to move in that direction, and a considerable distance was now placed between Soult's corps in the south and our divisions.

* In a note of Gurwood's in the *Wellington Despatches* he says, 'This latter recommendation, the formation of a corps of sappers and miners, the want of such an establishment with the army being the chief cause of the *great* loss (of life) in the sieges.'

pears to them wisest to do nothing. A sergeant of the old school in some French caricature drills his troop, and when he has got the men fixed in a row like statues, cries to them with enthusiasm: 'Immobility's the finest movement in the exercise!' While the public was crying out upon Lord Aberdeen for having in this spirit dealt with the Russians, it was much more evident and certain that in this spirit the whole Parliament was dealing with ourselves.

We will take, however, the grave omissions to which we refer as lapses in duty natural to men troubled by an unaccustomed care. We are not used to have a war upon our path, and may be allowed at first sight to form wrong impressions about the extent to which it is to be considered an impediment to social progress. We have yet the benefit of sanitary laws made in preceding years. The German critic whom we have already invoked would, indeed, find upon close study that there is not one of them wholly sufficient for its purpose—not one that does not either exist now in the form of an Amended Act, or else await some necessary emendation. Boards have been so created that they could not do what they might, and might not do what they could. Parliament has put into the midst of them the leaven of unpopularity: it has worked, they have become unpopular, and then they have been officially snubbed or officially thrown over.

Bodies of law have been created without legs to carry them along, lumps that, like the Interments Act, are able to arrive at nothing. We are not half so much surprised at the unpopularity of the Board of Health, considering the work it had to do and the powers given for the purpose, as at the fact that it really is able to show a large amount of work accomplished. It has rescued thousands of men from death by cholera, has taught more than a score of towns how to be wholesome: it has underbid dirt in the market by proving that cleanliness is cheaper, not in any indirect way by its consequences, but directly, scheme against scheme, clean sewerage against stink, constant supply of good water all over the house against an intermit-

tent supply of bad water in the scullery. An extensive amount of accurate sanitary knowledge has by the same agency been diffused, and two or three new and important principles have been established, though they have not yet all conquered the hostility of vested interests. This Board was sent into the world almost without any other tool or weapon than its tongue; it has used that well, and we complain of its much talking. It was set to a task of innovation, bidden to tread on a whole army of toes; the owners of the toes cry out, and so we all cry shame on such a Board of Health for having made itself unpopular. Where there is so much cry, there must be some wool, we say; there cannot be all this smoke and no fire. Certainly not; but the fire may be one that, if wise, we should be in no hurry to quench. When we see much smoke after the kindling of a necessary fire, we do not throw cold water on the coals we have been lighting, but rather, if we must do something, aid them with an extra faggot, or give them a little helping breath out of our bellows. It is in the first kindling, the freshness of the coal, that we get more than a common show of smoke, but let the fire burn up, and it will soon wear a more cheerful aspect. That was not the philosophy of Lord Seymour (whom no labourer for public health has ever blessed as an ally), or of Sir Benjamin Hall, when those gentlemen marked a session that had done no good to the sanitary cause with a strong effort to do it harm. It may be true that Dr. Southwood Smith and Mr. Chadwick are themselves responsible for some part of the unpopularity attaching to their office. We do not know that they are. We know that in the mere fulfilment of their duty they must have affected many prejudices, wounded many interests, and incurred inevitable odium which it is an honour to have deserved. No doubt they may have had their faults, but we know very well how much good service they have done, and if we felt, as we do not, that we could point out how it might have been done with a better grace, we should be chary, even then, of censure. For why should we throw stones into

the garden out of which we gather flowers?

After all, now that we touch upon the Board of Health, we, for the first time, feel ground under our feet in a consideration of existing sanitary prospects. The Board's term of office now expiring is to be renewed provisionally for a year or two, until 'something may turn up;' and, in the meantime, to be subjected to the full control and supervision of the Home Office, which shall have power to dismiss any of its members. The influence of a department of the Government may, therefore, be used in backing with its weight all the just wishes of our sanitary councillors;* while the duty of the State, to concern itself actively with details of sanitary discipline, will at the same time be suggested rather more practically and distinctly than it hitherto has been. On the other hand, the spokesmen for the vested interests rejoice in the control to which too energetic leaders of the struggle against filth and pestilence are to be subjected, and are not without hope that ere long those sanitary champions may be sacrificed to meet the humour of a public that is so frequently ungrateful, because unreflecting.

Our public, however, is a very sensible and kindly one when it does think. A section of it is already thinking busily about our weak defences against filth and fever; and there is surely just now more than enough matter for the cogitation of us all. While we write, we are told of five thousand people killed in a fortnight at Jamaica by the cholera, and of the ravages of the same

plague at Marseilles, where nearly two hundred deaths have occurred in a single day, and where the inhabitants, until restrained by a decree, were taking flight by troops into the open country. The terrible disease has already sent forward announcement of its probable arrival in strong force among ourselves. Deaths by cholera have occurred here and there. Cholera broke out lately in a ship at Liverpool; it has been gaining strength at Glasgow; it has already appeared, and is now rapidly increasing, in London. It is hardly possible that we shall escape a severe visitation for the present season; the hot summer weather has but recently set in, our river banks and the great fetid pools under our feet, are only now beginning to reek out their poison in a concentrated form, and it is difficult not to fear that we are now again on the verge of an immense calamity.

When this possibility was distant, thought was taken for it by a writer whom the public honours, because they have been none but just and noble thoughts to which he has given permanence in sterling English. This gentleman, author of *Friends in Council*, printed some months ago for private circulation, a small work entitled *Health Fund for London; Some Thought for Next Summer*. Its immediate purpose was to suggest a combination of the strength of private men determined to do something; however little it might be, yet to get something actually done; for the abatement of the evils out of which all pestilence arises. Let them, it was urged, subscribe a sum of money, and administer it in

* Whilst these sheets were passing through the press two incidents have occurred calculated greatly to dishearten all friends of sanitary progress, and especially to disappoint the hopes which had been formed of Lord Palmerston's activity in the cause. First, in a debate on the Public Health Amendment Bill, Lord Palmerston, while in the very act of claiming to be the representative of the General Board of Health, took occasion to make a very sarcastic and ostentatious disclaimer of having read the important *Report*, in which that Board had just endeavoured to relate its achievements and justify its policy, this *Report* being at the moment under discussion in the House. And, secondly, within the last day or two, after introducing the 'Nuisances Removal Amendment Bill,' one of the most important endeavours for sanitary legislation which late years have witnessed, Lord Palmerston, on the first show of opposition, declared himself 'the last man in the world to give unnecessary trouble,' and accordingly withdrew his bill. If the country is to have its sanitary affairs properly administered, this must be under the auspices of a minister who is superior to flippant vanity and selfish indolence—of a minister who will take the trouble to read that for which he claims to be responsible, and will be content to struggle with some obstacles when the lives of millions are at stake.

the form of concentrated help to some one filthy district, so that it might be cleansed, and become on a pretty large scale, what on a small scale the Model Lodging-houses are already—irresistible evidence in favour of the right use of air, water, and drainage. Recent reports of the result of the working of those model lodging-houses that have been now a sufficiently long time established, show that although they are erected commonly in the midst of the worst London neighbourhoods, and have stood the siege of cholera, by which they were on some occasions hotly surrounded, yet in no form has pestilence hitherto crossed one of their thresholds. The low rate of even ordinary mortality in these buildings is so positively startling, that we dare not quote it until more experience shall have confirmed the opinion it suggests. The Health Fund, then, was proposed, in order that, as nearly as possible, not a house only, but a district, might be made in this way pestilence-proof.

The idea so proposed fell upon good soil, and aroused much active and sincere desire for co-operation, but for reasons that need not here be specified it has never yet been actually carried out. The pamphlet of which we speak did nevertheless much good in its own sphere by the infusion of new vigour into the general discussion about matters of hygiene, and it contained many wise thoughts pointing forward to the legislative and administrative powers that it will be best to seek for sanitary purposes. We agree so thoroughly with the main principle affirmed under this head in the little tract, that we will venture to quote from it a passage bearing most directly on our present argument:—

In the first place (it is said), the management of such a thing as the public health should not be dependent upon the spare time of Parliament, or be subject to the interruptions caused by the recesses of your legislators. The waiting from the close of one session to the beginning of another, [and we have now to add, from the beginning of one session to the close of the same,] for such sanitary measures as may suddenly be required, is a palpable defect, a manifest failure. It shows at once how ill such things are regulated. Any particular evil which occurs should be

remediable, either by a municipal body, or a Department of the State. How contemptible a thing it is, that there should be great public works of the first necessity required; and that mere offsets of authority—powerless, moneyless commissions—should be the only bodies to appeal to for orders in such a pressing matter. There should be a great Department of Public Health, distinct from that of justice. Many matters, not now thought of, should come under the jurisdiction of this Department. To prevent the adulteration of food, for instance, should be one of its duties. It should turn science to account in every way. It should encourage and enable scientific men to work at matters connected with the public health.

This we believe to be a view of the question to which it is important that attention should be steadily directed. The peculiar connexion that is to exist, *ad interim*, between the Home Office and Board of Health may be used as a preparation for some definite and well-developed measure, that shall establish, finally, the care of public health, as an essential portion of the business of the nation. In this event it will be seen that the direction of it is to be entrusted only to the highest class of public servants. It is not a trust to be disposed of at the option, or, at best, mismanaged by the discordant action of ten thousand small municipalities or parish vestries. Let the deadliness of the poison steaming from a cesspool or a sewer-of-deposit once be fairly recognised, and nobody will be disposed to assert that a due regard for popular institutions makes it proper for a corporation or a vestry to maintain it in existence. No local board should be entitled to declare that a murderous piece of brick and mortar shall not be summarily dealt with, and that the state is not, unless the vestry or the corporation pleases, to take thought for the protection of lives visibly in danger. Municipalities have no more right to exercise their mercy on a cesspool than to save from the prison or the gallows any other sort of Greenacre. Not even a vestryman, if he be a fishmonger, may offer for sale, as food, stinking turbot; is there reason why he should have right, if he be a house-owner, to offer for tenancy a stinking habitation? For nobody

can doubt which is the more fatal bargain of the two. The time will surely come when not a man in England will be blind to the fact, that there should be no option left with any one, as to the performance or neglect of the main duties that belong to public hygiene. They are matters of life and death, for which the greatest of our representative institutions, namely, the State, alone can take thought in a proper manner. It is a matter also that nearly concerns national morality. An old French poet, François Villon, who sank deep in all the filth of filthy times, and wrote much reckless levity, but now and then moaned like a fallen angel in the midst of his defiant revelling, uttered the despair not of himself only, but of a host, when he exclaimed—

Ordure avons, et ordure nous suyt ;
Nous defuyons l'honneur, et il nous fuyt.

The most surprising part of the whole subject is the speed with which health and honour are recovered, when once ordure has been thoroughly turned out of doors. This point of the case is really a hindrance in discussion, by its very strength. Proper sanitary care tells so amazingly upon a population that we get on faster in a controversy when we let our facts alone. The Board of Health states the results it has produced, and men at once cry out on hot-headed enthusiasts, who prove too much. When facts are to be dealt with, in the present state of human cautiousness, (cautiousness not to be discouraged,) half as good a case for sanitary discipline would make twice as certain an impression. We have for this reason abstained, hitherto, from figures, but we cannot refrain from allusion to the evidence of one witness, who has no connexion with the Board of Health, and cannot be said to have a crotchet of his own to prove. In a very pithy and business-like second report, recently issued, on the operation of the Common Lodging-Houses Act, Captain Hay states that among thirty thousand tenants of registered lodging houses, places infested formerly by pestilence, and now, to a certain moderate extent, cleared of filth by the operation of a tolerably easy law, among those thirty thou-

sand people there were, in the twelvemonth, only ten cases of fever. An improvement has, at the same time, taken place in the character and habits of the lodgers, almost commensurate with this improvement in their physical condition. The supervision extends now only over common lodging-houses, no protection is afforded to the occupants of other dwellings.

Every man knows that arsenic is poison; to administer it, therefore, in a dangerous or fatal dose, is to commit a felony. When every man has learned that filth in certain forms is poison, ought it to be left to his discretion, or to the discretion of his parish, whether dangerous or fatal doses of it are to be administered to any neighbour? We do not, in what we have been saying, diminish the office of any local body. In grave matters it is for the State to ordain what must be done, and by local self-representation, each little community—perhaps by means of Local Boards of Health—may decide for itself how to do it.

A scheme of representative self-government especially designed for the metropolis, and bearing largely upon the advancement of the public health, has been suggested in a thoughtful and ingenious pamphlet by Lord Ebrington. To this we may refer readers who desire to see justice done to the great principle of local self-representation, without hurt to any public interest. Due provision is made by the plan for securing certain weight in each Council to the nation at large, as represented by its government; and we accept many of Lord Ebrington's ideas, though we attach little importance to one of the arguments on which he bases them. He thinks it necessary to take care lest a metropolitan government, with too extensive and independent powers of control, should become at any time an *imperium in imperio*, and be a source of danger to the central government. He points to the great prominence given already by large vestries to political discussion and the composition of memorials. On any such account we own that we have no fear. Only the lessening of public liberty could make a London revolutionary junta possible. Govern-

ment never can be more under London influence than it is now. The most comprehensive representation of the municipality of London could not carry more weight than exists already in the columns of the London press, and in the free expression of opinion by all citizens. The town is by a great deal too large for any narrowness of local feeling; it is practically a great British province, in which are found represented the interests of the nation here and in all quarters of the world. A government with which the whole metropolis contended, would exist in opposition to the will of the whole nation. If, however, the municipality were no more than a representation, having local feeling for its animating soul, there would be no need to protect the State against it. There is no need to look for danger from improper steps that may be taken by the little parliaments we cherish and desire to cherish always, however true it may be that, like greater parliaments, they indulge in occasional absurdities. Lucian tells of a king of Egypt who taught monkeys to dance. They danced correctly, and with a profound gravity, until some citizen threw nuts among them. Now there are many little matters that are nuts to the members of a town council or vestry, and whenever public liberty may be in danger from steps taken by any such body, we will undertake to get up in that town council or vestry, and to save the country. We would propose such a halfpenny rate—but no, why need we reveal the nostrum? If we speak lightly of our small self-representing bodies, let it be remembered that men laugh with the most freedom at what they love. Were the true rights of municipalities endangered by denying to them uses they were never meant to serve, we should be very serious in their defence. But as it is, while we declare our belief that in their worst form they care, as they should do, infinitely more for their own quarrels than for those of anybody else, and that under no possible circumstances

could they in this country ever assume a revolutionary character, we must object to all confusion of departments. There is a fable about a man who quarrelled with his hair-brush, and, setting it aside, elevated three old servants, blacking brushes, to the vacant situation. Admirably had they performed the not unimportant duty formerly entrusted to them, but when the change was made, their owner did not find much reason to congratulate himself.

We have touched very lightly and briefly on the points to which it has seemed to us most expedient to call attention, and have made no attempt to enforce our argument by an array of sanitary facts. But upon these facts it is nevertheless requisite that men should dwell with an incessant patience. Whoever will go with the clergyman or parish surgeon of any wretched district in this country, using his own eyes and his own nose, though he will not see in one visit a tenth part of the pollution that exists above ground, and will have imagined most imperfectly the horrors that lie underneath the soil, will yet come away eager to be at work, and make his heavy heart a little lighter by some effort to be helpful. The next best thing to actual inspection for an acquisition of some knowledge of the truth, is a reading of the evidence of faithful witnesses. The reports of the inspectors who have been invited in various places to make the preliminary inquiry that is requisite before there can be any question about an application of the Health of Towns Act are worth reading with care. They show not only what terrible neglect of all the ordinary means of health is common, but also—as at Swindon, for example—what angry, dogged opposition may be made by selfishness and ignorance together, even against changes that one might think would be dictated by the simplest sense of decency. A vigorously-written summary of the chief sanitary events of the metropolis exists in the well-known reports of the City Officer of Health, which are now collected.* Mr. Simon's excellent reports in their

* *Reports relating to the Sanitary Condition of the City of London.* With Preface and Notes. By John Simon, F.R.S., Surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital, and Officer of Health to the City. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1854.

present form are likely to do as much good service in the future as they have done already in the past, as official documents suggesting lines of action to a public body, or as matter for the newspapers. They have become now a possession to the student. There are several things pointed out by Mr. Simon in the preface to his volume upon which we find that we have already touched. Other topics—as the adulteration of food and the serious and extensive falsification of drugs, both evils upon which there is now no adequate check—have escaped our mention. Men are plunged into disease by want of proper sanitary care over the town, and the best doctor is defied often to drag them out of their disease, for want of proper supervision exercised over the druggist's shop:—

It is notorious in my profession, (Mr. Simon writes), that there are not many simple drugs, and still fewer compound preparations, on the standard strength of which we can reckon. It is notorious that some important medicines are so often falsified in the market, and then so often mis-made in the laboratory, that we are robbed of all certainty in their employment. Iodide of potassium, an invaluable specific, may be shammed to half its weight with the carbonate of potash. Scammony, one of our best purgatives, is rare without chalk or starch, weakening it, perhaps, to half the intention of the giver. Cod-liver oil may have come from seals or olives. The two or three drops of prussic acid that we would give for a dose may be nearly twice as strong at one chemist's as at another. The quantity of laudanum equivalent to a grain of opium being, theoretically, 19 minims; we may practically find this grain, it is said, in 4.5 minims, or in 34.5. And my colleague Dr. R. D. Thomson, who has much experience in these matters, tells me that of calamine—not indeed an important agent, but still an article of our pharmacopœia—purporting daily to be sold at every druggist's shop, there has not for years, he believes, existed a specimen in the market.

Mr. Simon urges very strongly the necessity of dealing with the

great subject of our sanitary condition, by comprehensive and scientific legislation, 'that it should be submitted, in its entirety, to some single department of the Executive, as a sole charge; that there should be some tangible head, responsible—not only for the enforcement of existing laws, such as they are or may become, but likewise for their progress from time to time to the level of contemporary science, for their completion where fragmentary, for their harmonisation where discordant.'

The department of a President of the Board of Health, sitting in Parliament, should be, 'in the widest sense, to care for the physical necessities of human life,' and we regret that we have only space to quote the conclusion of Mr. Simon's able summary of the duties for which such a Minister of Health should be responsible:—

Into the hands of this new minister—advised, perhaps, for such purposes by some permanent commission of skilled persons, would devolve the guardianship of public health against combined commercial interests, or incompetent administration. He would provide securities for excluding sulphur from our gas, and animalcules from our water. He would come into relation with all local Improvement Boards, in respect of the sanitary purposes of their existence. To him we should look to settle, at least for all practical purposes, the polemics of drainage and water supply; to form opinions which might guide parliament, whether street sewers really require to be avenues for men, whether hard water really be good enough for all ordinary purposes, whether cisternage really be indispensable to an urban water-supply.

Organisations against epidemic diseases—questions of quarantine—laws for vaccination, and the like, would obviously lie within his province; and thither perhaps also his colleagues might be glad to transfer many of those medical questions which now belong to other departments of the executive—the sanitary regulation of emigrant ships, the ventilation of mines, the medical inspection of factories and prisons, the insecurities of railway traffic, *et hoc genus omne*.

I.—THE CLOUD.

LOVE stood before me in my youth's fresh prime ;
 ' Life's hill is steep,' he said, ' the way is long—
 Be love thy guide ! Love's heart is bold and strong,
 Love's truth triumphant over Death and Time.'
 Oh ! very fair was Love, and sweeter far
 His voice than any bird's—my soul did seem
 Touched by an angel in a silver dream,
 Sent down from regions of the morning star.
 I turned to follow, but austere and strange,
 Another voice cried ' Pause !' whereat, a wail
 Broke from me—lo ! sweet Love waxed wan and pale,
 And dark, behind him, lower'd the Shadow, Change.
 That sterner voice was Truth's, for now I know
 Change followeth Love wherever he doth go.

II.—THE ' SILVER LINING.'

' Poor Child !' Truth murmured—' Thou dost shrink to see
 Love thus companioned ; on thine ear doth ring
 The grand ' for ever' that the seraphs sing,
 In the heavens only. Love, that melody
 Hath dreamed, nor questioneth, nor doubteth he,
 But chanteth loud and strong, yet pauseth oft,
 And . . . ceaseth soon. Poor child ! the clouds, aloft,
 Are just as stable—yet some grace must be
 Hid in that sorrow ; with meek hands uplift
 The shroud and search ; behold ! how one by one,
 Life's feeble loves die out, like flowers in the drift
 Of the first snow ; grief lingers, but anon,
 By faith transfigured, sets the whole heart free,
 To clasp a love whose term's eternity.'

III.—GRIEF.

I could not lift that pall—my heart was full,
 Mine eyes o'erflowed—Life's glory seemed to grow
 A shadowy semblance and a mocking show ;
 Dull grew the earth, the sky, all leaden dull.
 O Love ! I cried—O Love, the beautiful !
 O Love, the joy o' the heart, the light o' the eyes !
 Thou hast undone me with thy witcheries,
 O fair, false Love ! a pitiless hand doth pull
 Thy mask off, and behold, Decay hath shed
 Dust on thy lip and ashes on thy head.
 O Death, unbar thy door ! my soul doth pine
 To enter in—and Thou, the one, divine,
 True Love, uplift me, where the sweet heavens ring,
 With that ' for ever' which the seraphs sing.

IV.—RESIGNATION.

The river flowed in music to the sea,
 The summer wind its wild, sweet tune began ;
 The little field-mice in the furrows ran ;
 From out the flower-bells buzzed the wandering bee.
 A calm sank on my soul. This misery
 Of Loss and Change, I said, all life doth bear,
 Nor riseth in revolt, nor in despair
 Doth languish. God is very strong, and we,
 In rash rebellion, but as sapling trees,
 That front the lightning ; I will lift that pall,
 And bow me where the deathly shade doth fall,
 And scan, with patient heart, those mysteries ;
 If haply I may find—oh ! sweet and strange !
 God's Love enfolded in God's bitter Change !

POLITICS AND PRONUNCIAMENTOS OF SPAIN.

THE past generation of Englishmen, some of the bravest and best of whom have been called away from us in the last couple of years, took the deepest interest in the prosperity of Spain, and we do not know that this interest has in any wise diminished with the living generation. Spain is now—thanks to steamboats and railroads—much nearer to our shores than during the great Peninsular struggle, and we drive with her people a much larger and more profitable trade than any existing in the seven years between 1807 and 1814.

Since the death of Ferdinand VII., too, we have, with our ally France, taken a most prominent and costly part in sustaining the cause of Isabella, and as we had hoped, in securing thereby the foundation and progress of constitutional government.

But altogether, independently of our sacrifices in men and money, and of the treaty obligations which we have incurred, the fate of so fine and fertile a country as Spain can never be indifferent to intelligent Englishmen. If Spain be convulsed, Portugal runs the greatest risk of contagion, and thus two kingdoms near to the shores of England and of France may exercise an influence on Europe out of all proportion with their geographical extent and importance. The people of Spain, and we mean by the word people the peasantry and small farmers, are an energetic, a sober, and a laborious people. Proud of the pristine renown of their nation, they are no lovers of novelty and innovations, and only desire to live as their ancestors have lived, under the shadow of their own vines and their own fig-trees. The mass of the small proprietors and peasantry in Spain are neither reformers, nor revolutionists, nor brawlers in the forum or the market-place. They desire nothing better than to exist in peace and quiet under the ancient laws and lawful authorities of the nation—under that monarchical government which has endured for ages in the sunny land in which they have drawn breath. The Spaniard, though peaceful and well-disposed,

has, however, a sense of his own dignity. No man reverences authority more than he when character and decorum are added to lofty station. But if those who are set in authority over him forget what is due to themselves, and to the nation over which they are placed, the hardy, patient, cheerful, and submissive Spanish subject becomes an inflammable and impassioned insurgent, ready with arms in his hands to pronounce against a system which shocks all his cherished prejudices and traditions. Spain is a land not of calculation but of passion, not of reflection but of impulse and of feeling. The conduct and character of individuals in high station in the Peninsula have, during the last one-and-twenty years, had a greater influence on public events than in any country in Europe. The fate and fortune of the nation, the progress of the civil war, the rise and fall of ministries, have all been bound up with the personal history of Maria Christina and her daughter Isabella II.

We are not about to write any diatribe, personal or political, against the Queen-Mother, Maria Christina. But we cannot conceal from ourselves that from the period of the arrival of the fourth wife of the late King Ferdinand VII., of unhappy memory, in Spain, the condition of the Peninsula has been one, for the most part, of trouble and unrest. Maria Christina, still, in her forty-eighth year, a woman of grace and beauty, was at the close of 1829, when she married Ferdinand VII., in the full prime of beautiful and attractive womanhood. The character of her royal husband is well known, and need not be dwelt on at any length. Arbitrary, violent, selfish, false, faithless; a glutton, a voluptuary, and a sensualist in the extreme sense of these terms, he was nevertheless subdued and captivated by the grace, the beauty, and the fascination of his spouse and relative—for Christina was the daughter of the Neapolitan Bourbon, Francis I., and of his second wife, Maria Isabella, daughter of Charles IV. of Spain.

In the first months of their union,