Alas for the infirmity of mortal resolution! Between the fool and the man of genius there is at least this symptom of their common humanity. Carlyle came home with the fixed determination to be amiable and good and make his wife happy. No one who reads his letters to her can doubt of his perfect confidence in her, or of his childlike affection for her. She was the one person in the world besides his mother whose character he completely admired, whose judgement he completely respected, whose happiness he was most anxious to secure; but he came home to drive her immediately distracted, not by unkindness—for unkind he could not be—but through inability to endure with ordinary patience the smallest inconveniences of life. These were times when Carlyle was like a child, and like a very naughty one.

During the three months of his absence the house in Cheyne Row had undergone a "thorough repair." This process, which the dirt of London makes necessary every four or five years, is usually undergone in the absence of the owners. Mrs. Carlyle, feeble and out of health as she was, had remained, to spare her husband expense, through the paint and noise, directing everything herself, and restoring everything to order and cleanliness at a minimum of cost. The walls had been painted or papered, the floors washed, the beds taken to pieces and remade, the injured furniture mended. With her own hands she had newly covered chairs
and sofas, and stitched carpets and curtains; while for Carlyle himself she had arranged a library exactly in the form which he had declared before that it was essential to his peace that his own working-room should have. For three days he was satisfied, and acknowledged "a certain admiration." Unfortunately when at heart he was really most gratified, his acknowledgments were limited; he was shy of showing feeling, and even those who knew him best and understood his ways were often hurt by his apparent indifference. He had admitted that the house had been altered for the better, but on the fourth morning the young lady next door began upon her fatal piano, and then the tempest burst out which Mrs. Carlyle describes with such pathetic humour. First he insisted that he would have a room made for himself on the roof where no sound could enter. When shown how much this would cost, he chose to have his rooms altered below—partitions made or taken down—new fireplaces introduced. Again the house was filled with dust and workmen; saws grating and hammers clattering, and poor Carlyle in the midst of it, "at sight of the uproar he had raised, was all but wringing his hands and tearing his hair." And after all it was not the piano, or very little the piano. It is in ourselves that we are this or that, and the young lady might have played her fingers off, and he would never have heard her, had his work once been set going, and he absorbed in it. But go it would not, except fitfully and unsatisfactorily; his materials were all accumulated; he had seen all that he needed to see, yet his task still seemed impossible. The tumult in the house was appeased: another writing-room was arranged; the unfortunate young lady was brought to silence. *Past and Present* was done and out of the way. The dinner-hour was changed to the middle of the day to improve the biliary condition. No result came. He walked about the streets to distract himself.

So Carlyle had been when he began *The French Revolution*. So it was, is, and must be with every serious man when he is first starting upon any great literary work. "Sport of every wind" he seems to himself, for every trifle, piano or what not, distracts him. Sterling was in London, then on the
edge of his last fatal illness. In the Journal of October 23 Carlyle enters:

\begin{verbatim}
Methinks I am a hieroglyphic bat
Skim o' er the zenith in a slipshod hat;
And to shed infant's blood, with horrid strides
A damn'd potato on a whirlwind rides!
\end{verbatim}

Fabulously attributed to Nat Lee in Bedlam; composed, I imagine, by John Sterling, who gave it me yesterday.

After this he seemed to make progress. "Have been making an endeavour one other time to begin writing on Cromwell. Dare not say I have yet begun. All beginning is difficult!" Many pages were covered, with writing of a sort. Mrs. Carlyle, on November 28, describes him as "over head and ears in Cromwell," and "lost to humanity for the time being." That he could believe himself started gave some peace to her; but he was trying to make a consecutive history of the Commonwealth, and, as he told me afterwards, "he could not get the subject rightly taken hold of." There was no seed fitly planted and organically growing; and the further he went, the less satisfied he was with himself. He used to say that he had no genius for literature. Yet no one understood better what true literary work really was, or was less contented to do it indifferently.

One of his difficulties lay in his extreme conscientiousness. No sentence would be ever deliberately set down on paper without his assuring himself, if it related to a fact, that he had exhausted every means of ascertaining that the fact was true as he proposed to tell it; or, if it was to contain a sentiment or opinion, without weighing it to see if it was pure metal and not cant or insincere profession. This, however, lay in his nature, and, though it might give him trouble, would give him no anxiety. But his misgiving was that he was creating no living organic work, but a dead manufactured one, and this was intolerable. He flung aside at last all that he had done, burnt part of it, as he said, locked away the rest, and began again, as he told his mother, "on another side." He gave up the notion of writing a regular history. He would make the person of Oliver Cromwell the centre of his composition, collect and edit, with introductions and connecting fragments of narrative, the extant letters and
speeches of Oliver himself—this, at least, as a first opera-
tion—a plain and comparatively easy one. When it was
finished, he told me that he found to his surprise that he had
finished all which he had to say upon the subject, and might
so leave it.

The dissatisfaction of Carlyle with his own work, as long
as he was engaged upon it, is a continuous feature in his
character. “The French Revolution was worth nothing.”
“To have done with it” was the chief desire which he had. “To
have done with it” was his chief desire again now. “To have
done with it” was the yet more passionate cry in the pro-
longed agony of Frederick. The art of composition was merely
painful to him, so conscious was he always of the distance
between the fact as he could represent it and the fact as it
actually was. He could be proud when he measured himself
against other men; but his estimate of his merit, considered
abstractedly, was utterly low. His faults disgusted him; his
excellences he could not recognise; and when the work was
done and printed, he was surprised to find it so much better
than he had thought.

It is always so. The better a man is morally, the less con-
scious he is of his virtues. The greater the artist, the more
aware he must be of his shortcomings. If excellence is to be
its own only reward, poor excellence is in a bad way; for the
more there is of it, the less aware of itself it is allowed to be.
There is and must be, however, a certain comfort in the sense
that a man is doing a right thing, if not well, yet as well as
he can.

There was to be no Scotland for Carlyle this year. The
starting with Cromwell had been so hard that he did not
mean to pause over it till it was done; and an occasional rest
of a day or two at the houses of friends near London was all
that he intended to allow himself. It was his wife’s turn to
have a holiday. She had not been in the North since she had
lost her mother. All the last summer had been spent with the
workmen in Cheyne Row. In autumn and winter she had
been ill as usual with coughs, sleeplessness, and nervous
headaches. As long as the cold weather lasted she had not been
well for a single day, and only her indomitable spirit seemed
to keep her alive at all. She never complained—perhaps for-
tunately—as with Carlyle to suffer in any way was to com-
plain loudly and immediately, and when complaint was absent he never realised that there could be occasion for it. Anyway she was now to have a holiday. She was to go first to her uncle at Liverpool, then to the Paulets at Seaforth, then to stay with Geraldine Jewsbury at Manchester; then, if she wished, to go to Scotland. She was always economical, and travelled at smallest cost. Money matters no longer, happily, required such narrow attention as in former years. Her letters (or parts of them) describing her adventures are published in the *Letters and Memorials*. Carlyle, busy as he was, made time to write to her regularly, with light affectionate amusing sketches of his visitors or the news of the day; most particularly of the progress of the new acquaintance which was to have so serious an influence on her own future peace. . . . Mr. and Lady Harriet Baring, whom he had met two years previously, were now both of them becoming his intimate friends. From Mr. Baring there are many letters preserved among Carlyle's papers. They exhibit not only respect and esteem, but the strongest personal confidence and affection, which increased with fuller knowledge, and ceased only with death. They show, too, a fuller understanding of, and agreement with, Carlyle's general views than are to be found in almost any of those of his other correspondents. From Lady Harriet, too, there are abundance of notes, terse, clear, and peremptory, rather like the commands of a sovereign than the easy communications of friendship. She was herself gifted, witty, unconventional, seeing men and things much as they were, and treating them accordingly. She recognised the immense superiority of Carlyle to everyone else who came about her. She admired his intellect; she delighted in his humour. He at first enjoyed the society of a person who never bored him, who had a straight eye, a keen tongue, a disdain of nonsense, a majestic arrogance. As they became more intimate, the great lady affected his imagination. He was gratified at finding himself appreciated by a brilliant woman, who ruled supreme over half of London society. She became Gloriana, Queen of Fairyland, and he, with a true vein of chivalry in him, became her rustic Red Cross Knight, who, if he could, would have gladly led his own *Una* into the same enchanting ser-
vice. The “Una,” unfortunately, had no inclination for such a distinguished bondage.

Some misgiving may have crossed Carlyle’s mind that too near an intimacy in these great circles might not be profitable to him. As long as social distinctions survive, an evenness of position is a condition of healthy friendship; and though genius is said to level artificial inequalities, it creates inequalities of another kind, which rather complicate the situation than simplify it. However this may have been, hard work and the London heat tired him out by the end of the summer. He was invited to stay at the Grange, a beautiful place belonging to the Barings in Hampshire, and as the visit was to be a short one he went. Mr. Baring’s father, the Lord Ashburton of the American Treaty, still lived and reigned there. He had heard of Carlyle, and wished to make his acquaintance, as his Transatlantic wife did also. The Grange, in September especially, was the perfection of an English country palace. The habits of it did not suit Carlyle. He was off his sleep, woke early, could get no breakfast till ten, and no food but cigars and sunshine. But the park was beautiful, the riding delightful, “the solitude and silence divine.” He tried to be amused and happy, and succeeded tolerably.

While this new acquaintance was rising up into Carlyle’s sky, another was setting or had set. News were waiting for him when he returned to Cheyne Row, which melted the Grange and its grandeurs into bodiless vapour. John Sterling was dead. Of all the friends whom Carlyle had won to himself since he came to London, there was none that he valued as he valued this one. Sterling had been his spiritual pupil, his first, and also his noblest and best. Consumption had set its fatal mark upon him. His spirit had risen against it and defied it. He had fled for life in successive winters to Italy, to France, and then to Falmouth and to Italy again. If not better, there had been no sign that he was becoming definitely worse. He had lately settled at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight. He had added to his house; he had hoped, as his friends had hoped before for him, that years of useful energy might still be granted to him. It seemed impossible that a soul so gifted, so brilliant, so generous, should have
been sent upon the earth merely to show how richly it had been endowed, and to pass away while its promise was but half fulfilled. But in this past summer he had been visibly declining. To himself, if to no one else, it had become sternly certain that the end was now near; and on August 10 he had written the letter of farewell, printed by Carlyle in his lost friend's biography, which I am therefore at liberty to transfer to these pages.

Hillside Ventnor
Aug 10—44.

My dear Carlyle— For the first time for many months it seems possible to send you a few words merely however for Remembrance & Farewell. On higher matters there is nothing to say. I tread the common road into the great darkness without any thought of Fear & with very much Hope. Certainty indeed I have none. With regard to You and Me I cannot begin to write having nothing for it but to keep shut the lid of those secrets with all the iron weights that are in my power. Towards Me it is still more true than towards England—that no one has Been & Done like you. Heaven help you! If I can lend a hand when I am there that will not be wanting.— It is all very strange but not one hundredth part so sad as it seems to the standers by.

Your wife knows my mind towards her & will believe it without asseverations.

Yours to the last
John Sterling.10

Sterling lingered for six weeks after writing this. He had been apparently dying more than once already, and yet had rallied. Carlyle could not believe that he was to lose him, and hoped that it might be so again. But it was not so to be. On September 18, within a day of Carlyle's return from the Grange, his friend was dead.

Sterling's death was the severest shock which Carlyle had yet experienced. Perhaps the presence of a real sorrow saved him from fretting over the smaller troubles of life. He threw himself the more determinately into his work. All the remainder of this year and all the next till the close of the summer he stayed at home, as far as possible alone, and seeing few friends in London except the Barings. His wife had been improved by her excursion. She had been moderately well since her return. Strong she never was; but for her the season had been a fair one. In July 1845, the end of Crom-
well was coming definitely in sight. She could be spared at home, and went off again to her relations at Liverpool. Carlyle had another horse—"Black Duncan" this one was called.\textsuperscript{11} He rode daily, and sent regular bulletins to his "Necessary Evil."\textsuperscript{12}

The truth is, I have this very moment ended Oliver: hang it, he is ended thrums and all! I have nothing more to write on the subject; only mountains of wreck to burn. Not up to the chin in Paper-clippings, and chaotic litter, hatefuller to me than to most; I am to have a swept floor now again!\textsuperscript{13}

Thus was finished the first edition of the \textit{Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell}\textemdash the first edition\textemdash for other letters, other material of various kinds, came afterwards and had to be woven in with the rest; but essentially the thing was done on which Carlyle had been labouring for five years; and a few words may now be given to it.

This book is, in my opinion, by far the most important contribution to English history which has been made in the present century.\textsuperscript{14} Carlyle was the first to break the crust which has overlaid the subject of Cromwell since the Restoration, and to make Cromwell and Cromwell's age again intelligible to mankind. Anyone who will read what was written about him before Carlyle's work appeared, and what has been written since, will perceive how great was the achievement. The enthusiast, led away by ambition, and degenerating into the hypocrite, the received figure of the established legend, is gone for ever. We may retain each our own opinion about Cromwell, we may think that he did well or that he did ill, that he was wise or unwise; but we see the real man. We can entertain no shadow of doubt about the genuineness of the portrait; and, with the clear sight of Oliver himself, we have a new conception of the Civil War and of its consequences. The book itself carries marks of the difficulty with which it was written. It has no clear continuity; large gaps are left in the story. Contrary to his own rule, that the historian should confine himself to the facts, with the minimum of commentary, Carlyle breaks in repeatedly in his own person, pats his friends upon the back, expands, applauds, criticises to an extent which most readers would wish more limited. This, however, is to be remembered, that
he was reproducing letters and speeches, of which both the thought and the language were obsolete—obsolete, or worse than obsolete, for most of it had degenerated into cant, insincere in everyone who uses such expressions now, and therefore suggesting insincerity in those who used them then. Perhaps he allowed too little for our ability to think for ourselves. But he had seen how fatally through this particular cause the character of the Commonwealth leaders had been obscured, and, if he erred at all, he erred on the right side. It is his supreme merit that he first understood the speeches made by Cromwell in Parliament, and enabled us to understand them. Printed as they had hitherto been, they could only confirm the impression, either that the Protector's own mind was hopelessly confused, or that he purposely concealed what was in it. Carlyle has shown that they were perfectly genuine speeches, not eloquent, as modern parliamentary speeches are, or aspire to be thought; but the faithful expressions of a most real and determined meaning, about which those who listened to him could have been left in no doubt at all. Such a feat was nothing less than extraordinary. It was not a "whitewashing," as attempts of this kind are often scornfully and sometimes deservedly called. It was the recovery of a true human figure of immense historical consequence from below two centuries of accumulated slander and misconception, and the work was completely done. No hammering or criticising has produced the least effect upon it. There once more Cromwell stands actually before us, and henceforth will stand, as he was when he lived upon the earth. He may be loved or he may be hated, as he was both loved and hated in his own time; but we shall love or hate the man himself, not a shadow or a caricature any more.

Detailed criticism of the book, or of any part of it, would be out of place in a biography, and I shall not attempt such a thing. I may mention, however, what Carlyle told me of the effect upon his own mind of his long study of the Commonwealth and its fortunes.

Many persons still believe that, if the army had not pushed the quarrel to extremities, if the "unpurged" Parliament had been allowed to complete its treaty with the King, the constitutional fruits of the struggle might have been secured more completely than they actually were; that the violent
reaction would never have taken place which was provoked by the King's execution; that the Church of England could and would have then been completely reformed and made Protestant in form and substance; the pseudo-Catholicism—Episcopacy, Liturgy, and Ritual—which has wrought us all so much woe being swept clean from off the stage.

Speculations on what might have been are easy. We see what actually happened; what would have happened we can only guess. Charles, it is certain, was false—how false is now only completely known when the secret negotiations of himself and the Queen with the Catholic Powers have been brought to light. No promises which he had made would have bound him one moment beyond the time when he could safely break them; nor could anyone say what the composition of a new House of Commons might be after the next election. Taking the country through, the Royalists and the Moderates together were in the majority in point of numbers, and Cromwell's conclusion was that, so far as religion was concerned, the cause for which he and the army had fought would be utterly lost if the treaty was carried out. Wearied England, satisfied with having secured control of the purse strings, would hand over the sour fanatics to Charles's revenge. Carlyle was satisfied that Cromwell was right, and he drew from it a general inference of the incapacity of a popular assembly to guide successfully and permanently the destinies of this or any other country. No such body of men was ever seen gathered together in national council as those who constituted the Long Parliament. They were the pick and flower of God-fearing England, men of sovereign ability, of the purest patriotism—a senate of kings. If they failed, if they had to be prevented by armed force from destroying themselves and the interests committed to them, no other Parliament here or anywhere was likely to do better. Any pilot or council of pilots might answer, with smooth water and fair winds; but Parliaments, when circumstances were critical, could only talk, as their name denoted. Their resolutions would be half-hearted, their action a compromise between conflicting opinions, and therefore uncertain, inadequate, alternately rash or feeble, certain to end in disaster at all critical times when a clear eye and a firm hand was needed at the helm.
This was one inference which Carlyle drew. Another was on the rights of so-called "majorities." He had been bred a Radical, and a Radical he remained to the last, in the sense that he believed the entire existing form of human society, with its extremes of poverty and wealth, to be an accursed thing, which Providence would not allow to endure. He had been on the side of Catholic emancipation, hoping that the wretched Irish peasantry might get some justice by it. He had welcomed the Reform Bill, imagining it to mean that England was looking in earnest for her wisest men, and would give them power to mend what was amiss. He had found, as he said, that it was but the burning off the dry edges of the straw on the dunghill; that the huge, damp, putrid mass remained rotting where it was, and thus would remain, for anything that an extended suffrage would do to cure it. No result had come of the Reform Bill that he could care for. The thing needed was wisdom. Parliaments reflected the character of those who returned them. The lower the franchise, the less wisdom you were likely to find; and after each change in that direction the Parliament returned was less fit, not more fit, than its predecessor. In politics as in all else, Carlyle insisted always that there was a right way of doing things and a wrong way; that by following the right way alone could any good end be arrived at; and that it was as foolish to suppose that the right way of managing the affairs of a nation could be ascertained by a majority of votes, as the right way of discovering the longitude, of cultivating the soil, of healing diseases, or of exercising any one of the million arts on which our existence and welfare depend.

This conclusion he had arrived at, ever since he had seen what came and did not come of the Reform Bill of 1832; and it had prevented him from interesting himself in contemporary politics. But Cromwell's history had shown him that the right way had other means of asserting itself besides oratory and ballot-boxes and polling booths. The world was so constructed that the strongest, whether they were more or fewer, were the constituted rulers of this world. It must be so, unless the gods interfered, because there was no appeal. If one man was stronger than all the rest of mankind combined, he would rule all mankind. They would be unable to help themselves. But the world was also so constructed,
owing to the nature of the Maker of it, that superior strength was found in the long run to lie with those who had the right on their side. A good cause gave most valour to its defenders; and it was from this, and this alone, the supremacy of good over evil was maintained. Right-minded men would bear much rather than disturb existing arrangements—would submit to kings, to aristocracies, to majorities, as long as submission was possible; but, if driven to the alternative of seeing all that they valued perish or trying other methods, they would prove that, though they might be outvoted in the count of heads, they were not outvoted in the court of destiny. Superior justice in the cause made superior men—men who would make it good in spite of numbers. The best were the strongest, and so in the end would always prove, "considering who had made them strong." Behind all constitutions, never so popular, lay an ultimate appeal to force. Majorities, as such, had no more right to rule than kings, or nobles, or any other persons or groups of persons, to whom circumstances might have given temporary power. The right to rule lay with those who were right in mind and heart, whenever they chose to assert themselves. If they tried and failed, it proved only that they were not right enough at that particular time. But, in fact, no honest effort ever did fail; it bore its part in the eventual settlement. The strong thing, in the main, was the right thing, because the world was not the Devil's; and the final issue would be found to prove it whenever the question was raised. Society was in a healthy condition only when authority was in the hands of those most fit to exercise it. As long as kings and nobles were kings and nobles indeed, superior in heart and character, the people willingly submitted to them, and gave them strength by their own support. When they forgot the meaning of their position, lived for ambition and pleasure, and so ceased to be superior, their strength passed from them, and with their strength their authority. That was what happened, and was happening still, in England. There being no longer any superiority of class over class, the integers of society were falling into anarchy, and, to avoid quarrelling, might agree for a time to decide their differences by a majority of votes; but it could be but for a time only, unless all that was great and noble in humanity was to disappear for ever; for the
good and the wise were few, and the selfish and the ignorant were many; the many would choose to represent them men like themselves, not men superior to themselves; and, under pain of destruction, it was indispensable that means must be found by which the good and wise should be brought to the front, and not the others. Nature had her means of doing it, and in extremity would not fail to use them.\textsuperscript{15}

In some such frame of mind Carlyle was left after he had finished his \textit{Cromwell}. I have described in my own words what, in his abrupt and scornful dialect, he often expressed to me. He was never a Conservative, for he recognised that, unless there was a change, impossible except by miracle, in the habits and character of the wealthy classes, the gods themselves could not save them. But the Radical creed of liberty, equality, and government by majority of votes, he considered the most absurd superstition which had ever bewitched the human imagination—at least, outside Africa.

\textit{Cromwell} thus disposed of, he was off for Scotland, "wishing," as he said, to be amiable, but dreadfully bilious, and almost sick of his life, if there were not hopes of improvement. He joined his wife at Seaforth, stayed a day or two\textsuperscript{16} with the Paulets there, and then, leaving Mrs. Carlyle to return and take care of the house in Cheyne Row, he made his way on by the usual sea route to Annan and Scotsbrig.

His mother was now fast growing weaker. She brightened up at letters from her daughter-in-law, or on visits from her illustrious son, whom all the world was talking of; but "all had grown old" about her, except her affection, which seemed younger than ever. Carlyle, while at Scotsbrig, was her constant companion, drove her about in the old gig, carried her down to see his sister Mary at Annan, or his sister Jean at Dumfries; and so the days passed on with autumnal composure, sad but not unhappy. Now and then troublesome proof-sheets came, which would stir the bile a little. But he kept himself patient, found "a day of Humiliation and Reflexion sometimes" "not useless to me,"\textsuperscript{17} and grumbled little. "All work," he said, "if it be nobly done, is about alike;—really so: one has not reward out of it, except even that same: the \textit{spirit} it was done in. That is blessed, or that is accursed; that always."\textsuperscript{18} The world was saying that he was a great man. He did not believe it. Mrs. Paulet had
written some wildly flattering letter, calling him "the greatest man in Europe." "Good Heavens," he said of this; "he feels himself in general the smallest man in Annandale almost! Being very bilious, confused and sleepless, let him never trouble his head about what magnitude he is of." As to his deserts, he deserved, if it came to that, "to be in Purgatory!" Men of genius who make a mark themselves in literature, in art or science, or in any way which brings their name before the world, find ready admittance into the higher social circles; but the entrée is granted less readily to their wives and daughters. Where this arrangement is allowed, the feeling on both sides is a vulgar one; the great lady is desirous merely that a person who is talked about shall be seen in her reception rooms, and is not anxious to burden herself with an acquaintance with his inferior connections. The gifted individual is vain of appearing in the list of guests at aristocratic mansions, and is careless of the slight upon his family. The Barings were infinitely superior to paltry distinctions of this kind, nor would Carlyle have cared for their acquaintance if they had not been. He was far too proud in himself, and he had too high a respect for his wife, to visit in lordly saloons where she would be unwelcome. Mr. Baring had called on Mrs. Carlyle, had seen her often, and had cordially admired her. With Lady Harriet, though they had probably met, there had not yet been an opportunity of intimacy; but Carlyle was most anxious that his wife, too, should be appreciated as she deserved to be by a lady whom he himself so much admired. Mrs. Buller, an experienced woman of the world, who knew both Lady Harriet and Mrs. Carlyle, was convinced that they would not suit each other, and that no good would come from an attempt to bring them into close connection. To Carlyle Mrs. Buller's forebodings seemed absurd. With all his knowledge, he was innocent of insight into the subtleties of women's feelings, and it was with unmixed pleasure that he heard of a visit of his wife to Bath House on her own account, soon after her return.

The first impressions had apparently been favourable on both sides. Mrs. Carlyle wrote brightly to him both about the Bath House affair and everything else. Her letters during his absence were exceptionally lively and entertaining.
Cromwell done with, he was beginning to consider to what
next he should put his hand, and Frederick the Great was
already hanging before him as a possibility. He had read
Preuss's book in the year preceding. He was now meditating
an expedition to Berlin to learn more about this "greatest of
modern men." His stay in Scotland was to be short. After a
fortnight of it he was thinking about his return. How it was
to be was the question. The railway from London only
reached to Preston, and the alternative was equally horrible
—the coach from Carlisle thither or the steamer to Liverpool.
One day he thought he would go "to the whale" again, and
say to it, "Swallow me at once," "thou dost it at once." The
whale ultimately proved the least desirable of the various
monsters. He chose the coach, and was at home again
just when Cromwell was appearing.

The reception of it was, as might be expected, in the highest
degree favourable. There was little to offend, and every one
was ready to welcome a fair picture of the great Protector.
The sale was rapid, and after a few months, as the interest
grew, fresh materials were contributed from unexpected
quarters, to be added in new editions. For the moment,
however, Carlyle was left idle. He came back to find liter­
ally that he had nothing to do. Frederick was still but a
thought, and of all conditions that of want of occupation was
what he was least fitted to endure. He had drawn his breath
when he ended his work in September. He had felt idyllic.
He and his poor wife had climbed the hill together by a
thorny road. He had arrived at the height of his fame. He
was admired, praised, and honoured by all England and
America; nothing, he said, could now be more natural than
that they should sit still and look round them a little in quiet.
Quiet, unhappily, was the one thing impossible. He admired
quiet as he admired silence, only theoretically. Work was
life to him. Idleness was torture. The cushion on which he
tried to sit still was set with spines. Mrs. Carlyle says briefly
that after he came back "she was kept in a sort of worry."
The remedy which was tried was worse than the disease. Mr.
Baring and Lady Harriet invited them both for a long visit to
Bay House, near Alverstoke in Hampshire. They went in the
middle of November and remained till the end of the year.
Carlyle, to some moderate extent, seems to have enjoyed
himself—certainly his wife did not.
To Mrs. Carlyle the visit was neither pleasant nor useful, probably the opposite of both. Mrs. Buller was turning out a true prophet. Mrs. Carlyle and Lady Harriet did not suit each other. Mrs. Carlyle did not shut her eyes to the noble lady's distinguished qualities: but even these qualities themselves might be an obstacle to cordial intimacy. People do not usually take to those who excel in the points where they have themselves been accustomed to reign supreme. Mrs. Carlyle knew that she was far cleverer than the general run of lady adorers who worshipped her husband. She knew also that he was aware of her superiority; that, by her talent as well as her character, she had a hold upon him entirely her own, and that he only laughed good-naturedly at the homage they paid him. But she could not feel as easy about Lady Harriet. She saw that Carlyle admired her brilliancy, and was gratified by her queenly esteem. To speak of jealousy in the ordinary sense would be extravagantly absurd; but there are many forms of jealousy, and the position of a wife, when her husband is an intimate friend of another woman, is a difficult and delicate one. If there is confidence and affection between the ladies themselves, or if the friend has a proper perception of a wife's probable susceptibilities, and is careful to prevent them from being wounded, or if the wife herself is indifferent and incapable of resentment, all is well, and the relation may be delightful. In the present case there were none of these conditions. No one could suspect Lady Harriet Baring of intending to hurt Mrs. Carlyle; but either she never observed her discomfort, or she thought it too ridiculous to notice. She doubtless tried in her own lofty way to be kind to Mrs. Carlyle, and Mrs. Carlyle, for her husband's sake, tried to like Lady Harriet. But it did not answer on either side, and in such cases it is best to leave things to take their natural course. When two people do not agree, it is a mistake to force them into intimacy. They should remain on the footing of neutral acquaintance, and are more likely to grow into friends the less the direct effort to make them so. Gloriana may have a man for a subject without impairing his dignity—a woman in such a position becomes a dependent. Carlyle unfortunately could not see the distinction. To such a lady a certain homage seemed to be due; and if his wife resisted, he was angry. When Lady Harriet required her presence, she told John Carlyle that she was
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obliged to go, or the lady would quarrel with her, "and that meant a quarrel with her husband." The Red Cross Knight was brought to evil thoughts of his "Una" by the enchantments of Archimage. To a proud fiery woman like Mrs. Carlyle the sense that Lady Harriet could come in any way between her husband and herself was intolerable.

Things had not come to this point during the Bay House visit, but were tending fast in that direction, and were soon to reach it.

In February 1846 a new edition was needed of the *Cromwell*. Fresh letters of Oliver had been sent which required to be inserted according to date; a process, Carlyle said, "requiring one's most exquisite talent as of shoe-cobbling, really, that kind of talent carried to a high pitch."\(^{21}\)

The Barings were at Addiscombe in the spring, and it was arranged that Mrs. Carlyle should be with them there for the benefit of country air; he remaining at his work, but joining them on Saturdays and Sundays. She could not sleep, she did not like it. He who had meant everything for the best, tried to comfort her as well as he could.

Evidently he was labouring at his task under complications of worry and trouble. Perhaps both he and she would have been better off after all at Craigenputtoch. The "stitching and cobbling," however, was gone through with. *Cromwell* thus enlarged was now in its final form; and as soon as it was done, he took a step in connection with it which, I believe, he never took before or after with any of his writings: he presented a copy of it to the Prime Minister. Sir Robert Peel had hitherto been no favourite of his, neither Peel nor any one of the existing generation of statesmen; Sir Jabesh Windbag in *Past and Present* representing his generic conception of them. But Peel was now repealing the corn-laws; not talking of it, but doing it; and imperilling in one righteous act his own political fortune. That had something of greatness in it, especially with Carlyle, who had believed heroic sacrifice of self to be an impossible virtue in a Parliamentary leader. He discovered Peel to be a real man.

It was hard on Carlyle that, while engaged with work into which he was throwing his entire heart and soul, he should be disturbed and perplexed with domestic confusions. But it was his fate—a fate, perhaps, which could not be avoided; and
those confusions were to grow and gather into a thick black cloud which overshadowed his life for many weary years. When Mrs. Carlyle returned to him from Addiscombe, it was, as she said, "with the mind of me all churned into froth"—not a pleasant condition. Carlyle, in spite of his good resolutions, was occasionally "a little 'ill haired.'" At last things went utterly awry. She set off alone to the Paulets at the beginning of July. There was a violent scene when they parted. Her words, if seldom smoother than oil, were "very swords" when she was really angry. She did not write on her arrival, as she had promised to do.

Among Mrs. Carlyle's papers are two letters—the first of them dated only July, yet in answer to one which she must have written before leaving London, showing that in her distress she had taken the strong step of consulting a friend on the course which she ought to follow. Happily she could have consulted no one who could have advised her more wisely.

Awake, arise, dear friend! Beset by pain or not, we must go on with a sad smile and a practical encouragement from one another. We have something of our own to care about, something godlike that we must not yield to any living creature, whoever it be. Your life proves an empty thing, you say! Empty! Do not blaspheme. Have you never done good? Have you never loved? . . . Can't you trust Him a little longer? How long will you remain at Seaforth? Does he himself propose to go anywhere? I was coming to see you on Saturday. Write if and when it does good even homoeopathically to you, and be assured that to me it will always do.

Ever yours,
Joseph Mazzini

Either this letter or her own reflections led Mrs. Carlyle, after a day's delay, to write softly to her husband. He, poor man, as innocent of any thought of wrong, as incapable of understanding what he had done to raise such a tornado, as my Uncle Toby himself could have been, was almost pitifully grateful.

On July 13 he wrote, enclosing his never-forgotten birthday present, "a poor little Card-case, a small memorial of Bastille-day, and of another day also very important to me and thee!" This is the letter of which she speaks so touchingly in her reply, the letter which had been delayed at the Seaforth post-office. She, agitated by a thousand thoughts, had feared that he had let the day pass without
GIUSEPPE MAZZINI. A slim, handsome man with a melodious voice and dark penetrating eyes, passionately dedicated to the cause of Italian liberty and the triumph of Republican principles, Mazzini was a particular favorite of Jane Carlyle's. Carlyle thought him impractical and visionary but gave him his respect. (Courtesy of the Columbia University Libraries.)
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writing to her, and she had been thrown into a “tumult of wretchedness.”27 She had written again, it appears, to Mazzini; for from him, too, came another letter, tenderly sympathetic, yet wise and supremely honourable to him. No ghostly confessor could have been more judicious.

The birthday present, and the words which had come with it, ought to have made all well; and yet it did not, for the cause remained. The condition into which she had wrought herself through her husband’s Gloriana worship would have been ridiculous if it had not been so tragic—tragic even in its absurdity, and tragic in its consequences. Fault there was little on any side. Want of judgement, perhaps, and want of perception; that was all. Carlyle had formed an acquaintance which he valued and she disliked, because she fancied that a shadow had risen between herself and him, which was taking from her part of what belonged to her. A few hearty words, a simple laugh, and the nightmare would have vanished. But neither laugh nor spoken word of any such salutary kind had been possible. Carlyle in such matters had no more skill than the Knight of La Mancha would have had. He was very shy, for one thing. He wrote with exquisite tenderness. In conversation he shrank from expressions of affection, even at moments when he felt most deeply. On the other hand, he was keenly sensitive to what he thought unreasonable or silly. He was easily provoked; and his irritation would burst out in spurs of angry metaphor, not to be forgotten from their very point and force. Thus his letters failed in producing their full effect from their contrast with remembered expressions which had meant nothing; while, again, he might himself naturally feel impatient when called on to abandon friends whose high character he admired, and who had been singularly kind to him, for a cause which he knew to be a preposterous creation of a disordered fancy, and which, in yielding, he would have acknowledged tacitly to have been just. A “man of genius,” especially one whose function it was to detect and expose chimaeras, ought to have contrived better. Some strange mismanagement there must have been to have created such a condition of things. Yet “a man of genius” is no better off in such situations than an ordinary mortal. He was confronted with a problem which a person with a thousandth fraction of his abilities, either of brain or
heart, would have solved in a moment by a smile; yet he wandered from mistake to mistake.

He had to tell her that a plan had been arranged for the Barings to go to the Highlands, that it had been proposed that he should accompany them, that he did not think he would, but that possibly he might.

He was struggling in a cobweb, and was not on the way to extricate himself. That a man of genius should enjoy the society of a brilliant and gifted lady of high rank was "just and laudable," as he called it. It was natural, too, if not laudable, that Mrs. Carlyle should not be equally interested in a person who rivalled her in her own domain. She, for her own part, had no wish to be intimate with a great lady who could have no interest in her. Carlyle made the mistake of trying to force her into a position which she detested; and every step which he took in this direction only made the irritation greater.

His plans for the summer had been laid out independent of the Highland tour. He was to go first to his mother at Scotsbrig for a few days, and afterwards to run across to Ireland. The "Young Ireland" movement, the precursor of the Home Rule movement, was just then rising into heat. Charles Gavan Duffy, of the Nation newspaper, with others of the leaders, had sought him out in London in consequence of what he had written in Chartism about Irish misgovernment. He had promised to go over, when he had leisure, and see what they were doing. Had he confined himself to this programme, he would have given time for the waves to go down; but he went for a day or two to see his wife at Seaforth on his way to Scotland. It then appeared that he had engaged to meet the Barings after all, and that Mrs. Carlyle herself was pressed to join their party. His letters after he reached Scotsbrig show that the barometer was still at "stormy."

It is ludicrous to contrast with all this tempest the fate of the expedition which was the occasion of it. The projected tour with Mr. Baring and Lady Harriet lasted but five days, and was as melancholy as Mrs. Carlyle could have desired. They went from Carlisle to Moffat, sleeping in "noisy cabins in confused whisky inns," and in the worst of weather. The lady was cross; Mr. Baring only pa-
Charles Gavan Duffy. Duffy was the chief of a group of Young Irelanders whom Carlyle knew. Carlyle toured Ireland in his company in 1846 and 1849. Later Duffy emigrated to Australia, but returned to England in old age, and after Carlyle’s death he wrote one of the most enlightening books on him by a contemporary—his Conversations with Carlyle. (Photograph by Elliott & Fry, courtesy of the Columbia University Libraries.)
tient and good-humoured. They had designed a visit to Drumlanrig: but "the Buccleuch household gave notice that it had hooping-cough," and were not to be approached; and Beattock, near Moffat, was the furthest point of the journey.

They had one fine day, which was given to Moffat and the neighbourhood, and then parted, the Barings to go on to the Highlands, Carlyle to retreat to Scotsbrig again—to "sleep . . . and practical sense and the free use of tobacco," and to prepare for his trip to Ireland. Mrs. Carlyle was in no spirits for Haddington, and returned alone to her own resting-place in Cheyne Row, after a day or two with Miss Jewsbury at Manchester. So the "weighty matter," which had called up such a storm, was over, and the gale had blown itself out. She, like a sensible woman, crushed down her own dissatisfaction. The intimacy was to go on upon whatever terms Carlyle pleased, and she resigned herself to take a part in it, since there was no reasonable cause to be alleged for cessation or interruption. But the wound fretted inwardly and would not heal. She and her husband had quarrelled often enough before—they had quarrelled and made it up again, for they had both hot tempers and sharp tongues—but there had been at bottom a genuine and hearty confidence in each other, a strong sincere affection, resting on mutual respect and mutual admiration. The feeling remained essentially unbroken, but the fine edge of it had suffered. Small occasions of provocation constantly recurred. Mrs. Carlyle consented to stay with Lady Harriet and submit to her authority as often and as much as she required; the sense of duty acting as perpetual curb to her impatience. But the wound burst out at intervals, embittering Carlyle's life, and saddening a disposition which did not need further clouds upon it. She wrote to him while he was at Scotsbrig about indifferent things in the spirit of the resolution which she had made, and he, man-like, believed that all was well again.