1862–1865

Froude's Impressions of Carlyle. Serious Accident to Jane Carlyle. Death of Lord Ashburton. Jane Carlyle's Illness and Apparent Recovery. Completion of Frederick

So far my account of Carlyle has been taken from written memorials, letters, diaries, and autobiographic fragments. For the future the story will form itself round my own personal intercourse with him. Up to 1860 I had lived in the country. I had paid frequent visits to London, and while there had seen as much of Cheyne Row and its inhabitants as Mrs. Carlyle would encourage. I had exchanged letters occasionally with her and her husband, but purely on external subjects, and close personal intimacy between us there had as yet been none. In the autumn of that year, however, London became my home. Late one afternoon, in the middle of the winter, Carlyle called on me, and said that he wished to see more of me—wished me in fact to be his companion, so far as I could, in his daily rides or walks. Ride with him I could not, having no horse; but the walks were most welcome—and from that date, for twenty years, up to his own death, except when either or both of us were out of town, I never ceased to see him twice or three times a week, and to have two or three hours of conversation with him. The first of these walks I well remember, from an incident which happened in the course of it. If was after nightfall. At Hyde Park Corner, we found a blind beggar anxious to cross over from Knightsbridge to Piccadilly, but afraid to trust his dog to lead him through the carts and carriages. Carlyle took the beggar's arm, led him gently over, and offered to help him further on his way. He declined gratefully; we gave him some trifle, and followed him to see what he would do. His
dog led him straight to a public-house in Park Lane. We both laughed, and I suppose I made some ill-natured remark. "Poor fellow," was all that Carlyle said; "he perhaps needs warmth and shelter."

This was the first instance that I observed of what I found to be a universal habit with him. Though still far from rich, he never met any poor creature, whose distress was evident, without speaking kindly to him and helping him more or less in one way or another. Archbishop Whately said that to relieve street beggars was a public crime. Carlyle thought only of their misery. "Modern life," he said, "doing its charity by institutions," is a sad hardener of our hearts. "We should give for our own sakes. It is very low water with the wretched beings, one can easily see that."

Even the imps of the gutters he would not treat as reprobates. He would drop a lesson in their way, sometimes with a sixpence to recommend it. A small vagabond was at some indecency. Carlyle touched him gently on the back with his stick. "Do you not know that you are a little man," he said, "and not a whelp, that you behave in this way?" There was no sixpence this time. Afterwards a lad of fourteen or so stopped us and begged. Carlyle lectured him for beginning so early at such a trade, told him how, if he worked, he might have a worthy and respectable life before him, and gave him sixpence. The boy shot off down the next alley. "There is a sermon fallen on stony ground," Carlyle said, "but we must do what we can." The crowds of children growing up in London affected him with real pain; these small plants, each with its head just out of the ground, with a whole life ahead, and such a training! I noticed another trait too—Scotch thrift showing itself in hatred of waste. If he saw a crust of bread on the roadway he would stop to pick it up and put it on a step or a railing. Some poor devil might be glad of it, or at worst a dog or a sparrow. To destroy wholesome food was a sin. He was very tender about animals, especially dogs, who, like horses, if well treated, were types of loyalty and fidelity. I horrified him with a story of my Oxford days. The hounds had met at Woodstock. They had drawn the covers without finding a fox, and, not caring to have a blank day, one of the whips had caught a passing sheep dog, rubbed its feet with aniseed,
and set it to run. It made for Oxford in its terror, the hounds in full cry behind. They caught the wretched creature in a field outside the town, and tore it to pieces. I never saw Carlyle more affected. He said it was like a human soul flying for salvation before a legion of fiends.

Occupied as he had always seemed to be with high-soaring speculations, scornful as he had appeared, in the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, of benevolence, philanthropy, and small palliations of enormous evils, I had not expected so much detailed compassion in little things. I found that personal sympathy with suffering lay at the root of all his thoughts; and that attention to little things was as characteristic of his conduct as it was of his intellect.

His conversation when we were alone together was even more surprising to me. I had been accustomed to hear him impatient of contradiction, extravagantly exaggerative, overbearing opposition with bursts of scornful humour. In private I found him impatient of nothing but of being bored; gentle, quiet, tolerant; sadly-humoured, but never ill-humoured; ironical, but without the savageness, and when speaking of persons always scrupulously just. He saw through the "clothes" of a man into what he actually was. But the sharpest censure was always qualified. He would say, "If we knew how he came to be what he is, poor fellow, we should not be hard with him."

But he talked more of things than of persons, and on every variety of subject. He had read more miscellaniously than any man I have ever known. His memory was extraordinary, and a universal curiosity had led him to inform himself minutely about matters which I might have supposed that he had never heard of. With English literature he was as familiar as Macaulay was. French and German and Italian he knew infinitely better than Macaulay, and there was this peculiarity about him, that if he read a book which struck him he never rested till he had learnt all that could be ascertained about the writer of it. Thus his knowledge was not in points or lines, but complete and solid.

Even in his laughter he was always serious. I never heard a trivial word from him, nor one which he had better have left unuttered. He cared nothing for money, nothing for promotion in the world. If his friends gained a step anywhere
JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE. "His presence was striking and impressive," John Skelton wrote of Froude a year after his death in 1894, "—coal-black eyes, wonderfully lustrous and luminous . . . ; coal-black hair, only latterly streaked with grey; massive features strongly lined,—massive yet mobile, and capable of the subtlest play of expression. For myself I can say without any reserve that he was, upon the whole, the most interesting man I have ever known" (The Table-Talk of Shirley). This photograph is one of the best of Froude in later years. (Reproduced from the frontispiece to George Haven Putnam, comp., Prose Masterpieces from Modern Essayists [London: Bickers & Son, 1896].)
he was pleased with it—but only as worldly advancement might give them a chance of wider usefulness. Men should think of their duty, he said;—let them do that, and the rest, as much as was essential, "would be added to them." I was with him one beautiful spring day under the trees in Hyde Park, the grass recovering its green, the elm buds swelling, the scattered crocuses and snowdrops shining in the sun. The spring, the annual resurrection from death to life, was especially affecting to him. "Behold the lilies of the field!" he said to me; "they toil not, neither do they spin. Yet Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.² What a word was that? and the application was quite true too. Take no thought for the morrow—care only for what you know to be right. That is the rule."

He had a poor opinion of what is called science; of political economy; of utility as the basis of morals; and such-like, when they dealt with human life. He stood on Kant's Categorical Imperative. Right was right, and wrong was wrong, because God had so ordered; and duty and conduct could be brought under analysis only when men had disowned their nobler nature, and were governed by self-interest. Interested motives might be computed, and a science might grow out of a calculation of their forces. But love of Truth, love of Righteousness—these were not calculable, neither these nor the actions proceeding out of them.

Sciences of natural things he always respected. *Facts* of all kinds were sacred to him. A fact, whatever it might be, was part of the constitution of the universe, and so was related to the Author of it. Of all men that have ever lived he honoured few more than Kepler. Kepler's "laws" he looked on as the grandest physical discovery ever made by man; and as long as philosophers were content, like Kepler, to find out facts without building theories on them to dispense with God, he had only good to say of them. Science, however, in these latter days, was stepping beyond its proper province, like the young Titans trying to take heaven by storm. He liked ill men like Humboldt, Laplace, or the author of the *Vestiges.*³ He refused Darwin's transmutation of species as unproved; he fought against it, though I could see he dreaded that it might turn out true. If man, as explained by Science, was no more than a developed animal, and conscience and
intellect but developments of the functions of animals, then God and religion were no more than inferences, and inferences which might be lawfully disputed. That the grandest achievements of human nature had sprung out of beliefs which might be mere illusions, Carlyle could not admit. That intellect and moral sense should have been put into him by a Being which had none of its own was distinctly not conceivable to him. It might perhaps be that these high gifts lay somewhere in the original germ, out of which organic life had been developed; that they had been intentionally and consciously placed there by the Author of nature, whom religious instincts had been dimly able to discern. It might so turn out, but for the present the tendency of science was not in any such direction. The tendency of science was to Lucretian Atheism; to a belief that no “intention” or intending mind was discoverable in the universe at all. If the life of man was no more than the life of an animal—if he had no relation, or none which he could discern with any being higher than himself, God would become an unmeaning word to him. Carlyle often spoke of this, and with evident uneasiness. Earlier in his life, while he was young and confident, and the effects of his religious training were fresh in him, he could fling off the whispers of the scientific spirit with angry disdain; the existence, the omnipresence, the omnipotence of God, were then the strongest of his convictions. The faith remained unshaken in him to the end; he never himself doubted; yet he was perplexed by the indifference with which the Supreme Power was allowing its existence to be obscured. I once said to him, not long before his death, that I could only believe in a God which did something. With a cry of pain, which I shall never forget, he said, “He does nothing.” For himself, however, his faith stood firm. He did not believe in historical Christianity. He did not believe that the facts alleged in the Apostles’ creed had ever really happened. The resurrection of Christ was to him only a symbol of a spiritual truth. As Christ rose from the dead so were we to rise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. Not that Christ had actually died and had risen again. He was only believed to have died and believed to have risen in an age when legend was history, when stories were accepted as true from their
beauty or their significance. As long as it was supposed that the earth was the centre of the universe, that the sky moved round it, and that sun and moon and stars had been set there for man's convenience, when it was the creed of all nations that gods came down to the earth, and men were taken into heaven, and that between the two regions there was incessant intercourse, it could be believed easily that the Son of God had lived as a man among men, had descended like Hercules into Hades, and had returned again from it. Such a story then presented no internal difficulty at all. It was not so now. The soul of it was eternally true, but it had been bound up in a mortal body. The body of the belief was now perishing, and the soul of it being discredited by its connection with discovered error, was suspected not to be a soul at all; half mankind, betrayed and deserted, were rushing off into materialism. Nor was materialism the worst. Shivering at so blank a prospect, entangled in the institutions which remained standing when the life had gone out of them, the other half were "reconciling faith with reason," pretending to believe, or believing that they believed, becoming hypocrites, conscious or unconscious, the last the worst of the two, not daring to look the facts in the face, so that the very sense of truth was withered in them. It was to make love to delusion, to take falsehood deliberately into their hearts. For such souls there was no hope at all. Centuries of spiritual anarchy lay before the world before sincere belief could again be generally possible among men of knowledge and insight. With the half-educated and ignorant it was otherwise. To them the existing religion might still represent some real truth. There alone was any open teaching of God's existence, and the divine sanction of morality. Each year, each day, as knowledge spread, the power of the established religion was growing less; but it was not yet entirely gone, and it was the only hold that was left on the most vital of all truths. Thus the rapid growth of materialism had in some degree modified the views which Carlyle had held in early and middle life. Then the "Exodus from Houndsditch" had seemed as if it might lead immediately into a brighter region. He had come to see that it would be but an entry into a wilderness, the promised land lying still far away. His own opinions seemed to be taking no hold. He
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had cast his bread upon the waters and it was not returning to him, and the exodus appeared less entirely desirable. Sometimes the old fierce note revived. Sometimes, and more often as he grew older, he wished the old shelter to be left standing as long as a roof remained over it—as long as any of us could profess the old faith with complete sincerity. Sincerity, however, was indispensable. For men who said one thing and meant another, who entered the Church as a profession, and throve in the world by it, while they emasculated the creeds, and watered away the histories—for them Carlyle had no toleration. Religion, if not honest, was a horror to him. Those alone he thought had any right to teach Christianity who had no doubts about its truth. Those who were uncertain ought to choose some other profession, and if compelled to speak should show their colours faithfully. Thirlwall, who discharged his functions as a Macready, he never blamed to me; but he would have liked him better could he have seen him at some other employment. The Essayists and Reviewers, the Septem contra Christum, were in people's mouths when my intimacy with Carlyle began. They did not please him. He considered that in continuing to be clergymen they were playing tricks with their consciences. The Dean of Westminster he liked personally, almost loved him indeed, yet he could have wished him anywhere but where he was.  

"There goes Stanley," he said one day as we passed the Dean in the park, "boring holes in the bottom of the Church of England!" Colenso's book came out soon after. I knew Colenso; we met him in one of our walks. He joined us, and talked of what he had done with some slight elation. "Poor fellow!" said Carlyle, as he went away; "he mistakes it for fame. He does not see that it is only an extended pillory that he is standing on." I thought and think this judgement a harsh one. No one had been once more anxious than Carlyle for the "Exodus." No one had done more to bring it about than Colenso, or more bravely faced the storm which he had raised, or I may add, more nobly vindicated, in later life, his general courage and honesty when he stood out to defend the Zulus in South Africa. Stanley spoke more truly, or more to his own and Colenso's honour, when he told the infuriated Convocation to its face, that the
Bishop of Natal was the only English prelate whose name would be remembered in the next century.

Literature was another subject on which Carlyle often talked with me. In his Craigenputtoch Essays he had spoken of literature as the highest of human occupations, as the modern priesthood, etc., and so to the last he thought of it when it was the employment of men whom nature had furnished gloriously for that special task, like Goethe and Schiller. But for the writing function in the existing generation of Englishmen he had nothing but contempt. A "man of letters," a man who had taken to literature as a means of living, was generally some one who had gone into it because he was unfit for better work, because he was too vain or too self-willed to travel along the beaten highways, and his writings, unless he was one of a million, began and ended in nothing. Life was action, not talk. The speech, the book, the review or newspaper article was so much force expended—force lost to practical usefulness. When a man had uttered his thoughts, still more when he was always uttering them, he no longer even attempted to translate them into act. He said once to me that England had produced her greatest men before she began to have a literature at all. Those Barons who signed their charter by dipping the points of their steel gauntlets in the ink, had more virtue, manhood, practical force and wisdom than any of their successors, and when the present disintegration had done its work, and healthy organic tissue began to form again, tongues would not clatter as they did now. Those only would speak who had call to speak. Even the Sunday sermons would cease to be necessary. A man was never made wiser or better by talking or being talked to. He was made better by being trained in habits of industry, by being enabled to do good useful work and earn an honest living by it. His excuse for his own life was that there had been no alternative. Sometimes he spoke of his writings as having a certain value; generally, however, as if they had little, and now and then as if they had none. "If there be one thing," he said, "for which I have no special talent, it is literature. If I had been taught to do the simplest useful thing, I should have been a better and happier man. All that I can say for myself is, that I have done my best." A strange
judgement to come from a man who has exerted so vast an influence by writing alone. Yet in a sense it was true. If literature means the expression by thought or emotion, or the representation of facts in completely beautiful form, Carlyle was inadequately gifted for it. But his function was not to please, but to instruct. Of all human writings, those which perhaps have produced the deepest effect on the history of the world have been St. Paul's Epistles. What Carlyle had he had in common with St. Paul: extraordinary intellectual insight, extraordinary sincerity, extraordinary resolution to speak out the truth as he perceived it, as if driven on by some impelling internal necessity. He and St. Paul—I know not of whom else the same thing could be said—wrote as if they were pregnant with some world-important idea, of which they were labouring to be delivered, and the effect is the more striking from the abruptness and want of artifice in the utterance. Whether Carlyle would have been happier, more useful, had he been otherwise occupied, I cannot say. He had a fine aptitude for all kinds of business. In any practical problem, whether of politics or private life, he had his finger always, as if by instinct, on the point upon which the issue would turn. Arbitrary as his temperament was, he could, if occasion rose, be prudent, forbearing, dexterous, adroit. He would have risen to greatness in any profession which he had chosen, but in such a world as ours he must have submitted, in rising, to the "half-sincerities," which are the condition of success. We should have lost the Carlyle that we know. It is not certain that we should have gained an equivalent of him.

This is the sort of thing which I used daily to hear from Carlyle. His talk was not always, of course, on such grave matters. He was full of stories, anecdotes of his early life, or of people that he had known.

For more than four years after our walks began, he was still engaged with Frederick. He spoke freely of what was uppermost in his mind, and many scenes in the history were rehearsed to me before they appeared, Voltaire, Maupertuis, Chatham, Wolfe being brought up as living figures. He never helped himself with gestures, but his voice was as flexible as if he had been trained for the stage. He was never tedious, but dropped out picture after picture in in-
imitable finished sentences. He was so quiet, so unexag­
erative, so well-humoured in these private conversations,
that I could scarcely believe he was the same person whom
I used to hear declaim in the Pamphlet time. Now and then,
if he met an acquaintance who might say a foolish thing,
there would come an angry sputter or two; but he was
generally so patient, so forbearing, that I thought age had
softened him, and I said so one day to Mrs. Carlyle. She
laughed and told him of it. "I wish," she said, "Froude
had seen you an hour or two after you seemed to him so
lamblike." But I was relating what he was as I knew him, and
as I always found him from first to last.

Through the winter of 1862–1863 Mrs. Carlyle seemed
tolerably well. The weather was warm. She had no serious
cold. She was very feeble, and lay chiefly on the sofa, but
she contrived to prevent Carlyle from being anxious about
her. He worked without respite, rode, except on walking
days, chiefly late in the afternoon, in the dark in the winter
months, about the environs of London; and the roaring of
the suburban trains and the gleam of the green and crimson
signal lamps were wildly impressive to him. On his return
he would lie down in his dressing gown by the drawing­
room fire, smoking up the chimney, while she would amuse
him with accounts of her daily visitors. She was a perfect
artist, and could carve a literary vignette out of the com­
monest materials. These were his happiest hours, and his
only mental refreshment.

Age so far was dealing kindly with him. There was no
falling off in bodily strength. His eyes were failing slightly,
but they lasted out his life. His right hand had begun to
shake a little, and this unfortunately was to develop till he
was eventually disabled from writing; but as yet about
himself there was nothing to give him serious uneasiness.
A misfortune, however, was hanging over him of another
kind, which threatened to upset the habits of his life. All
his days he had been a fearless rider. He had a loose seat
and a careless hand, but he had come to no misfortune,
owing, he thought, to the good sense of his horse, which
was much superior to that of most of his biped acquaint­
tances. Fritz, even Fritz, was now to misbehave and was
Old Cheyne Walk. The Thames embankment was not built until the 1870s, and such a sight as this would have been familiar to Carlyle in his daily walk or ride. (Drawn and etched by Arthur Severn; from an engraving in the editor's possession.)
sold for nine pounds. What became of him further I never heard. Lady Ashburton supplied his place with another, equally good and almost with Fritz's intellect. Life went on as before after this interruption, and leaves little to record. On April 29 he writes:

I had to go yesterday to Dicken's Reading: "8 p.m. Hanover Rooms";—to the complete oversetting of my evening habits, and spiritual composure. Dickens does do it capitally (such as it is); acts better than any Macready in the world; a whole tragic-comic-farcic theatre visible performing under one hat; and keeping us laughing (in a sorry way, some of us thought) the whole night. He is a good creature too;—and makes 50 or £60 by each of these readings.

From dinner parties he had almost wholly withdrawn, but in the same letter he mentions one to which he had been tempted by a new acquaintance, who grew afterwards into a dear and justly valued friend, Miss Davenport Bromley. He admired Miss Bromley from the first, for her light, airy ways, and compared her to a "flight of larks."

Summer came, and hot weather; he descended from his garret to the awning in the garden again. By August he was tired, Frederick spinning out beyond expectation, and he and Mrs. Carlyle went for a fortnight to the Grange. Lord Ashburton seemed to have recovered [from a severe illness he had had in Paris late in 1862] but was very delicate. There was no party, only Venables, the guest of all others whom Carlyle best liked to meet. The visit was a happy one, a gleam of pure sunshine before the terrible calamity which was now impending.

One evening, after their return, Mrs. Carlyle had gone to call on a cousin at the post office in St. Martin's Lane. She had come away, and was trying to reach an omnibus, when she was thrown by a cab on the kerbstone. Her right arm being disabled by neuralgia, she was unable to break her fall. The sinews of one thigh were sprained and lacerated, and she was brought home in a fly in dreadful pain. She knew that Carlyle would be expecting her. Her chief anxiety, she told me, was to get into the house without his knowledge, to spare him agitation. For herself, she could not move. She stopped at the door of Mr. Larkin, who lived in the adjoining house in Cheyne Row, and asked him to
help her. The sound of the wheels and the noise of voices reached Carlyle in the drawing-room. He rushed down, and he and Mr. Larkin together bore her up the stairs, and laid her on the bed. There she remained, in an agony which, experienced in pain as she was, exceeded the worst that she had known. Carlyle was not allowed to know how seriously she had been injured. The doctor and she both agreed to conceal it from him, and during those first days a small incident happened, which she herself described to me, showing the distracting want of perception which sometimes characterised him—a want of perception, not a want of feeling, for no one could have felt more tenderly. The nerves and muscles were completely disabled on the side on which she had fallen, and one effect was that the under jaw had dropped, and that she could not close it. Carlyle always disliked an open mouth; he thought it a sign of foolishness. One morning, when the pain was at its worst, he came into her room, and stood looking at her, leaning on the mantelpiece. "Jane," he said presently, "ye had better shut your mouth." She tried to tell him that she could not. "Jane," he began again, "ye'll find yourself in a more compact and pious frame of mind, if ye shut your mouth." In old-fashioned and, in him, perfectly sincere phraseology he told her that she ought to be thankful that the accident was no worse. Mrs. Carlyle hated cant as heartily as he, and to her, in her sore state of mind and body, such words had a flavour of cant in them. True herself as steel, she would not bear it. "Thankful!" she said to him; "thankful for what? for having been thrown down in the street when I had gone on an errand of charity? for being disabled, crushed, made to suffer in this way? I am not thankful, and I will not say that I am." He left her, saying he was sorry to see her so rebellious. We can hardly wonder after this that he had to report sadly to his brother: "She speaks little to me, and does not accept me as a sick nurse, which, truly, I had never any talent to be."

Of course he did not know at first her real condition. She had such indomitable courage that she persuaded him that she was actually better off since she had become helpless than "when she was forcing herself out every day: 'returned so utterly done out; joints like to fall in pieces.'"
For a month she could not move—at the end of it she was able to struggle to her feet and crawl occasionally into the adjoining room. Carlyle was blind. Seven weeks after the accident he could write: "she actually sleeps better, eats better, & is cheerfuller than formerly. For perhaps 3 weeks past she has been hitching about; . . . she can walk too, but slowly, without stick: in short, she is doing well enough. As indeed am I;—and have need to be.”

He had need to be, for he had just discovered that he could not end with Frederick like a rocket-stick, but that there must be a new volume; and for his sake, and knowing how the truth, if he was aware of it, would agitate him, with splendid heroism she had forced herself prematurely to her feet again, the mental resolution conquering the weakness of the body. She even received visitors again, and in the middle of November, I and my own wife once more spent an evening there. But it was the last exertion which she was able to make. The same night there came on neuralgic pain—rather torture than pain—of which the doctor could give no explanation. "A mere cold," he said, "no cause for alarm"; but the weeks went on and there was no abatement, still pain in every muscle, misery in every nerve, no sleep, no rest from suffering night or day—save in faint misleading intervals—and Carlyle knew at last how it was with her, and had to go on with his work as he could. "We are in great trouble, anxiety, confusion," he wrote on the 29th of December to John, in one of those intervals: "poor Jane's state such as to fill one with the saddest thoughts. She does not gather strength: how can she? . . . Her state is one of weakness, utter restlessness, depression and misery: such a scene as I never was in before.”

Other remedies failing, the last chance was in change and sea air. Dr. Blakiston, an accomplished physician at St. Leonards, whose wife was an old friend of Mrs. Carlyle, offered to receive her as a guest. She was taken thither in a "sick carriage," in construction and appearance something like a hearse, in the beginning of March. Carlyle attended her down, left her, with her cousin Maggie Welsh, in the Blakistons' affectionate hands, and himself returned to his solitary home and task. There, in Hades as he called it, he sate toiling on, watching for the daily bulletins, now
worse, now a little better, his own letters full of passionate grief and impatience with intruders, who came with the kindest purpose to enquire, but just then could better have been spared.

Sorrows did not come single. [On March 25] came news that Lord Ashburton was dead, the dearest friend that had been left to him. As an evidence of regard Lord Ashburton had left him £2,000, or rather had not left it, but had desired that it should be given to him, that there might be no deduction for legacy duty. It was a small matter at such a moment that there appeared in the *Saturday Review* "an extremely contemptible review . . . (hostile if the dirty puppy durst[])," on the last published volumes of *Frederick*. This did not even vex him, was "not worth a snuff of tobacco"; only he thought it was a pity that Venables just then should have allowed the book to fall into unworthy hands. He wrote to his wife daily—a few words to satisfy her that he was well. At length the absence from her became unbearable. He took a house at St. Leonards, to which she could be removed; and, leaving Cheyne Row to the care of Mr. Larkin, he went down, with his work, to join her. Most things in this world have their sunny side—the planet itself first, and then the fortunes of its occupants. His grief and anxiety had convinced Mrs. Carlyle of her husband's real love for her, which she had long doubted. But that was all, for her sufferings were of a kind which few human frames could bear without sinking under them. Carlyle was patient and tender; all was done for her which care and love could provide; she had not wholly lost her strength or energy; but the pain and sleeplessness continued week after week without sign of abating. They remained at St. Leonards till the middle of July, when desperate, after twelve nights absolutely without sleep of any kind, she rallied her force, rose, and went off, under John Carlyle's charge, through London to Annandale, there to shake off the horrible enchantment or else to die.

It was on the eve of her birthday that she made her flight. The journey did not hurt her. She recovered sleep a little, strength a little. Slowly, very slowly and with many relapses, she rallied into a more natural state, first at the Gill and afterwards with the Russells in Nithsdale.
lule could not follow except with his heart, but the thoughts
which he could spare from his work were given to what he
would do for her if she was ever restored to him alive.

There was to be no more hiring of carriages, no more
omnibuses. She was henceforth to have a brougham of her
own. Her room in Cheyne Row in which she had so suf-
f ered, was re-papered, re-arranged with the kind help of
Miss Bromley, that she might be surrounded with objects
unassociated with the past.

I was absent from London during the summer. I had
heard that the Carlyles had left St. Leonards and that she
was in Scotland, and I wrote to him under the impression
that she must be recovering. He answered that I had been
far too hopeful.

The accounts have mostly been bad; but, for two days past, seem
(to myself) to indicate something of real improvement. I am al-
ways very sanguine, in the matter;—but get the saddest rebukes, as
you see. . . . I have no company here but my Horse; indeed I
have mainly consorted with my Horse for 8 years back;—and he,
the staff of my life otherwise, is better company than any I could
get at present in these latitudes: an honest creature that is always
candid with me, and actually useful in a small way, which so few
are!20

To her his letters continued constant, his spirits varying
with her accounts of herself, but, as he had said to me,
always trying to be sanguine.

Mrs. Carlyle came back to Cheyne Row [in October],
from which she had been carried six months before as in a
hearse, expecting to see it no more. She reappeared in her
old circle, weak, shattered, her body worn to a shadow,
but with her spirit bright as ever—brighter perhaps; for
Carlyle's tenderness in her illness had convinced her that
he really cared for her, and the sunset of her married life
recovered something of the colours of its morning. He, too
sanguine always, persuaded himself that her disorder was
now worn out, and that she was on the way to a perfect
restoration. She, I think, was under no such illusion. There
was a gentle smile in her face, if one ever spoke of it,
which showed her incredulity. But from London she took
no hurt. She seemed rather to gain strength than to lose
it. To her friends she was as risen from the dead, and it was
a pleasure to her to see how dear she was to them and with what eagerness they pressed forward to be of use. No one could care a little for Mrs. Carlyle, and the singular nature of her illness added to the interest which was felt for her. She required new milk in the morning. A supply was sent in daily, fresh from the Rector's cow. The brougham was bought, and she had a childlike pride in it, as her husband's present. "Strange and precious to look back upon," he says, "those last eighteen months, as of a second youth (almost a second childhood with the wisdom and graces of old age), which by Heaven's great mercy were conceded her and me."\(^{21}\)

*Frederick* was finished in January, the last of Carlyle's great works, the last and grandest of them. "That dreary task of Friedrich," he says in his Journal, "and the sorrows & obstructions attending it; which are a magazine of despair, 'impossibilities,' and ghastly difficulties, miseries and spasmodic struggles, never to be known except to myself, and by myself never to be forgotten," all was over, locked away and "the key on them for all time. They have nearly killed me, they, & the sore additaments,—my poor Jane's dreadful illness (now happily over again) &c. No sympathy could be found on Earth for those horrid struggles of 12 years;—nor happily is any needed. On Sunday evening (I now forget which) in the end of January last (1865), I walked out, with the multiple feeling (joy not very prominent in it, but a kind of solemn thankfulness traceable) that I had written the last sentence of that unutterable Book; and, contrary to many forebodings in bad hours, had actually got done with it for ever!"\(^{22}\)

*Frederick* was translated instantly into German, and in Germany, where the conditions were better known in which Carlyle had found his materials, there was the warmest appreciation of what he had done.\(^{23}\) The sharpest scrutiny only served to show how accurate was the workmanship. Few people anywhere in Europe dreamt twenty years ago of the position which Germany, and Prussia at the head of it, were so soon to occupy. Yet Carlyle's book seemed to have been composed in conscious anticipation of what was coming. He had given a voice to the national feeling. He had brought up as it were from the dead the creator of the
Prussian monarchy, and had replaced him among his people as a living and breathing man. He had cleared the air for the impending revolution, and Europe, when it came, could see how the seed had grown which had expanded into the German Empire.

In England it was at once admitted that a splendid addition had been made to the national literature. The book contained, if nothing else, a gallery of historical figures executed with a skill which placed Carlyle at the head of literary portrait painters. The English mind remains insular and is hard to interest supremely in any history but its own. The tone of Frederick nowhere harmonized with popular sentiment among us, and every page contained something to offend. Yet even in England it was better received on its first appearance than any of Carlyle's other works had been, and it gave solidity and massiveness to his already brilliant fame. No critic, after the completion of Frederick, challenged Carlyle's right to a place beside the greatest of English authors, past or present.

He had sorely tried America; but America forgave his sarcasms—forgot the "smoky chimney," forgot the "Iliad in a Nutshell," and was cordially and enthusiastically admiring. Emerson sent out a paragraph, which went the round of the Union, that Frederick was "infinitely the wittiest book that ever was written; a book that, one would think, the English people would rise up in a mass to thank him for, by cordial acclamation, and signify, by crowning him with chaplet of oak-leaves, their joy that such a head existed among them, and sympathizing and much-reading America would make a new treaty or send a minister extraordinary to offer congratulations of honoring delight to England in acknowledgment of such a donation." A rather sanguine expectation on Emerson’s part! England has ceased to stone or burn her prophets, but she does not yet make them the subject of international treaties. She crowns with oak leaves her actors and her prima-donnas, her politicians, who are to-day her idols, and to-morrow will find none so poor to do them reverence; to wise men she is contented to pay more moderate homage, and leaves the final decorating work to time and future generations.