Carlyle lived on after this more easy in his mind, but otherwise weary and "heavy laden"; for life, after he had lost the power of working, was become a mere burden to him. Often and often he spoke enviously of the Roman method of taking leave of it. He had read of a senator in Trajan's time who, slipping upon the pavement from infirmity, kissed the ground, exclaiming "Proserpine, I come!" put his house in order, and ended. Greatly Carlyle approved of such a termination, and regretted that it was no longer permitted. He did not conceive, he said, that his Maker would resent the voluntary appearance before Him of a poor creature who had laboured faithfully at his task till he could labour no more. He made one more effort to produce something. He had all along admired the old Norsemen, hard of hand and true of speech, as the root of all that was noblest in the English nation. Even the Scandinavian gods were nearer to him than the Hebrew. With someone to write for him, he put together a sketch of the Norse kings. The stories, as he told them to me, set off by his voice and manner, were vigorous and beautiful; the end of Olaf Trygveson, for instance, who went down in battle into the fiord in his gilded armour. But the greater part of them were weakened by the process of dictation. The thing, when finished, seemed diluted moonshine, and did not please him.

He wrote also a criticism on the portraits of John Knox, in which he succeeded in demolishing the authority of the accepted likenesses, without, however, completely establish-
ing that of another which he desired to substitute for them. He had great insight into the human face, and into the character which lay behind it. "Aut Knox aut Diabolus [Either Knox or the Devil]," he said, in showing me the new picture; "if not Knox who can it be? A man with that face left his mark behind him." But physiognomy may be relied upon too far, and the outward evidence was so weak that in his stronger days he would not have felt so confident.

This, with an appendix to his Life of Schiller, was the last of his literary labours. He never tried any thing again. The pencil entries in the Journal grew scantier, more illegible, and at last ceased altogether. The will was resolute as ever, but the hand was powerless to obey.

The end of the summer of 1872 was spent at Seaton with Lady Ashburton, whose affectionate care was unwearied. In a life now falling stagnant it is unnecessary to follow closely henceforth the occupation of times and seasons. The chief points only need be now noted. The rocket was burnt out and the stick falling. In November of that year Emerson came again to England, and remained here and on the Continent till the May following. He had brought his daughter with him, and from both of them Carlyle received a faint pleasure. But even a friend so valued could do little for him. His contemporaries were dropping all round; John Mill died; Bishop Wilberforce died; everyone seemed to die except himself.

His remarks on Mill and Mill's autobiography are curious.

Yesterday I got a great shock when Norton told me when we were stepping out into the street that John Mill was dead! I had heard no whisper of such a thing before; & a great black sheet of mournful more or less tragic memories, not about Mill alone, rushed down upon me: Poor Mill, he too has worked out his Life Drama in sight of me; & that scene too has closed before my old eyes, though he was so much my junior!

You have lost nothing by missing of the Autobiography of Mill. I have never read a more uninteresting book; nor I should say a sillier, by a man of sense, integrity and seriousness of mind. The penny-a-liners were very busy with it, I believe, for a week or two; but were evidently pausing in doubt and difficulty by the time the 2nd edition came out. . . . It is wholly the life of a logic-chopping engine, little more of human in it than if it had been done by a thing of mechanized iron: "Autobiography of a Steam Engine"
perhaps you may sometime read it as a mournful psychical curiosity, but in no other point of view can it interest anybody—I suppose it will deliver us henceforth from the cocka leerie crow about "Great Thinker of the Age"; which will be a kind of deliverance, welcome, though inconsiderable. The thought of poor Mill altogether, and of his life and history in this poor muddy world, gives me real pain and sorrow.  

Such a sentence, so expressed, is a melancholy ending to the affectionate intimacy which had once existed between Mill and Carlyle. At heart, perhaps, they remained agreed—at least as much agreed as Carlyle and Bishop Wilberforce could have been; both believed that the existing social arrangements in this country were incurably bad, that in the conditions under which the great mass of human beings in all civilised countries now lived, moved, and had their being, there was at present such deep injustice that the system which permitted such things could not be of long endurance. Carlyle felt this to his latest hours. Without justice society is sick, and will continue sick till it dies. The modern world, incapable of looking duty in the face, attempts to silence complaint with issuing flash-notes on the Bank of Liberty, and will leave all men free to scramble for as much as they can secure of the swine's trough. This is the notion which it forms to itself of justice, and of the natural aid which human beings are bound to give to one another. Of the graces of mutual kindliness, of the dignity and beauty which rise out of organically-formed human society, it politically knows nothing, and chooses to know nothing. The battle is no longer, even to the strong, who have, at least, the one virtue of courage; the battle is to the cunning, in whom is no virtue at all. In Carlyle's opinion no remedy lay in political liberty. Anarchy only lay there, and wretchedness, and ruin. Mill had struck into that road for himself. Carlyle had gone into the other. They had drifted far apart, and were now separated for ever. Time will decide between them. Mill's theory of things is still in the ascendant. England is moving more eagerly than ever in the direction of enfranchisement, believing that there lies the Land of Promise. The orators echo Mill's doctrines: the millions listen and believe. The outward aspect of things seems to say that Mill did, and that Carlyle did not, understand the conditions of the age. But the way is long, the expected victories are still to be won—are
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postponed till the day when "England, the mother of free nations, herself is free." There are rapids yet to be stemmed, or cataracts to descend, and it remains uncertain whether on arriving (if we do arrive) at a finished democracy, it will be a land flowing with milk and honey, or be a waste heaving ocean strewed with the wrecks of dead virtues and ruined institutions.

Carlyle was often taunted—once, I think, by Mr. Lecky—with believing in nothing but the divine right of strength. To me, as I read him, he seems to say, on the contrary, that, as this universe is constructed, it is "right" only that is strong.5

Old and weary as he was, the persistent belief of people in the blessings of democracy, and the confidence which they gave to leaders who were either playing on their credulity or were themselves the dupes of their own phrases, distressed and provoked Carlyle. He was aware that he could do nothing, that self-government by count of heads would be tried out to the end before it would be abandoned; but in his conversation and letters he spoke his opinions freely.

Of [Sir James] Stephen, Ruskin, and one or two others, Carlyle could still think with a degree of comfort. He would gladly have struck one more blow against "things not true"; for his intellect was strong as ever and his sight as piercing; but he sadly found that it was not to be. On December 6 he made the last pencil entry, or the last that is legible,6 in his Journal. From this time his hand failed him entirely, and the private window that opened into his heart was closed up—no dictation being there admissible.7

He seemed to be drifting calmly towards the end, as if of outward incidents or outward activities there would be nothing more to record. But there was still something wanting, and he was not to leave the world without an open recognition of his services to mankind. In January 1874, there came a rumour from Berlin that Prussia proposed to reward the author of the History of Frederick the Great, by conferring on him the Order of Merit, which Frederick himself had founded. Possibly the good turn which he had done to Germany by his letter during the siege of Paris, might have contributed to draw the Emperor’s attention to him. But his great history, translated and universally accepted by Frederick’s countrymen as the worthiest account of their national
hero, was itself claim sufficient without additional motive. Carlyle had never been ambitious of public honours. He had never even thought of such things, and the news, when it first reached Cheyne Row, was received without particular flutter of heart. "Were it never so well-meant," he said, "it can be of no value to me whatever. Dy the naither ill na' gude." The Order of Merit was the most flattering distinction which could have been offered him, for it really means "merit," and must be earned, even by the Princes of the Blood. Of course he could not refuse it, and, at the bottom, I am sure that he was pleased. Yet it seemed as if he would not let himself enjoy anything which she was no longer alive to enjoy with him.

To his friends this act of the German Government was a high gratification, if to himself it was a slight one. The pleasure which men receive from such marks of respect is in most cases "satisfied vanity"; and Carlyle never thought of his own performances, except as "duty" indifferently done.

We, however, were all glad of it, the more so because I then believed that when I wrote his life I should have to say that although for so many years he had filled so great a place amongst us, and his character was as noble as his intellect, the Government, or Governments, of his own country—Tory, Liberal, or whatever they might be—had passed him over without notice. The reproach, however—for reproach it would have been—was happily removed while there was yet time.

It is rather for their own sakes, than for the recipients of their favours, that Governments ought to recognise illustrious services. The persons whom they select for distinction are a test of their own worth.

Benjamin Disraeli could not have been unaware of the unfavourable light in which he was regarded by Carlyle, but he by no means reciprocated the feeling. He was essentially goodnatured, as indeed Carlyle always acknowledged, and took any blow that might be aimed at him with undisturbed composure. He had been a man of letters before he was a politician. He was proud of his profession and of the distinction which he had himself conquered as a novelist. He was personally unacquainted with Carlyle; they had moved in different circles, and I believe had never met. But in early
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life he had been struck with *The French Revolution*; he had imitated the style of it, and distinctly regarded the author of that book as the most important of living writers. Perhaps he had heard of the bestowal of the Order of Merit, and had felt that a scandal would rest on England if a man whom Germany could single out for honour was left unnoticed in his own land. Perhaps the consideration might have been forced upon him from some private source. At any rate, he forgot, if he had ever resented, Carlyle's assaults upon him, and determined to use his own elevation as Premier to confer some high mark of distinction on a person who was so universally loved and admired. It was indeed time, for Carlyle hitherto had been unnoticed entirely, and had been left without even the common marks of confidence and recognition which far inferior men are seldom without an opportunity of receiving. He would not have accepted a pension even when in extremity of poverty. But a pension had never been offered. Eminent men of letters were generally appointed trustees of the British Museum; Carlyle's name had not been found among them. The post of Historiographer Royal for Scotland had been lately vacant. This, at least, his friends expected for him; but he had been intentionally passed over. The neglect was now atoned for.

When I consider the literary world [Disraeli wrote to Carlyle], I see only two living names, which, I would fain believe, will be remembered; & they stand out in uncontested superiority. One is that of a poet; if not a great poet, a real one; & the other is your own.

I have advised the Queen to offer to confer a Baronetcy on Mr Tennyson, & the same distinction shod be at your command, if you liked it.

But I have remembered that, like myself, you are childless, & may not care for hereditary honors. I have, therefore, made up my mind, if agreeable to yourself, to recommend Her Majesty to confer on you the highest distinction for merit at Her command, & which, I believe has never yet been conferred by Her except for direct services to the State. And that is the Grand Cross of the Bath.

I will speak with frankness on another point. It is not well, that, in the sunset of life, you should be disturbed by common cares. I see no reason, why a great author should not receive from the nation a pension as well as a lawyer & a statesman. . . .

To which Carlyle replied:

Your splendid & generous proposals for my practical behoof
FROUDE’S LIFE OF CARLYLE

must not any of them take effect; that titles of honour are in all de-
grees of them out of keeping with the tenor of my poor existence
hitherto in this epoch of the world, and would be an encumbrance
not a furtherance to me; that as to money, it has after long years of
rigorous and frugal, but also (thank God, & those that are gone
before me) not degrading, poverty, become in this later time amply
abundant, even superabundant. . . .

The Government was unwilling to accept the refusal, and
great private efforts were tried to induce him to reconsider
his resolution. It was intimated to him that Her Majesty her-
self would regret to be deprived of an opportunity of showing
the estimation which she felt for him. But the utter unsuit-
ableness of a “title of honour” to a person of his habits and
nature, was more and more obvious to him. “The Grand
Cross,” he said to me, “would be like a cap and bells to
him.” And there lay below a yet prouder objection. “You
accepted the Order of Merit?” I said. “Yes,” he answered,
“but that is a reality, never given save for merit only; while
this ———.” The Prussian Order besides did not require
him to change his style. It would leave him, as it found him,
plain Thomas Carlyle.

So this small circumstance ended. The endeavour to mark
his sense of Carlyle’s high deserts, which no other Premier
had thought of noticing, will be remembered hereafter to
Lord Beaconsfield’s credit, when “peace with honour” is
laughed at or forgotten. The story was a nine days’ wonder,
with the usual conflict of opinion. The final judgement was
perhaps most completely expressed to me by the conductor
of an omnibus: “Fine old gentleman that, who got in along
with you,” said he to me, as Carlyle went inside and I
mounted to the roof; “we thinks a deal on him down in Chel-
sea, we does.” “Yes,” I said, “and the Queen thinks a deal
on him too, for she has just offered to make him a Grand
Cross.” “Very proper of she to think of it,” my conductor
answered, “and more proper of he to have nothing to do
with it. ’Tisn’t that as can do honour to the likes of he.”

More agreeable to Carlyle were the tributes of respect
which poured in upon Cheyne Row when the coming De-

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Prince Bismarck, written in his own large clear hand, which Carlyle showed me.

The Scotch medal too was an agreeable tribute, due, he believed, to the kind exertions of Professor Masson. But he was naturally shy, and disliked display when he was himself the object of it. The excitement worried him. He described it as "the birthday of a skinless old man; a day of the most miserable agitation he could recollect in his life." "The noble & most unexpected note from Bismarck," he said, "was the only real glad event of the day; the crowd of others, including even that of the Edinburgh Medal, was mere fret & fuss to me intrinsically of no value at all,—at least till one had time to recognise from the distance that kindness and goodwill had lain at the heart of every part of it."11

"Kindness and goodwill," yet not in the form which he could best have welcomed. The respect of the nineteenth century, genuine though it be, takes the colours of the age, and shows itself in testimonials, addresses, compliments. "They say I am a great man now," he observed to me, "but not one of them believes my report; not one of them will do what I have bidden them do."

His time was chiefly passed in reading and in dictating letters. He was still ready with his advice to all who asked for it, and with help when help was needed. He walked in the mornings on the Chelsea Embankment. "A real improvement that," as he reluctantly admitted. In the afternoon he walked in the park with me or some other friend; ending generally in an omnibus, for his strength was visibly failing.

Thus calmly and usefully Carlyle's later years went by. There was nothing more to disturb him. His health (though he would seldom allow it) was good. He complained of little, scarcely of want of sleep, and suffered less in all ways than when his temperament was more impetuously sensitive. One form of sorrow—inevitable when life is far prolonged, that of seeing those whom he had known and loved pass away—this he could not escape. In February, 1876, John Forster died, the dearest friend that he had left. I was with him at Forster's funeral in Kensal Green; and a month later at the funeral of Lady Augusta Stanley at the Abbey. In April his brother Alick went, far off in Canada.
CARLYLE IN 1876. (From a photograph in the Carlyle House, Chelsea.)
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Though he felt his life to be fast ebbing, he still watched the course of things outside him. He had, as has been seen, been touched by Mr. Disraeli's action towards him, but it had not altered in the least his distrust of Disraeli's character; and it was thus with indignation, but without surprise, that he found him snatch the opportunity of the Russian-Turkish War [of 1877] to prepare to play a great part in European politics. The levity with which Parliament, press, and platform were lending themselves to the Premier's ambition, was but an illustration of what Carlyle had always said about the practical value of English institutions; but he was disgusted that the leaders in the present insanity should be those from whom alone resistance could be hoped for against the incoming of democracy. It was something worse than even their Reform Bill ten years before. He saw that it could lead to nothing but the discredit, perhaps the final ruin of the Conservative party, and the return of Mr. Gladstone, to work fresh mischief in Ireland. He foresaw all that has happened as accurately as if he had been a mechanically inspired prophet; and there was something of the old fire of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* in the tone in which he talked of what was coming.

Events move fast in these days, and one nail drives out another; but we all remember the winter campaign which brought the Russians to Constantinople and the English fleet to the Dardanelles. Opinion in England was all but prepared to allow the Government to throw itself into the fray—all but—but not entirely. If initiative could be forced upon the Russians, those who wished for a fresh struggle could have it. A scheme was said to have been formed either to seize Gallipoli or to take some similar step, under pretence of protecting English interests, which would have driven Russia, however reluctant she might be, into a declaration of war. The plan, whatever it may have been, was kept a secret; but there is reason to believe that preparations were actually made, that commanders were chosen, and instructions were almost on their way, which would have committed the country beyond recall. Carlyle heard of this, not as he said from idle rumour, but from some authentic source; and he heard too that there was not a moment to lose. On the 5th of May he writes to his brother: "After much urgency
and with a dead-lift effort against my burden & incumbrances I have this day got issued through the Times a small indispen­sible [sic] deliverance on the Turk & Dizzy question."\textsuperscript{12}

The letter to the \textit{Times} was brief, not more than three or four lines; but it was emphatic in its tone, and was positive about the correctness of the information.\textsuperscript{13} Whether he was right, or whether some one had misled him, there is no evidence before the public to show. But the secret, if secret there was, had thus been disclosed prematurely. The letter commanded attention as coming from a man who was unlikely to have spoken without grounds, and any unexpected shock, slight though it may be, will disturb a critical operation. This was Carlyle's last public act in this world; and if he contributed ever so little to preventing England from committing herself to a policy of which the mischief would have been immeasurable, counterbalanced by nothing, save a brief popularity to the Tory party, it was perhaps also the most useful act in his whole life.

My tale draws to an end. In representing Carlyle's thoughts on men and things, I have confined myself as much as possible to his own words in his journals and letters. To report correctly the language of conversations, especially when extended over a wide period, is almost an impossi­bility. The listener, in spite of himself, adds something of his own in colour, form, or substance.

I knew Carlyle, however, so long and so intimately, that I heard many things from him which are not to be found under his hand; many things more fully dilated on, which are there only hinted at, and slight incidents about himself for which I could make no place in my narrative. I have already noticed the general character of his talk with me. I add here some few memorabilia, taken either from notes hastily written down, or from my own recollection, which I believe in the main to be correct.

When the shock of his grief had worn off, and he had com­pleted his expiatory memoir, he became more composed, and could discourse with his old fulness, and more calmly than in earlier times. A few hours alone with him furnished then the most delightful entertainment. We walked five or six miles a day in Hyde Park or Battersea, or in the environs of Ken-
sington. As his strength declined, we used the help of an omnibus, and extended our excursions farther. In his last years he drove daily in a fly, out Harrow way, or to Richmond or Sydenham, or wherever it might be. Occasionally, in the warm days of early summer, he would go with me to Kew Gardens to see the flowers or hear the cuckoo and the nightingales. He was impervious to weather—never carried an umbrella, but, with a mackintosh and his broad-brimmed hat, let the rain do its worst upon him. The driving days were the least interesting to me, for his voice grew weak, and, my own hearing being imperfect, I lost much of what he said; but we often got out to walk, and then he was as audible as ever.

He was extremely sensitive, and would become uneasy and even violent—often without explaining himself—for the most unexpected reasons. It will be remembered that he had once stayed at Malvern with Dr. Gully, and on the whole had liked Gully, or had at least been grateful to him. Many years after Dr. Gully's name had come before the world again, in connection with the Balham mystery, and Carlyle had been shocked and distressed about it. We had been out at Sydenham. He wished to be at home at a particular hour. The time was short, and I told the coachman to go back quickly the nearest way. He became suddenly agitated, insisted that the man was going wrong, and at last peremptorily ordered him to take another road. I said that it would be a long round, and that we should be late, but to no purpose, and we gave him his way. By-and-by, when he grew cool, he said, "We should have gone through Balham. I cannot bear to pass that house."  

In an omnibus his arbitrary ways were very amusing. He always craved for fresh air, took his seat by the door when he could get it, and sat obliquely in the corner to avoid being squeezed. The conductors knew him, and his appearance was so marked that the passengers generally knew him also, and treated him with high respect. A stranger on the box one day, seeing Carlyle get in, observed that the "old fellow 'ad a queer 'at." "Queer 'at!" answered the driver; "ay, he may wear a queer 'at, but what would you give for the 'ed-piece that's inside of it?"

He went often by omnibus to the Regent Circus, walked
from thence up Regent Street and Portland Place into the Park, and returned the same way. Portland Place, being airy and uncrowded, pleased him particularly. We were strolling along it during the Russo-Turkish crisis, one afternoon, when we met a Foreign Office official, who was in the Cabinet secrets. Knowing me, he turned to walk with us, and I introduced him to Carlyle, saying who he was. Carlyle took the opportunity of delivering himself in the old eruptive style; the Geyser throwing up whole volumes of steam and stones. It was very fine, and was the last occasion on which I ever heard him break out in this way. Mr.— wrote to me afterwards to tell me how much interested he had been, adding, however, that he was still in the dark as to whether it was his eyes or the Turks' that had been damned at such a rate. I suppose I might have answered both.

He spoke much on politics and on the character of public men. From the British Parliament he was profoundly convinced that no more good was to be looked for. A democratic Parliament, from the nature of it, would place persons at the head of affairs increasingly unfit to deal with them. Bad would be followed by worse, and worse by worst, till the very fools would see that the system must end. Lord Wolseley, then Sir Garnet, went with me once to call in Cheyne Row, Carlyle having expressed a wish to see him. He was much struck with Sir Garnet, and talked freely with him on many subjects. He described the House of Commons as "six hundred talking asses, set to make the laws and administer the concerns of the greatest empire the world had ever seen"; with other uncomplimentary phrases. When he rose to go, he said, "Well, Sir, I am glad to have made your acquaintance, and I wish you well. There is one duty which I hope may yet be laid upon you before you leave this world—to lock the door of yonder place, and turn them all out about their business."

Of the two Parliamentary chiefs then alternately ruling, he preferred Mr. Disraeli, and continued to prefer him, even after his wild effort to make himself arbiter of Europe. Disraeli, he thought, was under no illusions about himself. To him the world was a mere stage, and he a mere actor playing a part upon it. He had no serious beliefs, and made no pretences. He understood, as well as Carlyle himself,
whither England was going, with its fine talk of progress; but it would last his time; he could make a figure in conducting its destinies, or at least amuse himself scientifically, like Mephistopheles. He was not an Englishman, and had no true care for England. The Conservatives, in choosing him for their leader, had sealed their own fate. He had made his fame by assailing Peel, the last of the great order of English ministers. He was dexterous in Parliamentary maneuvers, but looked only to winning in divisions, and securing his party their turn of power. If with his talents he had possessed the instincts of a statesman, there was anarchic Ireland to be brought to order; there were the Colonies to be united with the Empire; there was the huge, hungry, half-human population of our enormous towns to be drafted out over the infinite territories of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where, with land to cultivate and pure air to breathe, they might recover sanity of soul and limb.

He used to speak with real anger of the argument that such poor wretches were wanted at home in their squalid alleys, that labour might continue cheap. It was an argument worthy only of Carib cannibals. This was the work cut out for English Conservatives, and they were shutting their eyes to it because it was difficult, and were rushing off, led by Dizzy, into Russian wars.

Mr. Disraeli, however, had, he admitted, some good qualities. He could see facts, a supreme merit in Carlyle's eyes. He was good-natured. He bore no malice. If he was without any lofty virtues, he affected no virtuous airs. Mr. Gladstone Carlyle considered to be equally incapable of high or sincere purpose, but with this difference, that he supposed himself to have what he had not. He did not look on Mr. Gladstone merely as an orator, who, knowing nothing as it ought to be known, had flung his force into words and specious sentiments; but as the representative of the multitudinous cants of the age—religious, moral, political, literary; differing in this point from other leading men, that the cant seemed actually true to him; that he believed it all and was prepared to act on it. He, in fact, believed Mr. Gladstone to be one of those fatal figures, created by England's evil genius, to work irreparable mischief, which no one but he could have executed.
London housebuilding was a favourite text for a sermon from him. He would point to rows of houses so slightly put together that they stood only by the support they gave to one another, intended only to last out a brief lease, with no purpose of continuance, either to themselves or their owners. "Human life," he said, was not possible in such houses. All real worth in man came of stability. Character grew from roots like a tree. In healthy times the family home was constructed to last for ages; sons to follow their fathers, working at the same business, with established methods of thought and action. Modern houses were symbols of the universal appetite for change. They were not houses at all. They were tents of nomads. The modern artisan had no home, and did not know what home meant. Everything was now a makeshift. Men lived for the present. They had no future to look forward to, for none could say what the future was to be. The London streets and squares were an unconscious confession of it.

For the same reason he respected such old institutions as were still standing among us—not excepting even the Church of England. He called it the most respectable teaching body at present in existence; and he thought it might stand for a while yet if its friends would let it alone. "Your rusty kettle," he said, "will continue to boil your water for you if you don't try to mend it. Begin tinkering, and there is an end of your kettle." It could not last for ever, for what it had to say was not wholly true. Puritanism was a noble thing while it was sincere, but that was not true either. All doctrines had to go, after the truth of them came to be suspected. But as long as men could be found to work the Church of England who believed the Prayer-book sincerely, he had not the least wish to see the fall of it precipitated. He disliked the liberal school of clergy. Let it once be supposed that the clergy generally were teaching what they did not believe themselves, and the whole thing would become a hideous hypocrisy.

He himself had for many years attended no place of worship. Nowhere could he hear anything which he regarded as true, and to be insincere in word or act was not possible to him. But liturgies and such-like had a mournful interest for him, as fossils of belief which once had been genuine. A
lady—Lady Ashburton, I think—induced him once, late in his life, to go with her to St. Paul's. He had never before heard the English Cathedral Service, and far away in the nave, in the dim light, where the words were indistinct, or were disguised in music, he had been more impressed than he expected to be. In the prayers he recognised "a true piety," which had once come straight out of the heart. The distant "Amen" of the choristers and the roll of the great organ brought tears into his eyes. He spoke so feelingly of this that I tempted him to try again at Westminster Abbey. I told him that Dean Stanley, for whom he had a strong regard, would preach, and this was perhaps another inducement. The experiment proved dangerous. We were in the Dean's seat. A minor canon was intoning close to Carlyle's ear. The chorister boys were but three yards off, and the charm of distance was exchanged for contact which was less enchanting. The lines of worshippers in front of him, sitting while pretending to kneel, making their responses, bowing in the creed by habit, and mechanically repeating the phrases of it, when their faces showed that it was habit only without genuine conviction; this and the rest brought back the feeling that it was but play-acting after all. I could see the cloud gathering in his features, and I was alarmed for what I had done before the service was half over. Worst of all, through some mistake, the Dean did not preach, and in the place of him was a popular orator, who gave us three quarters of an hour of sugary eloquence. For a while Carlyle bore it like a hero. But by-and-by I heard the point of his stick rattle audibly on the floor. He crushed his hat angrily at each specially emphatic period, and groans followed, so loud that some of the congregation sitting near, who appeared to know him, began to look round. Mrs. D———, the Dean's cousin, who was in the seat with us, exchanged frightened glances with me. I was the most uneasy of all, for I could see into his mind; and at the too florid peroration I feared that he would rise and insist on going out, or even, like Oliver, exclaim, "Leave your fooling, sir, and come down!"15 Happily the end arrived before a crisis, and we escaped a catastrophe which would have set London ringing.

The loss of the use of his right hand was more than a common misfortune. It was the loss of everything. The power of
writing, even with pencil, went finally seven years before his death. His mind was vigorous and restless as ever. Reading without an object was weariness. Idleness was misery; and I never knew him so depressed as when the fatal certainty was brought home to him. To this, as to other immediate things, time partly reconciled him; but at first he found life intolerable under such conditions. Increasing weakness only partially tamed him into patience, or reconciled him to an existence which, even at its best, he had more despised than valued.

To Carlyle, as to Hamlet, the modern world was but a "pestilent congregation of vapours." Often and often I have heard him repeat Macbeth's lines:

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

He was especially irritated when he heard the ordinary cant about progress, unexampled prosperity, etc. Progress whither? he would ask, and prosperity in what? People talked as if each step which they took was in the nature of things a step upward; as if each generation was necessarily wiser and better than the one before; as if there was no such thing as progressing down to hell; as if human history was anything else but a history of birth and death, advance and decline, of rise and fall, in all that men have ever made or done. The only progress to which Carlyle would allow the name was moral progress; the only prosperity the growth of better and nobler men and women; and as humanity could only expand into high dimensions in an organic society when the wise ruled and the ignorant obeyed, the progress which consisted in destroying authority, and leaving everyone to follow his own will and pleasure, was progress down to the devil and his angels. That, in his opinion, was the evident goal of the course in which we were all hurrying on in such high spirits. Of the theory of equality of voting, the good and
the bad on the same level, Judas Iscariot and Paul of Tarsus counting equal at the polling booth, the annals of human infatuation, he used to say, did not contain the equal.

Sometimes he thought that we were given over and lost without remedy; that we should rot away through inglorious centuries, sinking ever deeper into anarchy, protected by our strip of sea from a violent end till the earth was weary of us. At other times the inherent manliness of the English race, inherited from nobler ages, and not yet rinsed out of them, gave him hopes that we might yet be delivered.

I reminded him of the comment of Dion Cassius on the change in Rome from a commonwealth to an empire. In a democracy, Cassius says, a country cannot be well administered, even by accident, for it is ruled by the majority, and the majority are always fools. An emperor is but a single man, and may, if the gods please, be a wise one. But this did not please Carlyle either. The emperors that Rome got, and that we should be likely to get, were of the Copper Captain type, and worse than democracy itself. The hope, if there was hope, lay in a change of heart in the English people, and the reawakening of the nobler element in them; and this meant a recovered sense of "religion." They would rise out of their delusions when they recognised once more the sacred meaning of duty. Yet what religion? He did not think it possible that educated honest men could even profess much longer to believe in historical Christianity. He had been reading the Bible. Half of it seemed to be inspired truth, half of it human illusion. "The prophet says, 'Thus saith the Lord.' Yes, sir, but how if it be not the Lord, but only you who take your own fancies for the word of the Lord?" I spoke to him of what he had done himself. Then as always he thought little of it, but he said, "They must come to something like that if any more good is to grow out of them." Scientific accountings for the moral sense were all moonshine. Right and wrong in all things, great and small, had been ruled eternally by the Power which made us. A friend was arguing on the people's right to decide this or that, and, when Carlyle dissented, asked who was to be the judge. Carlyle fiercely answered, "Hell fire will be the judge. God Almighty will be the judge, now and always."

The history of mankind is the history of creeds growing
one out of the other. I said it was possible that if Protestant Christianity ceased to be credible, some fresh superstition might take its place, or even that Popery might come back for a time, developed into new conditions. If the Olympian gods could survive Aristophanes 800 years; if a Julian could still hope to maintain Paganism as the religion of the empire, I did not see why the Pope might not survive Luther for at least as long. Carlyle would not hear of this; but he did admit that the Mass was the most genuine relic of religious belief now left to us. He was not always consistent in what he said of Christianity. He would often speak of it with Goethe "as a height from which, when once achieved, mankind could never descend." He did not himself believe in the Resurrection as a historical fact, yet he was angry and scornful at Strauss's language about it. "Did not our heart burn within us?" he quoted, insisting on the honest conviction of the apostles.  

The associations of the old creed which he had learnt from his mother and in the Ecclefechan kirk hung about him to the last. I was walking with him one Sunday afternoon in Battersea Park. In the open circle among the trees were a blind man and his daughter, she singing hymns, he accompanying her on some instrument. We stood listening. She sang Faber's "Pilgrims of the Night." The words were trivial, but the air, though simple, had something weird and unearthly about it. "Take me away!" he said after a few minutes, "I shall cry if I stay longer."

He was not what is commonly called an amiable man. Amiability runs readily into insincerity. He spoke his mind freely, careless to whom he gave offence: but as no man ever delighted more to hear of any brave or good action, so there was none more tender-hearted or compassionate of suffering. Stern and disdainful to wrongdoers, especially if they happened to be in high places, he was ever pitiful to the children of misfortune. Whether they were saints or sinners made no difference. If they were miserable his heart was open to them. He was like Goethe's elves:

\[
\text{ob er heilig, ob er böse,} \\
\text{jammert sie der Unglücksmann.} \\
\text{(be he holy, be he evil,} \\
\text{they grieve for the man of ill-fortune.)}^{19}
\]
His memory was extremely tenacious, as is always the case with men of genius. He would relate anecdotes for hours together of Scotch peasant life, of old Edinburgh students, old Ecclefechan villagers, wandering from one thing to another, but always dwelling on the simple and pious side of things, never on the scandalous or wicked. Burns's songs were constantly on his lips. He knew them so well that they seemed part of his soul. Never can I forget the tone in which he would repeat to me, revealing unconsciously where his own thoughts were wandering, the beautiful lines:

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.\textsuperscript{20}

Not once but many times the words would burst from him, rather as the overflow from his own heart than as addressed to me.

In his last years he grew weak, glad to rest upon a seat when he could find one, glad of an arm to lean on when on his feet. He knew that his end must be near, and it was seldom long out of his mind. But he was not conscious of a failure of intellectual power, nor do I think that to the last there was any essential failure. He forgot names and places, as old men always do, but he recollected everything that was worth remembering. He caught the point of every new problem with the old rapidity. He was eager as ever for new information. In his intellect nothing pointed to an end; and the experience that the mind did not necessarily decay with the body confirmed his conviction that it was not a function of the body, that it had another origin and might have another destination. When he spoke of the future and its uncertainties he fell back invariably on the last words of his favourite hymn:

\textit{Wir heissen euch hoffen.} (We bid you be of hope.)

Meanwhile his business with the world was over, his connection with it was closing in, and he had only to bid it Farewell.

\begin{align*}
\text{Fear no more the heat o' the sun,} \\
\text{Nor the furious winter's rages;} \\
\text{Thou thy worldly task hast done,} \\
\text{Home art gone and ta'en thy wages.}
\end{align*}
Often these words were on his lips. Home, too, he felt that he was going; home to those "dear" ones who had gone before him. His wages he has not taken with him. His wages will be the love and honour of the whole English race who read his books and know his history. If his writings are forgotten, he has left in his life a model of simplicity and uprightness which few will ever equal and none will excel. For he had not been sustained in his way through this world by an inherited creed which could give him hope and confidence. The inherited creed had crumbled down, and he had to form a belief for himself by lonely meditation. Nature had not bestowed on him the robust mental constitution which passes by the petty trials of life without heeding them, or the stubborn stoicism which endures in silence. Nature had made him weak, passionate, complaining, dyspeptic in body and sensitive in spirit, lonely, irritable, and morbid. He became what he was by his moral rectitude of principle, by a conscientious resolution to do right, which never failed him in serious things from his earliest years, and, though it could not change his temperament, was the inflexible guide of his conduct. Neither self-indulgence, nor ambition, nor any meaner motive, ever led him astray from the straight road of duty, and he left the world at last, having never spoken, never written a sentence which he did not believe with his whole heart, never stained his conscience by a single deliberate act which he could regret to remember.

All things and all men come to their end. This biography ends. The biographer himself will soon end, and will go where he will have to answer for the manner in which he has discharged his trust, happy so far that he has been allowed to live to complete an arduous and anxious undertaking. In the summer of 1877 Carlyle, at my urgent entreaty, sat for his picture to Mr. Millais. Mr. Boehm had made a seated statue of him, as satisfactory a likeness in face and figure as could be rendered in sculpture; and the warm regard which had grown up between the artist and himself had enabled Mr. Boehm to catch with more than common success the shifting changes of his expression. But there was still some-
thing wanting. A portrait of Carlyle completely satisfactory did not yet exist, and if executed at all could be executed only by the most accomplished painter of his age. Millais, I believe, had never attempted a more difficult subject. In the second sitting I observed what seemed a miracle. The passionate vehement face of middle life had long disappeared. Something of the Annandale peasant had stolen back over the proud air of conscious intellectual power. The scorn, the fierceness was gone, and tenderness and mild sorrow had passed into its place. And yet under Millais's hands the old Carlyle stood again upon the canvas as I had not seen him for thirty years. The inner secret of the features had been evidently caught. There was a likeness which no sculptor, no photographer, had yet equalled or approached. Afterwards, I knew not how, it seemed to fade away. Millais grew dissatisfied with his work and, I believe, never completed it. Carlyle's own verdict was modestly uncertain. "The picture I think does not please Mary, nor in fact myself altogether; but it is surely strikingly like in every feature & the fundamental condition was that Millais should paint what he himself was able to see there." 22

His correspondence with his brother John, never interrupted while they both lived, was concerned chiefly with the books with which he was occupying himself. He read Shakespeare again. He read Goethe again, and then went completely through the Decline and Fall. "I have finished Gibbon," he wrote.

with a great deduction from the high esteem I have had of him ever since old Kirkcaldy days when I first read the twelve volumes of poor Irving's copy in twelve successive days,—a man of endless reading & research, but of a most disagreeable style and a great want of the highest faculties which indeed are very rare of what we could call a classical historian. Compared with Herodotus for instance and his grand simplicity and his perfect clearness in every part. . . . 23

He continued to read the Bible, "the significance of which" he found "deep & wonderful almost as much as it ever used to be to me." 24 Bold and honest to the last, he would not pretend to believe what his intellect rejected, and even in Job, his old favourite, he found more wonder than satisfaction. But the Bible itself, the Bible and Shakespeare, remained "the best books" to him that were ever written.
As long as John Carlyle survived, he had still the associate of his early years, on whose affection he could rely, and John, as the younger of the two, might be expected to outlive him. But this last consolation he was to see pass from him. John Carlyle, too, was sinking under the weight of years. Illness bore heavily on him, and his periodic visits to Chelsea had ceased to be manageable. His home was at Dumfries, and the accounts of him which reached Cheyne Row all through that winter were less and less hopeful. It was a winter memorable for its long, stern, implacable frost, which bore hard on the aged and the failing.

As his condition grew hopeless, Carlyle was afraid every day that the end had come, and that the news had been kept back from him. "Is my brother John dead?" he asked me one day as I joined him in his carriage. He was not actually dead then, but he suffered only for a few more days. John Carlyle would have been remembered as a distinguished man if he had not been overshadowed by his greater brother. After his early struggles he worked in his profession for many careful years, and saved a considerable fortune. Then, in somewhat desultory fashion, he took to literature. He wanted brilliancy, and still more he wanted energy, but he had the virtue of his family—veracity. Whatever he undertook he did faithfully, with all his ability, and his translation of Dante is the best that exists. He needed the spur, however, before he would exert himself, and I believe he attempted nothing serious afterwards. In disposition he was frank, kind-hearted, generous; entirely free from all selfishness or ambition; simple as his brother in his personal habits; and ready always with money, time, or professional assistance, wherever his help was needed. When Carlyle bequeathed Craigenputtoch to the University of Edinburgh, John too settled a handsome sum for medical bursaries there, to encourage poor students. These two brothers, born in a peasant's home in Annandale, owing little themselves to an Alma Mater which had missed discovering their merits, were doing for Scotland's chief University what Scotland's peers and merchants, with their palaces and deer forests and social splendour, had, for some cause, too imperfectly supplied.

James Carlyle and three sisters still remained, and Car-
lyle was tenderly attached to them. But John had been his early friend, the brother of his heart, and his death was a sore blow. He bore his loss manfully, submitting to the inevitable as to the will of his Father and Master. He was very feeble, but the months went by without producing much visible change, save that latterly in his drives he had to take a supply of liquid food with him. He was still fairly cheerful, and tried, though with diminished eagerness, to take an interest in public affairs. He even thought for a moment of taking a personal part in the preparation of his Memoirs. Among his papers I had found the "Reminiscences" of his father, of Irving, of Jeffrey, of Southey and Wordsworth. I had to ask myself whether these characteristic, and as I thought, and continue to think, extremely beautiful autobiographical fragments, should be broken up and absorbed in his biography, or whether they ought not to be published as they stood, in a separate volume. I consulted him about it. He had almost forgotten what he had written; but as soon as he had recalled it to his recollection he approved of the separate publication, and added that they had better be brought out immediately on his death. The world would then be talking about him, and would have something authentic to go upon. It was suggested that he might revise the sheets personally, and that the book might appear in his lifetime as edited by himself. He turned the proposal over in his mind, and considered that perhaps he might try. On reflection, however, he found the effort would be too much for him. He gave it up, and left everything as before to me, to do what I thought proper.

At this time there had been no mention and no purpose of including in the intended volume the Memoir of Mrs. Carlyle. This was part of his separate bequest to me, and I was then engaged, as I have already said, in incorporating both memoir and letters in the history of his early life. I think a year must have elapsed after this before the subject was mentioned between us again. At length, however, one day about three months before his death, he asked me very solemnly, and in a tone of the saddest anxiety, what I proposed to do about "the Letters and Memorials." I was sorry—for a fresh evidence at so late a date of his wish that the Letters should be published as he had left them would
take away my discretion, and I could no longer treat them as I had begun to do. But he was so sorrowful and earnest—though still giving no positive order—that I could make no objection. I promised him that the Letters should appear with such reservations as might be indispensable. The Letters implied the Memoir, for it had been agreed upon from the first between us that, if Mrs. Carlyle's Letters were published, his Memoir of her must be published also. I decided, therefore, that the Memoir should be added to the volume of Reminiscences; the Letters to follow at an early date. I briefly told him this. He was entirely satisfied, and never spoke about it again.

I have said enough already of Carlyle's reason for preparing these papers, of his bequest of them to me, and of the embarrassment into which I was thrown by it. The arguments on either side were weighty, and ten years of consideration had not made it more easy to choose between them. My final conclusion may have been right or wrong, but the influence which turned the balance was Carlyle's persevering wish, and my own conviction that it was a wish supremely honourable to him.

This was in the autumn of 1880, a little before his 85th birthday. He was growing so visibly infirm, that neither he himself nor any of us expected him to survive the winter. He was scarcely able even to wish it.

He was entirely occupied with his approaching change, and with the world and its concerns we could see that he had done for ever. In January he was visibly sinking. His political anticipations had been exactly fulfilled. Mr. Gladstone had come back to power. Fresh jars of paraffin had been poured on the fire in Ireland, and anarchy and murder were the order of the day. I mentioned something of it to him one day. He listened indifferently. "These things do not interest you?" I said. "Not the least," he answered, and turned languidly away. He became worse a day or two after that. I went down to see him. His bed had been moved into the drawing-room, which still bore the stamp of his wife's hand upon it. Her workbox and other ladies' trifles lay about in their old places. He had forbidden them to be removed, and they stood within reach of his dying hand.

He was wandering when I came to his side. He recognised
me. "I am very ill," he said. "Is it not strange that those people should have chosen the very oldest man in all Britain to make suffer in this way?"

I answered, "We do not exactly know why those people act as they do. They may have reasons that we cannot guess at." "Yes," he said, with a flash of the old intellect, "it would be rash to say that they have no reasons."

When I saw him next his speech was gone. His eyes were as if they did not see, or were fixed on something far away. I cannot say whether he heard me when I spoke to him, but I said, "Ours has been a long friendship; I will try to do what you wish."

This was on the 4th of February, 1881. The morning following he died. He had been gone an hour when I reached the house. He lay calm and still, an expression of exquisite tenderness subduing his rugged features into feminine beauty. I have seen something like it in Catholic pictures of dead saints, but never, before or since, on any human countenance.

So closed a long life of eighty-five years—a life in which extraordinary talents had been devoted, with an equally extraordinary purity of purpose, to his Maker's service, so far as he could see and understand that Maker's will—a life of single-minded effort to do right and only that; of constant truthfulness in word and deed. Of Carlyle, if of anyone, it may be said that "he was a man indeed in whom was no guile." No insincerity ever passed his lips; no dishonest or impure thought ever stole into his heart. In all those long years the most malicious scrutiny will search in vain for a single serious blemish. If he had frailties and impatiences, if he made mistakes and suffered for them, happy those whose conscience has nothing worse to charge them with. Happy those who, if their infirmities have caused pain to others who were dear to them, have, like Carlyle, made the fault into a virtue by the simplicity and completeness of their repentance.

He had told me when Mrs. Carlyle died, that he hoped to be buried beside her at Haddington. It was ordered otherwise, either by himself on reconsideration, or for some other cause. He had foreseen that an attempt might be made to give him a more distinguished resting-place in Westminster
Abbey. For many reasons he had decided that it was not to be. He objected to parts of the English burial service, and, veracious in everything, did not choose that words should be read over him which he regarded as untrue. "The grain of corn," he said, "does not die; or if it dies, does not rise again." Something, too, there was of the same proud feeling which had led him to decline a title. Funerals in the Abbey were not confined to the deserving. When —— was buried there he observed to me, "There will be a general gaol delivery in that place one of these days." His own direction was that he was to lie with his father and mother at the spot where in life he had made so often a pious pilgrimage, the old kirkyard at Ecclefechan.

Dean Stanley wrote to me, after he was gone, to offer the Abbey, in the warmest and most admiring terms. He had applied to me as one of the executors, and I had to tell him that it had been otherwise arranged. He asked that the body might rest there for a night on the way to Scotland. This also we were obliged to decline. Deeply affected as he was, he preached on the Sunday following on Carlyle's work and character, introducing into his sermon a beautiful passage which I had given to him out of the last journal.

The organ played afterwards the Dead March in Saul—grand, majestic—as England's voice of farewell to one whose work for England had closed, and yet had not closed. It is still, perhaps, rather in its infancy; for he, being dead, yet speaks to us as no other man in this century has spoken or is likely to speak.

He was taken down in the night by the railway. I, Lecky, and Tyndall, alone of his London friends, were able to follow. We travelled by the mail train. We arrived at Ecclefechan on a cold dreary February morning; such a morning as he himself describes when he laid his mother in the same grave where he was now to rest. Snow had fallen, and road and field were wrapped in a white winding-sheet. The hearse, with the coffin, stood solitary in the station yard, as some waggon might stand, waiting to be unloaded. They do not study form in Scotland, and the absence of respect had nothing unusual about it. But the look of that black, snow-sprinkled object, standing there so desolate, was painful; and, to lose sight of it in the three hours which we had to wait,
we walked up to Mainhill, the small farmouse, two miles distant, where he had spent his boyhood and his university vacations. I had seen Mainhill before, my companions had not. The house had been enlarged since my previous visit, but the old part of it, the kitchen and the two bedrooms, of which it had consisted when the Carlyles lived there, remained as they had been, with the old alcoves, in which the beds were still standing. To complete the resemblance, another family of the same station in life now occupied it—a shrewd industrious farmer, whose wife was making cheeses in the dairy. Again there were eight children, the elder sons at school in the village, the little ones running about barefoot as Carlyle had done, the girls with their brooms and dusters, and one little fellow not strong enough for farm work, but believed to have gifts, and designed, by-and-by, for college. It was the old scene over again, the same stage, the same play, with new players. We stayed looking about us till it was time to go, and then waded back through the half-melted snow to the station. A few strangers had arrived from Edinburgh and elsewhere, but not many; for the family, simple in their habits, avoided display, and the day, and even the place, of the funeral, had not been made public. Two or three carriages were waiting, belonging to gentlemen in the neighbourhood. Mr. James Carlyle and his sisters were there, with their children, in carriages also, and there was a carriage for us. The hearse was set in movement, and we followed slowly down the half-mile of road which divides the station from the village. A crowd had gathered at the churchyard, not disorderly, but seemingly with no feeling but curiosity. There were boys and girls bright with ribands and coloured dresses, climbing upon the kirkyard walls. There was no minister—or at least no ceremony which implied the presence of a minister. I could not but contrast, in my own thoughts, that poor and almost ragged scene, with the trampled sleet and dirt, and unordered if not disorderly assembly, with the sad ranks of mourners who would have attended in thousands had Dean Stanley’s offer been accepted. I half-regretted the resolution which had made the Abbey impossible. Melancholy, indeed, was the impression left upon me by that final leave-taking of my honoured master. The kirkyard was peopled with ghosts. All round
me were headstones, with the names of the good old villagers of whom I had heard so many stories from him: the schoolmaster from whom he had learnt his first Latin, the blacksmith with whom his father had argued on the resurrection of the body, his father, mother, sister, woven into the life which was now over, and which it was to fall to myself to describe. But the graves were soiled with half-thawed sleet, the newspaper correspondents were busy with their pencils, the people were pressing and pushing as the coffin was lowered down. Not in this way, I thought for a moment, ought Scotland to have laid her best and greatest in his solemn sleeping-place. But it was for a moment only. It was as he had himself desired. They whom he had loved best had been buried so—all so—and with no other forms. The funeral prayers in Scotland are not offered at the grave, but in private houses, before or after. There was nothing really unsuitable in what habit had made natural and fit. It was over, and we left him to his rest.

In future years, in future centuries, strangers will come from distant lands—from America, from Australia, from New Zealand, from every isle or continent where the English language is spoken—to see the house where Carlyle was born, to see the green turf under which his dust is lying. Scotland will have raised a monument over his grave; but no monument is needed for one who has made an eternal memorial for himself in the hearts of all to whom truth is the dearest of possessions.

For, giving his soul to the common cause, he has won for himself a wreath which will not fade and a tomb the most honourable, not where his dust is decaying, but where his glory lives in everlasting remembrance. For of illustrious men all the earth is the sepulchre, and it is not the inscribed column in their own land which is the record of their virtues, but the unwritten memory of them in the hearts and minds of all mankind.28