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The European Crisis

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For the last hour; and floods of rain have dashed,
Mingled with fire and hail, on all around;
And trees have bent, and window panes have smashed;
And men and houses would have bit the ground,
Had not Ben Franklin’s storm-rod kept them safe and sound.

VII.
But look! the darkened sky is clearing off;
The heavens and earth seem both agreed to stop;
The thunder’s growl is changed into a cough;
From their retreats the toads begin to hop;
The bright sun has sufficient space to pop
His warm beams on the earth, between the fleece
Of glowing clouds, and clean away the slop;
The elements have come to terms of peace,
And freshened nature looks once more as slick as grease.

THE EUROPEAN CRISIS.

It is impossible to look upon the present commotions of Europe, without being awe-struck with the tremendous crisis they are evidently hastening on. If any one, fifty years ago, had predicted that, in eighteen hundred and forty-nine, France would be a republic, and almost every nation in Europe endeavoring to imitate her example, he would have been looked upon as a madman. But it is even so! Almost every steamer brings tidings of a despotic government overthrown, and a blow struck for liberty. And the end is not yet!

But, some think that all will end in anarchy and confusion—that these commotions will result in the re-enactment of the scenes of another Waterloo, and serve but to fix more deeply the despotism that produced them. And how can such sentiments be entertained by any true American? Do we not see, in the revolution that has lately agitated France, the same elements that constituted the glorious revolution to which we are indebted for the privileges that we now enjoy? This great struggle is a contest between truth and error—the oppressor and the oppressed. Our fathers fought the same battle; and, looking at the difficulties they had to encounter, and the glory they acquired, can we not bid France, On! and in the language of her beautiful hymn, exclaim,

“Ye sons of freedom, wake to glory!
Hark! hark! what myriads bid you rise!”

This great movement will not, cannot fail. The people are beginning to learn their power. In a moment they have snapped asunder, as weeds, the
manacles under which they have groaned for centuries. They have hurled from their thrones tyrants surrounded by forests of bayonets. And they have accomplished all this, not as a mob of maniacs, swayed by furious passions and lawless men: they trampled not upon the laws of nature and reason. It was for justice they sought—a release from the grinding and merciless will of their rulers. The eyes of the French people have been opened, and we cannot suppose that they will suffer themselves to relapse into their former ignoble condition.

But let us, for a moment, turn to poor unfortunate Ireland. How fares she? What are her prospects? And here we might pause for a moment, and drop the tear of sympathy, when we reflect how long and how much she has suffered. Surely, a heavy hand has been laid upon her. She stands before the world a Niobe. The lightnings have scathed her, and the billows of tribulation have nigh overwhelmed her. Fate seems to have decided that the epitaph of her illustrious martyr should never be written. But hope cannot yet be extinct. The sceptre that has so long been her scourge must, sooner or later, be broken. Her cries will be heard by a righteous God, and upon her enemies he will turn the poisoned arrow that has so long rankled in her bosom.

"And, thou gem upon the waters,
Fair, yet hapless Emerald Isle,
Once again thy sons shall triumph,
Once again thy daughters smile."

It is true, that the difficulties which Ireland will have to encounter are great, and calculated to drive her almost to despair. She will never, perhaps, be able to cope, single-handed, with the giant arm of England. But there lies in store for her a more certain way of escape, a much surer means of obtaining retribution. The eyes of the world are upon her, and its great heart is beginning to throb in unison with hers. And England will find that the injustice with which she is treating her sister isle will bring down upon her the condemnation of every true patriot, and the wrath of an outraged humanity. This she cannot and will not endure. Her pride alone would make her shrink from such a fate. And thus will the way be opened for the deliverance of Ireland. If her enemies will not listen to the dictates of conscience, they will be compelled to do right under its lashes, or, at least, under a conviction that their own interests demand it; policy will force them to do what a regard for justice is unable to accomplish.

But not only have France and Ireland been shaken; a shout has been heard in the

"Land of old and classic splendor;
Life, new life, has thrilled the pulses
Of impassioned Italy."

The seven-hilled city is waking from the sleep of centuries; from the
The College of the Magii.

Almost everywhere, in fact, the spirit of revolution is at work, and almost every nation has caught the enthusiasm of reform. And who will say that this enthusiasm will pass away, and that these great movements will accomplish nothing in hastening on the world's emancipation. Let it not be forgotten that there is One, who, though unseen and unheard, is yet overlooking the affairs of nations, and exerting an influence among men greater than all that the combined efforts and machinations of earth's potentates can effect. And He is just, wise, and good. Under His strong arm shall the sons of oppression triumph. With the God of truth on their side, and with the example set by those whom tyrannical rulers drove to the wilds of a western wilderness before them, they will take courage, and learn that there is, indeed, a reality in the sublime theory of self-government.

THE COLLEGE OF THE MAGII.

The Magii* of Babylon constituted a distinct class of society, into which none but literary men and public functionaries were admitted. A law, similar to that which existed in Egypt, compelled the king to become a priest among the Magii before he could ascend the throne. The care, as well as the direction, of the public worship was at an early period confided to them alone; and became soon profitable in their hands. These employments they endeavored, and succeeded, to make hereditary from the father to the son. (Diod. ii. 29.) But they had also an artificial succession amongst them, and this was obtained for an individual, by his being adopted by one of their number; Daniel and his three brothers became in this manner members of their society. (Manter, Emp. of B., p. 80.) The word Magii appears to have signified, among the Babylonians, "sages." (Hakim, Dan. v. 7.) They occupied themselves with the study and practice of all the secret arts appertaining to demonology; such as making out horoscopes, with goety (the art of conjuring, and calling up the spirits of the departed) and augury. The multiplicity of their occupations caused them to institute subdivisions in their order similar to those which were common in Persia.

* The word Magus has been considered to be of Persian origin, according to Apulej. Apol. p. 290. But it is evidently Sanscrit, and means an enchanter, in that language. It is derived from the verb mag, to practice witchcraft.

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