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# A NEW YEAR'S LETTER

FROM

## JONATHAN TO JOHN.

CASSIUS. You love me not.

BRUTUS. I do not like your faults.

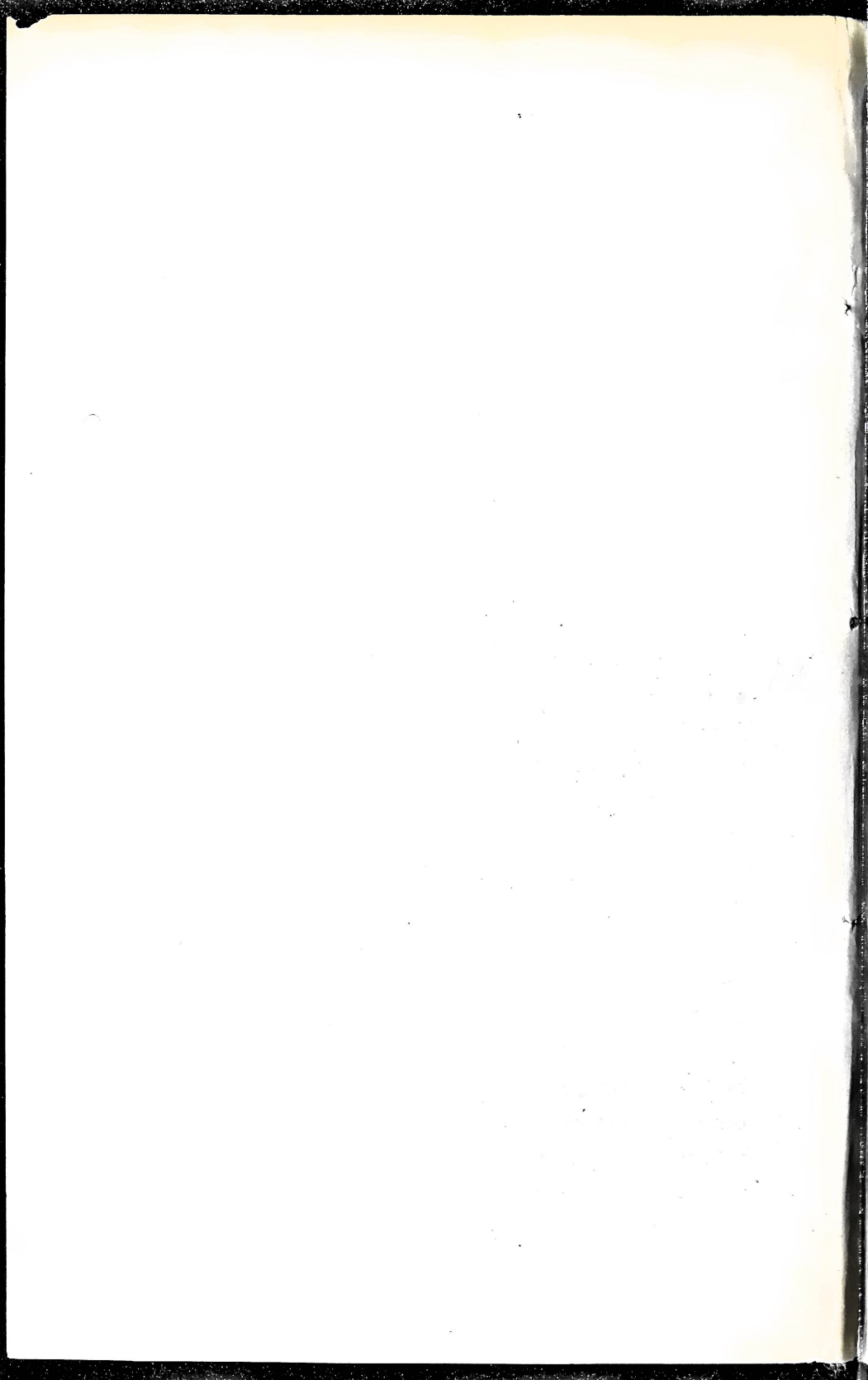
CASSIUS. A friendly eye could never see such faults.

BRUTUS. A flatterer's would not, though they do appear  
As huge as high Olympus.

*Julius Caesar.*

LONDON:  
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1868.



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### JONATHAN TO JOHN.

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DEAR JOHN,—I hope I need make no apology for addressing you, in these critical times, on matters profoundly concerning us both. The wine-makers have a belief that in the season of the blossoming of vines the wine in its bottles ferments anew in sympathy, and then chiefly breaks its bottles. Blood, John, is thicker and more fiery than wine. Ours long ago flowed from your heart, and it has never failed to be stirred when your periods of change and agitation have arrived. It was not by accident that our fathers named their bleak home on these shores New England. When your people were sending King James the Second adrift to sea, the happy tidings thereof found our ancestors at Boston doing precisely the same for that monarch's sub-king in New England. The stamp of Cromwell's foot, when he cried, "Take away that

bauble!" was echoed along our coasts; and when Charles came back, and gave Whitehall its ghastly coronet of skulls, there were few in this land who did not hear above the ocean's roar the groan of Bunyan in his prison, and of Milton in his hiding-place. Then we took to growing our own wine, and, somehow, it has been imported by your people, and ever since you have been visibly affected by our flowering season. Nature makes very little of our lands and seas. The earthquake at Lisbon toppled down a hundred chimneys in our Boston. The revolution of America for independence shook down a throne and an aristocracy in France, and it formed a democratic party in England which has been slowly and steadily revolutionising your society and government from that day to this. We may as well face the facts, John: we are one and the same people; twenty millions of us have English blood in our veins; our history is English history. We never more plainly showed ourselves chips of the old block than when we rebelled against the old block. And, on the other hand, we cannot fail to perceive that, under whatever disguises your internal troubles come, each, when unmasked, is sure to turn out American. Trades'-Unionism, Beales-ism, Fenianism—they are all, best and worst, Americans. Abu Taleb wrote:

“He who has one enemy shall meet him everywhere.”

You feel, and I know, that every step of the English people away from feudal forms is the later *Mayflower*

struggling through storms to its New England. The voices of the Robinsons and Standishes in your Parliament are unmistakable; their Plymouth Rock is ahead. And, in the converse, your instinct is equally clear as to your feudal friends in this country. Old England was planted here, in the South, alongside of New England in the North; it battled stoutly for two hundred and fifty years, until, in its final struggle—notwithstanding your instinctive sympathy and aid—it perished. We understood your sympathy well enough. There are a dozen chapters of our history through which the story of the *Alabama* runs. No one man or generation is to blame for this antagonism. We are in the hands of fate, which has its own remorseless methods of providing that the New World shall not be a mere duplicate of the Old. “Perhaps,” said our chief philosopher, on his return from England—“perhaps the ocean serves as a galvanic battery to distribute acids at one pole and alkalis at the other. So England tends to accumulate her Liberals in America, and her Conservatives at London.” All this involves the repulsion of positive and negative; but it should mean only the awakening of certain talents that have slept in our English race, which is a magazine of the powers of many races. And, in fact, John, whilst in our workshops and telegraphs we make a good thing out of action and reaction, positive and negative, I fear that, politically, the new year finds us both, not the masters, but the fools of fate. I have heard Mr. Seward and Lord

Lyons speak to each other across a dinner-table in a humanlike way ; but in the *Alabama* correspondence there is snarling and the show of teeth. Eighteen hundred and sixty-eight finds us with a great cable binding us together for good ends by means of positive and negative poles ; but when I read our Blue-Books, I have to turn and see if they were not printed a hundred years ago, when we were getting ready to fight. Are we never to reach a new year which shall ring out those sad years of the seventeenth century, when the farms of our poor settlers were given away to English noblemen ; when the English Church pursued over the ocean and tried to crush the religion it had banished ; when the Charters of American Colonies were taken away ; when all that our fathers could wring from the rock on which they had settled was taxed to carry on wars and sustain projects which they detested ?

The appearance of your greatest novelist on our shores at present reminds us that, above our feudal, or monarchical, or democratic forms of society and government, there is a great commonwealth of thought which owns loyal citizens in every civilised land. Fortunately for us both, we are a reading people ; and, fortunately for all but your authors, we Americans have appropriate your library to an extent that will, I trust, cause astonishment and contrition in our coming generation. We have crammed ourselves and our children with Mill, Spencer, Grote, and Arnold ; Thackeray, Dickens, and George Eliot and Hughes have woven your country

seats and your city dens into romance for us ; Tennyson has for some time filled up the poets' corners of all our papers ; our babies lisp Carlylese ; the other day I found our soldiers, by their camp-fire on the Mississippi, gathered around a fellow who was reciting to them, with appropriate gesture, "How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix," as related by Robert Browning. You produced these fine spirits ; we welcome and love them. With this friendly cloud of witnesses around, let us sit down, this New Year's Day, and look over our unsettled accounts. The common heart and brain of our respective countries shall be our court of arbitration.

And, first of all, John, let me say that I have, after much severe experience, discovered that an ounce balances an ounce. The assertion may seem to you paradoxical, but I am quite serious in making it. Lately, I read in one of your weekly journals the question, "Why is it that with America France may steal a horse, where England must not look over the hedge?" The question is most pregnant, and is answerable thus : France's theft comes at the end of two and a half centuries of benefits ; England's look comes at the end of two and a half centuries of unfriendliness. The usurper in Mexico had behind him the help rendered by the French in Canada to the pinched and freezing pilgrims of Plymouth, the free-trade between Nouvelle France and Boston, the sword of Lafayette, the earliest recognition of American independence.

This was the accumulated capital in the American heart which he had to trade upon. England did not earlier recognise, nor her rulers more sympathise with, those who lately tried to destroy the United States; she did not do anything half so offensive to the American people as he who tried to establish the throne of a Hapsburg in Mexico; but what she said and did was added to a column of historical oppressions, unbalanced by any entries of generosity. Do not turn red and deny this, John; it is true. There are, indeed, long neutral years in which you did us no wrong; you had no occasion in them to do us any wrong; but neither all this while has it occurred to you that there is a balance against you among us. The traditional policy of England toward America required to be distinctly reversed. I know how your living generation speaks of these old days—how it repudiates the persecutions which, having driven the Pilgrims from England's side, still pursued them, which robbed them of manufactures and stifled them with Navigation Acts, and the hard days of taxation which ended in the revolution; and how it protests against having these sins of their fathers visited upon the Englishmen of to-day. But you cannot cancel your national debt, John, because it was contracted by your dead ancestors. I observe that your present family is comfortable and satisfied. I looked in on your Pan-Anglicans the other day, and was impressed by the unctuous way in which your rotund Bishops, addressing Heaven, said, "We have



done those things that we ought to have done, and have left undone those things that we ought to have left undone, and are in a thoroughly sound condition." I was not trained in "the Church," and may not quote the words exactly, but am quite sure that I give their tone and spirit correctly. And I must say that I can trace the same comfortable assurance in the way your people have of throwing off their consciences the wrongs they have inherited, while lifting no finger for their removal. A generation adopts every wrong it inherits, and does not its best to redress. But if this is so, what shall be said of a generation that steadily follows instead of reversing the bad precedents of the past? It was not you, the contemporaneous John, who stoned the Puritans, taxed our colonies, imprisoned our sailors at Dartmoor, and burned our capitol; but in taunting the defenders of our Union, and helping those who were seeking to establish a vast Slave-empire on the ruins of our Republic, did you not prove yourself the legitimate child of those who stoned our ancestors? The present cannot escape being interpreted in the light of the past. Your people of the lower orders sympathised with us in our dark hour—that is to say, the unemigrated America in Europe sympathised with its pioneer wing on this side of the Atlantic. And no wonder, for our defeat would have moved back the shadow on their dial many, many years. But their interest in us is the other side of your instinctive dislike of us and oppression of them.

The fact is, John, the more we scrutinise your part in our recent struggle the darker it appears. When the rebellion broke out, you said you were with us, and we believed it; we were grappling Slavery under the watchwords of your own great emancipators—men whom you bitterly persecuted, it is true, while they were alive, but whose sons you have made baronets. At last, we said, the Anglo-Saxon heart is one; progressive America and Conservative England will be hereafter right and left hands, working harmoniously for great human ends. A mere accident was the spear-touch that revealed the hypocrisy of your sympathy. An American officer seized two Confederate envoys on one of your ships; instantly all England (rather imperiously) demanded their restoration, and they were restored; but under cover of the popular unanimity against that act, your old and real hatred of America grasped the sceptre again, and, in the face of former declarations, maintained and wielded it to the end with an enthusiasm, beside which your early Federal sympathy was ice. The newspapers with their ante-Trent and post-Trent articles are no doubt on file at the British Museum; you will find them instructive reading. The former are stammering, the latter easy and eloquent.

Thus, then, after eight generations, for each of which your government had left some scar upon mine, the ninth began with a kiss and a stab. You were defeated, John; the Southern Confederacy was not more severely defeated in our civil war than you were; and I do

believe that you are sorry you were found on the losing side. But it is the honest way to let you know the full extent of the dangers that have been brought upon us both by the course you then took. If you could not free yourself from eight generations of antipathy to a Republic which your persecutions established and made strong, neither can we escape from the accumulated illustrations of the spirit of feudal society etched in the shadow of every chapter of our history, and every institution of our country. *Quisque suos patimur manes*. You have managed to make England the dark background of our Forefathers' Days, our Thanksgiving Days, our Independence Days; and every child is inevitably trained to associate his holidays with, and fire his crackers at, English oppression. (Ah, had you given us the right to say: "Child, that was the England of the far past: the England of to-day does not tax Dissenters, nor burthen its colonies (witness Jamaica), for the advantage of a class; it sees how both parties won in our Revolution, and rejoices in American Independence, not simply endures it, much less welcomes its dangers!")

Consider the ingenuity by which the freest first-class power of the Old World has become to the United States the agent of all the annoyance that despotism can inflict upon liberty! It is only about seventy-five years since people were suffering in English prisons for selling works which rehearsed the A B C of the United States Government, and their author—poor Tom Paine—fled from a State trial to France and to

America. So into our diary it goes: In England assertion of the "Rights of Man" = imprisonment or exile. Ben Franklin, welcomed in France, is snubbed in England. Thomas Jefferson is slighted at Court. These men gave Washington City its traditions, and the Honourable Messrs. Chandler, Robinson, and others are at this day, in their speeches against England, quite unconsciously, avenging slights put by George III. upon the representatives of a government he had been forced to treat with, but never forgave.

Lately I was reading with peculiar interest, in Howell's State Trials, an account of the proceedings against Henry Redgrave Yorke, James Montgomery, and Joseph Gales, for some alleged seditious proceedings and speeches at Sheffield, toward the close of the last century. This Mr. Joseph Gales, a man of great ability, fled with his wife and child (seven years of age) to Hamburg, and thence to America, and so escaped the term in York Castle awarded to "Citizen Yorke," to Montgomery "the Christian poet," and others. He (Gales) was nearly penniless when he arrived at Philadelphia, where the Congress of the United States then sat. But he was soon editing the leading newspaper of the city, a paper which afterwards migrated with Congress to Washington. There it became the chief journal in America, and was, as the *National Intelligencer*, for over forty years edited by the son who had fled from England with his parents. The same refugee established a newspaper in North Carolina. American

journalism was at its beginning more influenced by these men, father and son, hunted out of Hallamshire, than by all others. What is that influence, so far as it affected American feeling toward England, likely to have been? When you burned our capitol in 1812, one other house you thought worth burning, and did burn—the office of Mr. Gales.

I tell you, John, there remain in our cities old men who witnessed some of the events that have left skeletons in your closets; men who have seen the insides of your prisons; who saw that recruiting officer plunge with his horse among men, women, and children at Castle Hill, Sheffield, cutting them down with his sword; still more who heard those shrieks at Peterloo which have never died out of the air. These men may be poor and vulgar; but they are strong-headed men, who have tongues touched with some of that flame which shot out on your walls in the songs of the Corn Law Rhymer. Thus you have been ever careful to keep our ancient memories green. Many *Mayflower* ships, with fleeing pilgrims aboard, have followed the track of the first; and we all know that, when your troops were driven hence, it was still against America they were let loose, whether in France or England. There were not wanting those among us who maintained that a certain class in England was quite ready to treat our people as rebellious subjects, if they got a chance; that the spirit was willing, though the arm was weak. Well, a kind of opportunity came; and is it wonderful

that the blood of '76 stirred in our veins when we saw the *Alabama* sailing from an English port by acknowledged connivance of English officials, with the boast of its owner in Parliament, and, despite the affected deprecations of ministers, entertained by your representatives in every English port of the world, and cheered on her voyage of destruction?

A pound will only be balanced by a pound, John; and—think me not transcendental—the rule holds when it comes to tons.

The *Alabama* was no common ship. There was a soul in it, breathed out of two and a half centuries. Its hull sank to the bottom, but its ghost still sails the seas, and I fear will haunt them for some time yet. It is this “Flying Englishman” that is now the spectre-ship. At this particular moment it has the Fenian flag nailed to its mast.

We both know, John, that if you had not longed for the overthrow of this Republic, the *Alabama* would never have sailed from Liverpool; and, in our hearts, we both know that if the *Alabama* had not sailed Fenianism would never have been permitted to plot against you openly in our cities. “Its proper power to hurt each creature feels.” You showed a marvellous alacrity in discovering our vulnerable point, and we would not be your genuine scion if we had not discovered yours. It is surprising how much of this kind of thing can be done within the precincts of municipal law—how much war can be waged with the weapons of peace!

It so happens that there is but one nation on earth

that can suppress Fenianism; and that nation is not yours, John!

Do not throw down my letter at this point; I have good reason to know your feelings on this matter, and hasten to declare at once that I am no Fenian. If there is anything that runs dead against the average native American's faith about his own country, it is the whole Fenian theory. What America means to say to the whole world is—"Your free Germany, your liberated Ireland, your Tae-ping China, are here; all your utopias are provided for HERE!" The mere fact that the Fenians are making a tremendous ado about a bit of Old World land, not by a tenth so big or fruitful as the lands we are offering them for nothing out West, is enough to settle the matter with our lower classes. But we all have an inborn contempt for people who foster interests and enthusiasms of clan or race, separate from the aggregate of us, or who think it nobler to be Irish than to be American, that is, of the fraternity of races. The other day a wealthy citizen of New York, being applied to for a subscription to help some Fenian expedition to Ireland, took down his check-book and said to the deputation, "I will give you one thousand dollars, provided no Fenian that goes shall ever come back again!" I assure you he spoke our average sentiment. With all our combing and washing we have never been able to make a decent American of the Irishman. On our most important questions he seems to be utterly without principle, and votes with this or that party, according to its declarations about

the internal politics of Great Britain! Fancy our Germans testing us with Bismark or the mysterious hyphen between Sleswick and Holstein! The worst of it is that the Irish are so numerous that they are able to bribe parties and demoralise our national politics.

There is something in all this, no doubt, more unpleasant to you than if I should say we sympathised with Fenianism and its objects; you detect that the part we have in this ugly business—the part of a masterly limitation of ourselves to the letter of our restrictive laws—is one of simple unfriendliness to your Government. It is even so. Were there a conspiracy here to crush Garibaldi, we should certainly prevent it. There is no feeling in America which can be depended upon to sustain any officer who should go one hair's-breadth beyond the law-line, or who should be very officious even there, for the sake of England.

That is a sentence I have written with heaviness of spirit, John! I pause upon it. And let it stand. Between us be truth! We like your people personally: we admire and try to imitate your beautiful homes: we worship your poets, scholars, thinkers. But your Government seems to us a great apotheosis of Jesuitism, a hard systematised selfishness, and we hate it. The utter abolition of the English Constitution from the face of the earth would not evoke a sigh from a hundred of our people; whilst tens of thousands would weep at the death of certain of your poets and thinkers. No one of us believes that anything but powerfully organised



selfishness would give greater privilege and power to a titled idiot than to an untitled Carlyle. None among us imagine that it is anything but that ineradicable virus of Jesuitism, with which Europe has been fatally inoculated, that taxes a man for a religion he abjures, or admits a chimpanzee to the highest scholastic advantages, can he chatter the Thirty-Nine Articles, whilst excluding Martineaus and Mills. We inherit your great history, and are proud of it; but all of its bright epochs are to us those in which your Government was defeated by some small untiring band of reformers. With what groans you abolished slavery! How you consoled the master with money, without thought of the helpless negro! And when opportunity offers, how eagerly do you take to the old sport of negro-hunting you were forced to give up! No, John, we never think of your Government as doing a noble or humane thing except under the compulsion of fear. We see you just now preparing to do something for Ireland, and we understand it. It is the old story. "Because this widow troubleth me."

Nevertheless, little as we love your Government, it might, but for our late quarrel, have depended upon a determined defence of its rights of national amity in this country. Were France, or Switzerland, or Italy, or Prussia, the object of a conspiracy in the United States, our laws would harden into adamant before the conspirators. The whole theory of foreign politics with America is summed up in "Non-

intervention" and the "Monroe Doctrine," which are obverse and reverse of the same determination to avoid all complications with the Old World, and to prevent the repetition of its *régime* and its balance-of-power struggles in the New World. So we have always been kindled against any attempt to organise here movements against foreign countries, even when advocated by the eloquence of Kossuth, and at this very moment Mazzini and Garibaldi are appealing to our strongest sympathies in vain, so far as any material aid beyond private contributions of money is concerned. I do not contend that this vehement antipathy to all intervention in foreign affairs is right; but it exists, and Fenianism is the only case in which it has not animated the law. Fenianism passed eastward through rents in our fence made by the prow of the *Alabama* when sailing westward. (How would those laws of yours have bristled along the Mersey had the *Alabama* been starting out to destroy Belgian or Danish commerce!)

While I am no Fenian, John, and while there is no comeliness in Paddy that I should desire him, I do not wish to vindicate myself from a suspicion of pity for him. I feel a dull pain as I see him carted out West to be manure for my seeds of civilisation, or as often as I drive my coach over roads paved with his brains. (I understand that you are drawing a metaphysical distinction between Paddy and the Fenian; but you will get nothing by that—there is a potential Fenian in every Irish man and Irish woman.) I have before me

at this moment the last cartoon of the Fenian in *Punch*: it represents a huge monster of an Irishman astride a barrel of gunpowder, to which he has applied a fusee, whilst prattling children play around him, and a mother nurses her babe behind him. I recognise the portrait; it is the same ugly foreheadless fellow who has repeatedly burnt the homes of poor negroes in our large cities, slaying some and driving others into the streets. He once dragged my foremost reformer through the streets of Boston with a rope around his neck, and hurled a huge stone at the head of my finest orator, which would have killed had it struck him. His shillelagh has here succeeded the tomahawk. Yes, I recognise this Fenian on his barrel; but when the cartoon arrived in America there was just behind him the figure of a man with round, full paunch and heavy watch-seals, erecting a gallows, and of this latter the Fenian was plainly the shadow! Who was it, John, that, through long ages, pressed down that forehead and weighted that brutal jaw? Who was it that shotted those eyes with blood, and sank those gaunt, hungry cheeks? You see no alternative but hanging your Manchester and Clerkenwell prisoners; yet is it not sad that you have assiduously reared children with one hand for whom you must now rear a gallows with the other? I will not dwell on the ancient cruelty of British rule in Ireland, or the law that men treated like savages have a tendency to become such in reality; I am more likely to be understood when I remind you that your

course has not been business-like. Your country is now swarming with special constables; you have had to refit your old castles and replenish your armaments, as if suddenly relapsed into feudal ages; any Yankee would have been 'cute enough to show you how the money these things cost you might have been better invested. With it and your church endowments in Ireland you might even have transplanted Ireland, might have given to every poor family a free transit across the ocean, a snug farm on their arrival upon your unutilised lands in Canada, planting in each a kindly feeling toward England, in place of hate. The swallows, it is said, shove their young out of the nest to die when there are no flies with which to feed them; but men and women are of more value, John, than many swallows; and the swallow-plan is hardly a good model for English statesmanship. Your nest is small—especially considering the room demanded by your aristocracy—and there are more swallows than flies; but your fledglings are of a kind that will not die quietly, and, unprovided with another nest, propose, at Cork, Sheffield, and elsewhere, to fight you for yours. They will not get it for a century or so yet, I think; but it will be many a long year before you and Mrs. Bull will be able to rest quietly in your well-lined nest with these exasperated, hungry home-exiles fluttering and screaming around you. For I do not think so hardly of you as to suppose that you can find any deep repose under these circumstances. I have not failed to observe the crumbs you have occasionally

thrown out for the starvelings. But it evidently never occurs to them that your gifts have higher motives than your own desire for quiet and comfort; and the clamorous demands have increased with their successes. And, alas!—I cannot help reverting with pain to what might have been—the only hand that could have supplemented yours and satisfied them you have estranged!

Nevertheless, to that estranged hand some millions of them have appealed; and—despite your taxation in one age and *Alabama* depredations in another—that hand has been full enough to feed them, occasionally, on both sides of the ocean. Having fed, it might have soothed them, had you not paralysed it. As it is, all the strength they have gained here has been converted into animosity toward you; and this, by slow accumulation, has gathered to the dark and angry cloud which your New Year's sun of 1868 tries vainly to surmount.

You can hardly be in earnest in hoping that such stupid blunders as that Clerkenwell explosion can have any material effect in putting an end to Fenianism. It will no more perish from such stigmas than the British Government from the firing of Sepoys from mortars, the burning of Kagosima, the butchery of negroes in Jamaica. Nay, the immediate danger to your and my relations in the future arises from that crime which for the time is a blunder. For you are now plainly seized with fear, and fear is cruel. Your retaliation promises to be not only severe, but blind; and such retaliation will be followed by retaliation; for the

men you fight with will, if you try to hide your own cruelties under it, see at Clerkenwell only a more swift and concentrated specimen of disasters chronic in their own country: for every dying child or woman at Clerkenwell they will recall one, or perhaps more, at home. But when their retaliation becomes as furious as it is likely to be—striking high—you may recur under some form or other to your old weapon, MARTIAL LAW.

Now, it is just here, John, that it becomes my duty to warn you that there is danger ahead. It is hardly possible that you can take that weapon down without using it upon Americans; and it is utterly impossible that it can, however disguised, be used upon Americans without firing the train which, in the way I have shown, has been ingeniously laid between your Capitol and mine.

The indignant appeals of Irish-American criminals to the United States for protection as American citizens, recently uttered in your court-rooms, reached our shores at a peculiar political juncture. The old Democratic party, long excluded from power, had just seen the tide turn in its favour at local elections, and was gathering its forces for the great national campaigns of 1868. But it was in want of a new "platform," and a taking party cry. For many reasons its former watchword—"States' Rights"—is not yet a safe one; on the question of Protection parties are divided and confused; but what better could there be than the cry coming from English prisons—"Protection to

American citizens"? It was at once caught up, and the Democrats called a great meeting in New York to proclaim it through the land. But the Republicans were too shrewd not to see that a monopoly of such a telling cry must not be permitted to its opponents; and so when the great meeting was held the leaders of both parties were present—Horace Greeley sat beside Fernando Wood—and then ensued a grand competition in enthusiasm for the new watchword. Similar meetings, marked by the same unanimity and enthusiasm of all parties, followed in the largest cities of the Union. When Congress assembled, it at once resolved itself into a similar meeting, and no sooner had the theme been started by the Democratic Mr. Robinson, of New York, than he was distanced by the fulminations of the Republican Mr. Judd, from the West. In short, at this moment it seems probable that we are about to enter on a presidential campaign, wherein the contest shall be which party shall get hoarsest with shouting: A TRUCE FOR DOMESTIC STRIFES, AND PROTECTION TO AMERICANS EVERYWHERE, OR FIGHT!

Now it were a serious error, John, to regard this as one of the many bubbles that appear and disappear on the surface of American politics. It is because of a wide and deep popular feeling on this subject that these politicians and parties are competing for the representation of it. It is not a new subject between us; and, since our struggle of 1812, our position on it has been becoming what it is now—compulsory. When

the Fenian prisoners called to us for protection, there were two reasons why we could not take up their cause; first, because formally they were criminals; second, because our code of citizenship is the same with yours. As a "nation," originally meant those born (*nati*) in a country, we in America, inheriting the ideas and laws of citizenship corresponding to that principle, were satisfied with maintaining so much. But the great tide of emigration, which has within this half-century trebled the population and the power of the United States, has deposited here a new kind of nationality altogether. When the laws and principles of alienation are to be decided by a nation of the alienated, the result may be anticipated. One-third of the American people are patriotic expatriates. The other thirds are the descendents of those who were. The doctrine of once a citizen always a citizen is one that is for us excluded by a more unalterable constitution than any that can be contained in precedents or written on paper. There are sufficient reasons why only now we have discovered that the right of a man to be protected in the transfer of his allegiance is to us a vital one. The first thought of the immigrant was to accumulate some money, and get the habit and feeling of an independent man; but having now accomplished that, it seems that his next thought is to try and visit his old home and early friends, and to enjoy some of the pleasures which he remembers keenly, because they were longed for, but never reached. The German yearns to visit his



Fatherland, and the Irishman dreams of walking, in proud independence, the streets that once knew him only as a pauper. That these on their several wanderings should be liable to interference, to conscription, and the like, the United States, of course, cannot permit. A century ago you, John, were struggling with Spain for the free right and security of an English ship in any and all waters, even those solemnly donated by the Pope to other powers. You did not recognise any confirmation by the Universe of such donations. The inducements of the naturalised, and the disposition of the native, American to roam through other lands, make each to his country somewhat the same as her ship was to England in those days. But I need hardly quote the past; a nation which has an army defending the immunity of Englishmen from wrong amid the perils of Abyssinian deserts, will not require much apology for the hereditary sensitiveness of Americans on a similar point; nor is there need that either of us shall be blinded to the true nature of the flame newly kindled in this country by the partisan smoke mingled with it.

When we first began to look into this matter, two or three years ago, we saw at once that there were but two foreign nations with whom it could bring us into any serious collision—England and Germany. No other countries had a sufficient number of their former subjects naturalised in America, to induce them to take any determined stand on the letter of the common law

of nations in this matter. About two years ago some American-Germans were claimed whilst visiting Prussia for the ordinary military service, due from the subjects of that power; but they were released after a careful consultation between our governments, and the question has been probably postponed between us. Count Bismark saw that our position was a necessary one, and that all Prussia could gain by pressing us to defend it was thirty millions of enemies, for which a half dozen impressed and reluctant soldiers would be but a poor compensation.

The question, then, for the moment, practically remains open only between England and America. We have always demanded of every citizen naturalised in this country a solemn abjuration of his allegiance to all other countries; and that we shall now proclaim our intention of protecting such in all countries from any claims arising out of former allegiance is absolutely certain. In ordinary times, and as affecting ordinary questions, I should have no apprehension of any important disagreement between us about a modification which America is forced to demand in laws made before its discovery. Your own Canning showed us the necessity of our "Monroe doctrine," and our new movement does but contemplate an environment of every individual American with a Monroe doctrine. Your common sense will suggest that laws good for the times that produced them may be as useless as ruined castles for other times. In ancient times the right of alienation

would have been paramount to the right of desertion. But now, whilst emigration is as useful to your overcrowded islands as immigration to our untilled lands, you must see that the feudal law can never bring you a shilling, a subject, or a soldier whom you would not be safer and stronger without. What a farce were it, for example, to hold as British subjects, for any national purpose or trust whatever, your Fenian visitors, whom you would rejoice to know were all in Walrussia! And behind these particular aspects of the question lies the general fact, that the principle of inalienable citizenship is referable to a period of European history when no such ideas of personal independence as now prevail existed; when also steam and exploration had not yet distributed through the world those great centres of commerce and civilisation, whose amity is secured by their equality, and which really form a commonwealth transcending national divisions.

All this, I say, might ordinarily, notwithstanding certain difficulties of detail, be trusted to reach a natural adjustment before the tribunal of our common reason. But it may happen, I fear, John, that the very occasion for our strenuous determination to affirm the new principle at this moment will constitute the obstacle to your complete concession of it. For that principle would not suffer us to stand aloof and see American citizens punished under any kind of martial law. If they were punished, it would have to be under laws and formulas common (substantially) to England and America, and

to all civilised countries. I fear we could not appreciate your emergencies, nor agree, in our present mood, to the necessity of extra-judicial trials for wandering Americans. You could not, you will remember, see the justice of our taking from the *Trent* envoys journeying for the avowed object of destroying the American Union. The excitement produced here, even by the arrest of that charlatan Train—whom you have made the happiest man in your dominions—justifies a fear that these insurrectionists may succeed, after years of effort in that direction, in dragging us into some kind of collision.

But be assured of this, John : if the Devil is to have another triumph of that kind on this planet, it will not be more than incidentally due to Fenianism, nor to any real difference between us on the question of citizenship; nor will it be due to the *Alabama* depredations in themselves; it will be beneath all ascribable to a general feeling in America that you hate us—constitutionally, instinctively, bitterly hate us—and to a suspicion, that will then have ripened to conviction, that the peaceful development of our Republic is incompatible with your continued naval and commercial supremacy. We are made up here of all the races of the world, and in such questions are very apt to identify our commonwealth with that of humanity; and there is a question arising whether, on the whole, England is using her supremacy and power for the welfare of mankind, or the reverse.

Is it true, John? Are you really our natural

enemy? It were dreadful if our conceit and your pride should trick us into thinking we are mortal enemies, if at bottom we are allies or even friends. We cannot get out of our ears those ringing shouts with which your Parliament greeted every disaster to the army of the Union; nor the sneers about the North fighting for Empire, and the founding of a great nation—coming as they did from your “Liberal” leaders. They think differently now; yes, the mouse having disappeared, the cat is woman again; but we cannot forget what was revealed in those terrible moments, and no one of those men will ever again be looked upon as other than a foe of the United States so long as they are too meanly proud, too cowardly before party taunts, to confess the wrong, despite the wounds it has inflicted, or the evils to which it may lead.

On the other hand, the news has come to us that your Parliament, at the end of its said hilarities, has, at your suggestion, committed *hari-kari* before you. It has under compulsion decided that it is a body which has shown itself unrepresentative of you, and is now passing out of existence. The direction from which the new Parliament is coming seems for us to be signified by the proposal of a Tory minister to concede us that arbitration which a Liberal minister had denied. If this is done in the dry leaf, what will be done in the green? I am already becoming suspicious of my first hasty conclusions about your natural enmity to us, John! There must be a great, friendly, and just

people where such men as your Mill, Bright, Hughes, Forster, Taylor, Stansfeld, Fawcett are produced, and that sturdy crop of Radicals, Frederic Harrison, Goldwin Smith, Beasley, Morley, and the rest, whose rising glow is visible across the ocean. There is a cry from Chelsea, too—a cry sharp with the summed-up sorrows of all your brakesmen, from Strafford to Robert Lowe—suggestive of something else than the “republican bubble” bursting. I see, too, that instead of getting slower, as you get older, you are gathering momentum. It was but yesterday, when the life of a nation is considered, that the gentle officers of the first gentleman in Europe charged upon that crowd of men, women, and children, in St. Peter’s-field, at Manchester, with the cry “Strike down their banners!” and struck them down with their mottoes which demanded “Extension of franchise,” “Abolition of Corn Laws,” and the like: now I see nearly every one of those banners, risen from their baptism of blood, floating in triumph on the old walls of Westminster!

After due reflection, John, I mean to wait. I know well, that in the end we are to be firm friends or warring enemies; and remembering that one of your philosophers says that hatred is inverted love, and another that the unforeseen always comes to pass, I mean to wait.

So I mean; but I must candidly say that I have still fears that my intent may be thwarted. That Fenian sword, whetted on your stony past, is in the hand of

a madman, and he cares little whether it is wielded against feudal or democratic England. Our politics are threatened here just now with another equinoctial storm, wherein the balances of the elements may be held by the race whose hatred of you has become their one motive of existence. And my helm of State is in the hand of a trickster who has taken a fancy that the phantom cruiser shall still be kept afloat. While the majority of us mean peace, there is a strong and subtle party here that means war.

Do you with me recoil from that poisoned weapon, and from all imaginable laurels to be won by it? Then hold your pride in abeyance for a little; ascribe my frankness to something better than Yankee insolence. Own for a moment that there may be something more important than "understanding the feelings of Englishmen" even; and give heed to counsel which is offered in the sacred interest of Peace.

First of all, John, checkmate my ingenious Secretary at Washington by paying the *Alabama* claims. I will not urge that you can do it without perceiving that the amount has gone out of your heavy purse; I will not hint that it will cost you more to let the bill run on gathering political interest. But it is of importance to maintain, as I do, that you can do it without servility or loss of dignity. The Minister under whom that infernal ship got out has declared in Parliament that its escape is a reproach and scandal to British law, and was effected through the treachery of British officials. That is

ground enough on which to pay for its devastations. Cash payment may commit you less than arbitration. You can still hold your own views about the technicalities of the matter; you have a perfect right to say that you do it in the interest of peace; you are strong enough and rich enough to be beyond the suspicion of having any dishonourable motive; there is nothing mean in saying, "I think I am right, but, at any rate, I will be rid of a bore!" This seems to me the wise plan, John; but if your chrysalid Government is not up to doing in the large way what is so likely to be done in some way, large or small, I do not see that it would be a humiliation to you to agree even to that stupid demand of Mr. Seward that the recognition of the Confederacy as a belligerent should also be submitted to arbitration. "That is," you said, "inadmissible;" but why? You had good reasons for such recognition; in it you were simultaneous with France, and a little later than President Lincoln. You could not have lost on such a question, and you would have given Mr. Seward a severer fall than he has yet had — he, more than all men living, being responsible for the early and repeated recognition by this Government of the belligerency of the South. You cannot, you may say, admit the principle of submitting to foreign judgment the internal policy and political course of Great Britain. But you have admitted that principle in offering to submit the *Alabama* claims at all; they involve the adequacy of your municipal laws and the policy of your public servants. Still, I think your safest and most



honourable course is to pay the money, and reserve your position in your own terms. My fine Secretary would certainly try to dodge this also; but the American people are not fools nor heartless, John; and the day when you pay or offer that money without external compulsion will lay something stronger than a cable between your shores and mine!

From that day the other side looms into view. You cease to be in debt to us; and if we owe any debt to you, that must begin to press. Let the beam lie level between us once more, and at least the hand that seeks to disturb it will bear its own responsibility. And if the base shall attribute base motives, will it not be compensation enough that you have drawn around you, for all emergencies, the undivided sympathy of your own people? Your working men, and their friends in Parliament, have decided against your rulers in this matter, John, and reduced you to petition for the arbitration you denied. What can you gain by allowing tricksters to trade on this thing? Will men say you act from fear? There is nothing dishonourable in fearing a calamity to mankind; still less in fearing to bear the responsibility of causing one. Your history and security enable your people to despise a charge of cowardice; that, at least, America can never make.

The next thing, John, for you to do is to search your Irish trouble to the bottom, and to do it at once. Those executions at Manchester show, I fear, that you are very far off the right track. The men ought to have been set to break stones in the streets. The fear

of death preponderates with all human beings—Irishmen excepted: to the average Fenian mind your gallows in Manchester did but suddenly carry three poor men from their Curraghs to Paradise—did but transform three obscure men into Emmets, into martyrs and heroes. Have you heard of John Brown? He made an armed attack on slavery a few years ago; he and those of his comrades who had not perished in the attack were executed; but we now know that what his raid could not effect, his execution did much toward—the abolition of slavery. It never pays to execute on the gallows men who have not in them the malignity and selfish passions for which the gallows was reared. Your Manchester victims were not of the stuff of murderers. You committed a blunder in hanging them that might have proved more serious had it not been for the offset given by the Fenians at Clerkenwell. You will be wise now to present your Manchester gallows to the British Museum, and turn your energies to secure the fair thing for Ireland. If your existence as a first-class Power is necessary, your retention of Ireland is necessary. But the retention of Ireland as a chronic insurrection no retention at all. There is a story of a man who went about all his life with a serpent inside of him; when it was hungry he must feed it, or it would start into his throat and threaten to suffocate him, as it did, I believe, at last. The world sees you, John, as the man with a snake in his bosom; it sees that your legislation for Ireland for many years has been food

given for your own exigency, which has only strengthened the snake. It has grown at length to be Fenianism, and your question now is, Cannot the fearful thing be disorged? I do not hope for you that it will be an easy matter, for it is plain to me that the grievances of Ireland are profoundly involved in your entire governmental system. The principle of the Irish Church and of the English Church is the same, only the prevalence of Roman Catholicism in Ireland makes it there a heavier burden and insult, because a Protestant Church is as odious to them as an Atheistic Society would be to English Dissenters. What would your English Methodists and Presbyterians say if they were made to support a National Comtist Establishment? The Catholic believes your Church as soul-destroying as Atheism; it is, to him, a lie planted on the ruins of Truth. Similarly, your British land laws and privileged class happen to bear more heavily on agricultural Ireland than on manufacturing and shopkeeping England; but it is all one system, and it bears heavily on the working people everywhere. It is only a question of time, of the increase of population, when your English people will cut up your estates and parks, and compel your lands to support men and women instead of rabbits and pheasants.

So, I fear that, having taken hold of this Irish trouble, and found how profoundly it is entangled with institutions resting on social superstitions—how inevitably the English Church must follow the Irish Church, and the English land monopoly that of Ireland—you will betake yourself to your old habit of ad-

ministering opiates. The Irish difficulty, if thoroughly traced, must lead you to the very heart of your heritage of wrong. Are you, after your Christian centuries, equal to losing your life that you may find it? At any rate, John, disgorge that Irish viper, whatever may have to be disgorged with it.

Your endowments? Throw them into the sea—anything—rather than let them longer send this stench through the world. Were Paul alive, he would surely find another Church to which he must say, “The name of God is blasphemed through you!” Here at least in America the Jesuit sharpens his most effectual arrows on that miserable wrong in Ireland. “You speak of the cruelties of the Church of Rome in the past; read in the history of the establishment in Ireland how Protestantism has improved upon Popes! Or would you illustrate Romish oppression of conscience? Compare it with the liberty which Protestant England allows the poor Catholics of Ireland—how much is their humiliation of to-day better than that which denied them citizenship in the past!” In both Ireland and America Romanism has at present no other bulwark so strong as your Irish Church, Protestantism no darker disgrace, and Christianity no deeper shame!

Away with that, John, and then let your living generation address itself to retrace the inglorious victories by which preceding generations have forced it into an attitude of despotism towards Ireland, whose natural sceptre is the gallows, whose kindest provision is the right of self-exile. All that through centuries you

sought and in the end happily failed to do with America, you have, by many disastrous successes, had the misfortune to accomplish in Ireland: down the fatal necessary grooves of injustice your conquest came, confiscating the lands, destroying the manufactures, making penal the worship of Ireland. The continuous effort to do exactly the same by Puritan New England trained America to be a nation. Ireland is not yet a nation; but whatever elements of nationality it has have been distilled from traditions of common sorrows and vainly resisted wrongs

Through sad six hundred years of hostile sway,  
From Strongbow fierce to cunning Castlereagh!

If these shall not at length crystallise into nationality it will not be your fault, unless indeed you discover that beating a child in order to make it love you, little likely as it is to secure the object aimed at, is apt—if the child have any fire in him—to quicken it to independent life.

There is enough land in Ireland to employ and feed all the Irish that remain to you, John; there are the sinews, there the soil; if you cannot in some way end their unnatural divorce, the gods themselves cannot save you! Your landlords? Make those men look you in the eye, John! Not one of them could trace his land-title, but he would find it was once a trust for his king and country, perverted by some self-seeker to the advantage of himself and family; not one *fee* or *feu*, but was originally a *fides*, or trust for the advantage of Great Britain; by no means for any absolute advantage of Lord Holdfast, who is now making of his trust a danger to the State, sowing in it dragons'

teeth, to spring up as armed enemies instead of the valiant retainers which it was given his ancestor to furnish! It has been for some time becoming apparent that your land-aristocracy are trying to outwit the laws of the universe. Let them try to shut up the sunlight in their mansions, and amid the darkness that ensues they may meditate on the fact that when humanity at large really requires their land it will be as impossible for any one man to maintain it for private ends as to appropriate the sun for his gaslight. If you will stand by old principles, John, let them be the oldest. No landlord is to be regarded as fulfilling the conditions of the deed whereby your Queen gives him land, who proposes to maintain an interest in it separate from, or antagonistic to, the general welfare of his country. He may not burn his house, nor turn it to a powder-mill, *ad libitum*; nor may he turn it, as many of the Irish landlords do, into a manufactory of explosive Fenians. If in times of danger the charters of liberty can be suspended, surely those of property may be also. Ah! could you enter upon your Irish task, asking only what is right for all—emancipated from your superstitions about class and about land, you could make of Ireland England's prairie-land, you could so establish prosperity there that whatever unassimilable Celtdom survived must betake itself (and by your aid would speedily betake itself) to these eupeptic regions which are able gradually to digest even Irishmen.

Fenianism, then, has two causes. One of these is the general weakness of your system, John, predisposing

you to the disease; the other, and incidental, cause is that the general unfriendliness to you in America has made us wink at its practical projects, that is, has caused us to deal with the conspiracy according to the letter, but not the spirit, of the law. In other words, America and Ireland, with very different aims, have to some extent made common cause about their grievances; about as much, we think, as you made with the Southern Confederacy. These two sources of the evil will grow by neglect, a recognised Fenian belligerency with its cruisers being not at all unimaginable. There are a great many mean and selfish men, John, in your country and mine, and our squabbles play into their vile hands sadly. But let England remember our long dreary past of wrong with which she is associated; let her attest her repudiation of that past by a deed reversing it, all the better if it be one beyond arbitrated justice, a deed of magnanimity; let her make of America an ally; then one brave session of Parliament can lay the axe to the root of the tree which poisons your air. Our national disgust at the whole theory of Fenianism; our hatred of intervention in Old-World quarrels; the indifference to clan-interests and race-antipathies which steadily grows into something sterner than indifference in a union of races; our impatience as a people with all fuss about purely visionary and impracticable schemes; the English history, speech, and literature we have inherited and still cherish; all these, veiled for the moment by the shadow you have thrown athwart our politics, would

resume their \*vigour. Nothing entirely unpopular can live in this country; and I know of no other thing which, in a normal condition of American feeling, has so many of the elements of unpopularity in it as Fenianism. I do not defend our coquetting with it; I wish we had been mature enough to repel such help; but we are very crude in many respects, John, and we have not had the best paternal examples of magnanimity to guide us. It takes us both a sadly long time to get the civility of our homes into our legislatures, our fleets, and our international dealings. Had it only been that Earl Russell's dog had bitten Mr. Adams's leg, what scented notes and inquiries had passed! If any one had stolen Sir Frederick Bruce's hat, Mr. Seward had deputed the American army, if need be, to find it! But it is a navy destroying our commerce; it is treason aiming at your life; so fang and claw are claiming their right to settle the question. Cannot our sixty or seventy millions manage together to show mankind that there may be rays of humanity carried into the dismal swamp of diplomacy? May we not startle the world by showing that, while the Pope is canonising the Chassepot Rifle, England and America can raise the Golden Rule to be International Law?

That the New Year may bring that sorrow for devils, and triumph for angels, is, John, the honest desire of

JONATHAN.

THE END.