

# NEW ENGLANDER

AND

## YALE REVIEW.

No. CXC.

---

JANUARY, 1886.

---

### ARTICLE I.—WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON: 1805–1879. *The Story of his Life told by his Children.* Volumes I. and II. 1805–1840. New York: The Century Co. 1885.

To one reading these two handsome and extraordinarily well constructed volumes with some independent knowledge of the history and the personality to which they relate, the question naturally occurs, What idea of the man and the times would be got from them by one who had no other source of information? It is a question not altogether easy to answer off-hand. Doubtless the idea would be somewhat confused at first; but being allowed to settle and clarify itself, after some canceling of contradictories and eliminating of impossibilities, it would come out somewhat in this shape:

Mr. Garrison was a man of meek, gentle and affectionate spirit, and wholly blameless character, who devoted himself at an early age, with absolute unselfishness, to universal philanthropy, and especially to the abolition of slavery. Beginning this work with a nearly unanimous public sentiment on his

side, he pushed it forward with such boldness, ability, tact and discretion, that by the end of fifteen years he had brought the public opinion of the nation, both South and North, into almost equally unanimous antagonism to himself. Particularly was this true of the Christian Church and ministry in America, who had shown him hearty sympathy at first; but many of whom, including men who are even yet held in the highest veneration and love, actually engaged in active opposition to slavery with the nefarious purpose of thereby sustaining that wicked institution; and when Mr. Garrison, in the simple fulfillment of his duty, rebuked such conduct, they abused him, the gentle Garrison, with vituperative language. This conspiracy of the entire Christian Church against him, simply for his superior righteousness, was only exceeded in wickedness by the abominable conduct of many of his nearest friends and benefactors and most self-sacrificing fellow-laborers, who had the hardihood to separate from his Society, and set up another society and newspaper which they called anti-slavery, but which the acumen of Mr. Garrison at once recognized as "the worst form of pro-slavery." Thus, deserted and betrayed by men whom for years he had extolled as among the noblest of the human race, he was publicly declared at last, by one of his few remaining adherents, to be "the only righteous in a world perverse."

In nothing was this good man's abhorrence of slavery more shiningly illustrated than in his rejection of any slavish bondage to his own consistency. At some periods in his career, he was a gradual abolitionist, a gradual emancipationist, a colonizationist, in favor of compensated emancipation, devoted to the Constitution of the United States, inculcating the exercise of citizenship, and maintaining a narrow and rigid Sabbatarianism. He had held these views in the simplicity and innocence of his heart; but such was the wild and swift degeneracy of the age and people, that after he laid them down, they were never afterward held by any body else, except with vile insincerity, by patent fallacy, with abominable motives, for atrocious ends.

His methods as a reformer were original almost to the point of paradox. He had two main objects: 1, Immediate emanci-

pation of slaves by their holders ; 2, immediate abolition of slavery by the repeal of the slave code. The first was sought by a style of address to the slaveholders that enraged every man of them against him and his views, to the utmost fury. The second was to be achieved by persuading all opponents of slavery into abdicating their rights and powers as citizens, and so committing the control of legislation exclusively to the upholders of that iniquitous system. But in the prosecution of this bold and energetic policy, the good Garrison was sadly hindered by the criminal folly of those who thought that one good way to oppose bad laws in a republic was to vote against them, and who thus committed themselves to "the worst and most dangerous form of pro-slavery."

But nothing in all this good man's career was so wonderful as his success. At last, by the power of his "sweet reasonableness," he so far won the people of the free States to sympathy with his abhorrence of the Constitution and Union of the United States and his sense of the sinfulness of voting, that they formed a great political party in which every principle characteristic of Mr. Garrison was repudiated, and fought out at the polls the old issue, that was old when Garrison was a baby. But his greatest triumph was when his peace and non-resistance principles had gained such a hold over the popular mind that at last a million of men stood in arms and entered into the bloodiest war of recent times for the maintenance of the Union and Constitution which Mr. Garrison detested—a war in which every death was held by him to be a wicked murder, and the incidental result of which was the abolition of slavery.

It was a fitting close to this triumphant career, that when he had accomplished his great work, he for himself and his family and friends in his behalf, should step promptly forward as they have, to accept for him the homage due to successful and humane achievement.

Such is the paradoxical, but filially pious portraiture of Mr. Garrison given in these volumes. The hero of them is depicted as a noble and wholly faultless character, of whom the world was not worthy. Indeed it is hardly so much the worthiness of the hero as the world's unworthiness of him that most impresses the reader's mind. One who reads believing is

shocked, from page to page, with growing proofs of the utter debasement and turpitude of the generation in which he lived, especially of those who pass for the best men of it; and with the vile perfidy toward Mr. Garrison of such large numbers of those who came into intimate relations with him, in business, in reform-agitation, and in personal friendship.

No trait of Mr. Garrison's character is more emphasized and illustrated by his biographers than his singular equanimity, self-control and gentleness of temper. His mildness of manner and expression are the theme of repeated and admiring comment; and it is demonstrated, not boastfully perhaps, but with evident pride, that his remarkable composure, in circumstances which to most men would have been exciting to the last degree, was due not to self-control, but to the actual absence of excitement. Contrariwise to the public impression of him, he was not a man of hasty or irritable temper, or given to grudges, or evil thoughts of others, but one who cherished not merely a doctrine of non-resistance, but actual kindly feelings toward bitter enemies. And yet, as we read, we do come upon language of his that has a different sound. For instance, in a long article on the remonstrances of some of his best friends and fellow-reformers against what they deemed the harshness and severity of his language, he says:—

“The same cuckoo cry is raised against me now as I heard when I stood forth alone; and the same sagacious predictions and grave admonitions are uttered now as were then spoken with the infallibility of ignorance, the disinterestedness of cowardice, and the prudence of imbecility. There are many calling themselves anti-slavery men who, because they are only “half fledged” themselves, and have neither the strength nor the courage to soar, must needs flutter and scream because my spirit will not stoop in its flight heavenward, and come down to their filthy nest.”—[Vol. I. 459, 460.]

Improving upon this pleasing metaphor, he characterizes the General Conference of the Methodist Church as “a cage of unclean birds, and synagogue of Satan.” [II. 78.] The action of the Consociation of Rhode Island in declining to entertain a memorial from an epicene convention in Boston is declared to be “clerical ruffianism.” [II. 220, *n.*] And the Rev. Charles T. Torrey, who not long after died a martyr to his anti-slavery convictions in the Baltimore jail, but who had

been guilty of the "sedition" (so Mr. Garrison termed it) of desiring another Society and another journal than Garrison's, is described as coming in "the full tide of his priestly bile." [II. 270.] We have these occasional specimens of a style of expression which in most men would be indicative of anger, or hatred, or some evil passion, although in this book no evidence appears, except in expressions of shame, disgust and heart-sickness on the part of many of Garrison's best friends, that his habitual style was that of the most brutally vituperative writer of his time. And yet the testimony, both of himself and of others who knew him, is that he was a man of exceptional mildness and gentleness of temper. What solution can be found for so strange a paradox?

That which is suggested by one of his admiring friends and cited by his biographers seems not improbable. Miss Harriet Martineau, in 1835, found his countenance to be

"wholly expressive of purity, animation and gentleness." "His conversation . . . is of the most practical cast. . . . Sagacity is the most striking attribute of his conversation. It has none of the severity, the harshness, the bad taste of his writing; it is as glad some as his countenance, and as gentle as his voice. Through the whole of his deportment breathes the evidence of a heart at ease. . . . I do not pretend to like or to approve the tone of Garrison's printed censures. I could not use such language myself toward any class of offenders, nor can I sympathize in its use by others. But it is only fair to mention that Garrison *adopts it warily*; and that I am persuaded that he is elevated above passion and has no unrighteous anger to vent in harsh expressions. . . . He gives his reasons for his severity with a calmness, meekness and softness which contrast strongly with the subject of the discourse, and which convince the objector that there is *principle* at the bottom of the practice."—[II. 70-71.]

It seems a hard thing for sons to have to say of a father whom they love and venerate, and yet it seems to be true, that the frenzied and unbridled scurrility of Garrison's polemic, such as might be extenuated, not excused, on the ground of irritated feeling or excited passion, was really adopted by him "warily," without a particle of animosity, in cold blood, as a matter of policy, for the accomplishment of a purpose. There was no noble and irrepressible rage in it. His feelings never ran away with him, no matter how diabolical the wickedness that confronted him. A very striking illustra-

tion of this self-command is presented in these volumes. On the subject of liquor-selling, said he in 1829,

“ We, who are somewhat impetuous in our disposition and singular in our notions of reform,—who are so uncharitable as to make no distinction between men engaged in one common traffic, which shall excuse the destroyer of thousands and heap contumely on the murderer of a dozen—we demand that the whole truth be told on all occasions, whether it induces persecution, or occasions a breach of private friendship. . . . If it be injurious, or criminal, or dangerous, or disreputable to drink ardent spirits, it is far more so to vend, or distil, or import this liquid fire. ‘Woe unto him who putteth the cup to his neighbor’s lips’—who increases his wealth at the expense of the bodies and souls of men—who takes away the bread of the poor and devours the earnings of industry—who scatters his poison through the veins and arteries of the community, till even the grave is burdened with his victims! Against *him* must the artillery of public indignation be brought to bear; and the decree must go forth, as from the lips of Jehovah, that he who will deal in the accursed article can lay no claim to honesty of purpose or holiness of life, but is a shameless enemy to the happiness and prosperity of his fellow-creatures.”—[I. 155, 156.]

“ He looked upon ‘every distiller or vender of ardent spirits’ as ‘a poisoner of the health and morals of community’; and could even say, in his address in 1832 before the second annual Convention of the People of Color in Philadelphia: ‘God is my witness that, great as is my detestation of slavery and the foreign slave trade, I had rather be a slaveholder—yea, a kidnapper on the African coast—than sell this poison to my fellow-creatures for common consumption.’”—[I. 268.]

This was in 1832. In 1833, this uncompromising reformer, burning with holy indignation, had the golden opportunity of confronting in the midst of his ill-gotten and blood-stained wealth, one of the most notorious of these monsters, more detestable than the slaveholder and the kidnapper, these murderers and public poisoners, of whom he was resolved to speak the truth on all occasions, however embarrassing. It was a peculiarly flagrant case, for the caitiff wretch had not only openly made and sold his liquid damnation, but had commended it to his neighbors’ lips in that seductive form known as Buxton’s Entire; and nevertheless, was holding a high position in the public esteem, and giving himself the airs of a philanthropist and reformer and Christian. In all Mr. Garrison’s stormy career, he never had so good an opportunity for unlimbering the “artillery of indignation” for a point-blank shot. But in-

stead of this he speaks with undisguised delight of a "polite invitation by letter" from this ogre "to take breakfast with him;" on which occasion our reformer, instead of warning his host of the hypocrisy of his "claim of honesty of purpose or holiness of life" and faithfully denouncing him as the "shameless enemy of his fellow-creatures," accepted his breakfast and his compliments without a syllable of protest; and after returning to America, described him as "the worthy successor of Wilberforce, our esteemed friend and coadjutor, Thomas Fowell Buxton," and declares that, aside from a single mistake of anti-slavery policy, "Mr. Buxton deserves universal admiration and gratitude for his long-continued, able and disinterested efforts, amidst severe ridicule and malignant opposition, to break every yoke and set the oppressed free."—[I. 351, 352.]

Miss Martineau was right. The spirit of the prophet was completely subject unto the prophet. He was able to restrain the fury of his indignation against this monstrous criminal, and devote all his energies, in England, to hounding, pestering and abusing the agent of a benevolent enterprise, of which less than four years before, Garrison himself had been a eulogist. The Colonization agent was guilty of not keeping up with Garrison in the nimble changes of his mind from love to hate; and this was a crime as much worse than Buxton's as Buxton's was worse than that of the slaveholder and the kidnapper. But let it not be supposed that even this badgering of the Colonization agent was a matter of indignation. As Miss Martineau perceived, it was only "sagacity"—part of a course "adopted warily," and on "principle"—a course disgusting enough to her, as well as to Whittier, and Follen, and the Tappans, and many others, but which nevertheless, as he calmly explained, with "gladsome countenance" and "gentle voice," had to be pursued as a matter of policy.

It is not impossible to comprehend the situation in which Mr. Garrison felt himself drawn or driven to this disgraceful policy. We must remember how scanty were the resources not only material and social, but intellectual, with which he entered on his crusade. He was a decidedly bright young fellow who had worked his way up from printer's boy to editor,—wrote in a fairly good English style, with a knack for turning a sonnet

which now and then rose to the dignity of real poetry. But he lacked intellectual strength, and was conscious of the lack. The reader of this book is impressed, in the pages from Garrison's pen, with the absence of genuine eloquence, or vigor of argument, or acuteness of observation. A superiority of intellectual and moral tone is recognized at once, when we pass from a page of Garrison's writing to a page from Elizur Wright, or even Lewis Tappan. Now what do most men do in this case—conscious that their strength is inadequate to their undertaking? They are commonly tempted to make up in violence for the defect of strength. And this was the temptation to which Garrison yielded. He was always straining his voice till it broke into falsetto. He might not be able to argue successfully; but he could scold like a fishwife. He might not convict his adversary of wrong; but he could pelt him with hard names. He might not be able to command the attention of the people by weight of character or power of language; but he could infuriate them by insult. Here were cheap substitutes for eloquence always at hand, and he had small scruple about using them. He might not be able to win any large following to serve under him by the attraction of his genius, or the success of his leadership; but perhaps some might be intimidated into his service by a policy of systematic insult. So this policy was deliberately adopted and persistently followed. Probably it was the first instance of an attempt to carry forward a scheme of Christian philanthropy in main reliance on blackmail. The bitterest epithets and most damaging accusations in Mr. Garrison's extensive repertory were applied to those who were nearest him but failed to adhere to him. The one lower grade of turpitude was that of the men who, having once trained in his troop, detached themselves from it. The "worst and most dangerous form of pro-slavery" was to be an anti-slavery man outside of Garrison's residuary faction. There was no lack of collaborators to whom the policy of Garrison was congenial, and it was industriously prosecuted. Faithful citizens, and especially Christian ministers, were studiously annoyed with false charges of being "pro-slavery." Americans going abroad found that a system of correspondence was in operation by which evil reports were sent in advance of them.

But the delight of the Garrison press and platform was to seize the occasion of the recent death of some exceptionally beloved and honored citizen, when hearts were tender, and the wounds of bereavement not yet closed, to defile his fresh grave with some abominable accusation. And down to this very day it is the amiable practice of some of the survivors of that faction, notably of Mr. Oliver Johnson, to mark the departure of some man honored for his great services in the cause of human freedom, by printing atrocious charges against him of proslavery sympathy, and sending them to the mourners.

It is only by glimpses between the lines that the reader of this biography gets an idea of the state of public sentiment in America at the time when Garrison began his work. Garrison's own reckless and swaggering account of it is this :

“ At that time [before the beginning of *The Liberator* in 1831] there was scarcely a man in all the land who dared to peep or mutter on the subject of slavery ; the pulpit and the press were dumb ; no anti-slavery organizations were made ; no public addresses were delivered ; no reproofs, no warnings, no entreaties were uttered in the ears of the people. silence, almost unbroken silence, prevailed universally.”—[I. 458.]

In the same ridiculously false and braggart tone is his talk about Channing's little work on slavery : “ We do claim all that is sound or valuable in the book as *our own* ; its sole excellencies are its *moral plagiarisms* ; ”—[II. 89]. Habitually, he abounds with great swelling words of assumption that he is the very founder and inventor of anti-slavery feeling, argument and effort.

And yet throughout the book, and especially the earlier part of it, we come continually upon facts that are only to be explained by supposing (what is the demonstrable truth) that Garrison from his childhood grew up in an atmosphere of abhorrence of slavery—an atmosphere which pervaded the North and, to a large extent, the South as well. In the year 1828, he refers, in his Bennington newspaper, to a petition recently presented to Congress by more than a thousand residents of the District of Columbia, including all the District Judges, praying for the abolition of slavery in the District. And presently a meeting is convened at the Bennington Academy at which a petition for the same object, drawn by Garrison's hand, is read and adopted, which reads :—

“Your petitioners deem it unnecessary to attempt to maintain by elaborate arguments that the existence of slavery is highly detrimental to the happiness, peace and prosperity of that nation in whose bosom and under whose auspices it is nourished; and especially that it is inconsistent with the spirit of our government and laws. All this is readily admitted by every patriot and Christian. . . . It is gratifying to believe that a large majority of the inhabitants of the District, and also of our more Southern brethren, are earnest for the abolition. . . . Your petitioners deem it preposterous that while there is one half of the States in which slavery does not exist, and while a large majority of our white population are desirous of seeing it extirpated, this evil is suffered to canker in the vitals of the republic.”

The petition was sent to *all the postmasters* of the State of Vermont, with the request that they would obtain signatures to it; and most of them “responded nobly;” so that the document was sent to Washington with no less than 2,352 signatures, and there met with a *nearly unanimous* resolution of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in favor of the same object.—[I. 109, 110.]

It is this exact period of which it is impudently declared (for the greater glory of Garrison:)

“Fifty years ago [i. e., in 1829], it is no exaggeration to say, this nation, in church and state, from President to boot-black—I mean the white boot-black—was thoroughly pro-slavery. In the Sodom there might have been a Lot or two here and there—some profound thinker who wished justice to be done though the heavens should fall, but he was despondent. It seemed as though nearly the whole business of the press, the pulpit and the theological seminary was to reconcile the people to the permanent degradation and slavery of the negro race.—[I. 298. Quoted from a speech of Elizur Wright, in June, 1879.]”

Who would suppose, from reading this statement of history, that Garrison’s boyhood had passed in the midst of an anti-slavery agitation that convulsed the nation almost to the point of civil war? or that in 1818 that noble act of the Presbyterian Church declaring slavery to be “a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ,” had been *unanimously* adopted by the General Assembly, representing North and South? The eulogists of Garrison will hardly have the effrontery to claim that it was from their hero that the illustrious Kentuckian, Robert J. Breckenridge, learned either the

ethics or the rhetoric of that splendid invective which he uttered in 1833 in the pages of the "Biblical Repertory," in which he declared "slavery as it is daily exhibited in every slave State" to be "a system which is utterly indefensible on every correct human principle, and utterly abhorrent from every law of God;" in which, rebuking the apologists of the institution he exclaims: "Out upon such folly! The man who cannot see that involuntary domestic slavery, as it exists among us, is founded on the principle of taking by force that which is another's, has simply no moral sense;" . . . "these are reasons for a Christian land to look upon and then ask: Can any system which they are advanced to defend be compatible with virtue and truth? . . . Hereditary slavery is without pretence, except in avowed rapacity."

Such views as these, of a conspicuous leader of public opinion in the slave States in 1833, instead of being, according to the preposterous assumption of Mr. Garrison's admirers, something unknown before his advent, devised by his own heart, becoming prevalent through his propagation of them,—were, as a matter of exact history, the generally prevalent sentiment of the country at the beginning of his career; and the progressive decline of them, and, at the South, the practical extinction of them, synchronizes with the progress of Mr. Garrison's anti-slavery operations. Whether these operations stood to the decline of anti-slavery sentiment in the relation of cause to effect is a fair question, on which, however, in our own minds, there is not a particle of doubt. It is clear to us that Mr. Garrison and his propaganda had no small part in the demoralization of public opinion which went on to worse and worse during the period of his greatest activity.

But while he had no originality in the advocacy of anti-slavery, of emancipation, or of abolition,—on all these points merely accepting the general sentiment of good men prevalent at the beginning of his career—there were two favorite nostrums on which he claimed exclusive rights, at least for the American market; one of these he labeled "immediate emancipation," and the other "immediate abolition." Both of them were founded in fallacy—that form of fallacy which his surviving disciple, Mr. Oliver Johnson, with unconscious humor, char-

acterizes as "elastic definition," but which is better known to logicians as "ambiguous middle." All slaveholding is wicked, said the reformer; therefore every slaveholder should instantly emancipate all his slaves, and until he does so, he is a murderer, a man-stealer, a pirate, to be excommunicated from the church, and shunned by decent men. But being questioned what he would do in the case of one who was holding slaves only until he could bring them away to a State where the laws would permit the emancipation of them, he answers at once "when I say slaveholding is wicked, I mean the wicked kind of slaveholding; the man you describe holds slaves, indeed, but he is not what I mean by a slaveholder. I have 'an elastic definition' that can be accommodated to all such cases." In short, he fell afoul of the English language; his long quarrel with the best men of his generation was a contest in defence of his indefeasible right to use words out of their proper meaning.

So with his demand for "immediate abolition," objection to which filled him with "inexpressible abhorrence and dismay." It "does not mean," he says, "that the slaves shall immediately . . . be free from the benevolent restraints of guardianship."—[I. 294.] In short, when he says "immediate abolition" he means what is ordinarily understood by "gradual abolition," which if any man dare to express approval of, he will belabor him with foul words in his "Liberator," and do what he can to injure him in public estimation.

With more patience than this patent fallacy deserved, the sober anti-slavery men of this country labored to clear excited minds of the illusion which Garrison and his followers persistently labored to maintain. Said Leonard Bacon:

"As for the thing which alone they profess to recognize as slavery, we hold it to be invariably sinful. As for the thing which, when they attempt to speak accurately, they call emancipation, we hold it to be the plainest and first duty of every master. As for the thing which they describe as the meaning of immediate abolition, we hold it to be not only practicable and safe, but the very first thing to be done for the safety of a slaveholding country. The immediate abolition against which we protest as perilous to the commonwealth and unjust to the slaves, is a different thing from that which the immediate abolitionists think they are urging on the country. . . .

"The sophism by which they unwittingly impose on their own minds and inflame the minds of others, is this: the terms 'slavery,' 'slave-

holding,' 'immediate emancipation,' etc., have one meaning in their definitions, and, to a great and unavoidable extent, another meaning in their denunciations and popular harangues. Thus they define a slaveholder to be one who claims and treats his fellow-men as property—as things—as destitute of all personal rights; one, in a word, whose criminality is self-evident. But the moment they begin to speak of slaveholders in the way of declamation, the word which they have strained out of its proper import, springs back to its position, and denotes any man who stands in the relation of overseer and governor to those whom the law has constituted slaves; and consequently every man who, in the meaning of the laws, or in the meaning of common parlance, is a slaveholder, is denounced with unmeasured expressions of abhorrence and hate, as an enemy of the species. What is the effect of this on their own minds? What, on the minds of those who happen, from one cause or another, to be ripe for factious or fanatical excitement against the south? What, on the minds of those who, without unraveling the sophistry of the case, know that many a slaveholder is conscientious, and does regard his slaves as brethren? What, on the minds of those slaveholders themselves who are conscious of no such criminality?"—*Quarterly Christian Spectator*, 1834.

The possible effect of his sophistical talk on other men's minds seems not to have been veiled from Mr. Garrison. In the retrospect at least, he looked back with complacency to the syllogism which he had furnished to the extreme defenders of slavery: "If human beings could be justly held in bondage for one hour, they could be for days and weeks and years, and so on indefinitely from generation to generation."—[I. 140.] It was an instruction which needed no bettering, to fit it exactly to the use of pro-slavery men, north or south, in their conflict with the anti-slavery feeling that was everywhere dominant when Garrison began his glorious work. But this bearing of it seemed to be no objection to it in Mr. Garrison's mind; and the fact that it would be exasperating and alienating to good, conscientious and anti-slavery men among the slaveholders was vastly in its favor. His grievance with the old anti-slavery societies was that they did not "personally arraign the slaveholder and hold him criminal for not immediately emancipating his slaves, and seek to make him odious and put him beyond the pale of intercourse."—[I. 159, *note*.] The language is the biographer's.]

Nothing in all this book is more truly characteristic of Mr. Garrison than these words of his children. A policy of reform might be wise, effective, successful; it might have extinguished

slavery in State after State, and be moving hopefully for the like result in other States yet; but unless it was personally exasperating, it had no charms for him. He was not exasperated himself; and he no more believed every slaveholder to be criminal than Dr. Bacon or Dr. Breckenridge did; but with his little contrivance of "an elastic definition" he continued, with great composure and equanimity, to pour out the weekly torrent of bitter, foul, insulting language with which he succeeded in quenching the anti-slavery sentiment of the South to its last embers, and infuriating an opposition to the very name of abolitionist, even in the North, that showed itself in the shameful mobs which he delighted to provoke, and which were repressed or prevented by the efforts of men for whom he had no thanks, but only abuse and calumny. His love of a mob was not in the least like the Tipperary Irishman's delight in a shillalah-fight. It was a matter of policy, and in the roughest tumble of it his "mind was tranquil;" and when it was over he sat down and footed up the net advantages: "New subscribers to the *Liberator* continue to come in—not less than a dozen to-day. Am much obliged to the mob."—[II. 50.] He was even capable of refraining from exciting a mob when he saw no profit in it—"a mob without doing us any benefit, as the market is now getting to be somewhat glutted with deeds of violence."—[II. 105.] But in general, he actually hungered for a row, and labored, when he saw the populace nearing the boiling-point, to throw in fresh provocations, and invite general attention to his non-resistance principles. On the eve of the Boston riot, he was disgusted with the apparent lull of popular excitement which threatened that the storm would blow over. "Boston is beginning to sink into apathy. The reaction has come rapidly, but we are trying to get the steam up again."—[II. 2.] In like manner, at the dedication of Pennsylvania Hall in Philadelphia, his disgust at the address of David Paul Brown, the eminent anti-slavery lawyer, was irrepressible. That address seemed adapted "to allay, in some measure, the prejudice that prevails against us and our holy cause"; and that was not at all what he had come to Philadelphia for. There were placards out inciting to a riot, and it was an opportunity not to be missed. The mob needed punch-

ing up, and Garrison was just the man to do it. So he took the platform with some sneering and insulting remarks about Mr. Brown and his address, and about men of "caution," and "prudence," and "judiciousness," generally.

"Sir, I have learned to hate those words. . . . Sir, slavery will not be overthrown without excitement, a most tremendous excitement. And let me say there is too much quietude in this city. It shows that the upholders of this wicked system have not yet felt that their favorite sin has been much endangered. You need and must have a moral earthquake. . . . Your cause will not prosper here,—the philosophy of reform forbids you to expect it—until it excites popular tumult, and brings down upon it a shower of brickbats and rotten eggs, and it is threatened with a coat of tar-and-feathers."—[II. 215, 216, *note*.]

The desire of Garrison's heart was promptly gratified by the smashing of the windows and the burning of the building; out of all which he got safely off, and wrote to his mother-in-law in high spirits, from Boston. "We have had great doings in Philadelphia, during the present week. . . . "It will do incalculable good to our cause. . . . Our friends are all in excellent spirits, shouting Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Let the earth rejoice!"

The attitude of Mr. Garrison and his queer little "persecuted remnant" of followers, toward the mob, was like that of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg toward the enraged Mr. Pickwick. "Perhaps you would like to call us swindlers, sir," said Dodson. "Pray do, sir, if you feel disposed; now pray do sir." "Go on, sir; do go on," added Mr. Fogg. "You had better call us thieves, sir; or perhaps you would like to assault one of us. Pray do it, sir, if you would; we will not make the smallest resistance. Pray do it, sir;" and Fogg put himself very temptingly within the reach of Mr. Pickwick's clenched fist."

The case is not exactly in point. The mob was by no means as innocent as Mr. Pickwick, and the abusive epithets, to which *thief* and *swindler* were terms of compliment, were rather bestowed by Mr. Garrison than solicited. But Dodson and Fogg never equalled Mr. Garrison in the cool studiousness with which he invited assault with the standing promise of impunity, serenely calculating on the ulterior advantage of it. He swaggered insolently about in the panoply of his non-resistance principles, the "Moral Bully" described by Dr. Holmes.

"His velvet throat against thy corded wrist,  
 His loosened tongue against thy doubled fist."  
 "The *Moral Bully*, though he never swears,  
 Nor kicks intruders down his entry stairs,  
 Though meekness plants his backward-sloping hat,  
 And non-resistance ties his white cravat, . . .  
 Hugs the same passion to his narrow breast;  
 That heaves the cuirass on the trooper's chest;  
 Feels the same comfort, while his acrid words  
 Turn the sweet milk of kindness into curds,  
 As the scarred ruffian of the pirate's deck  
 When his long swivel rakes the staggering wreck."

The lesson of Mr. Garrison's life, truly told, is instructive but sad. It is the story of the failure and wreck of what could hardly, in any case, have been a great career, but might have been a wholly honorable and useful one. The whole course of his active life is a continuous history of opportunities wasted, influence forfeited, faithful friends and benefactors alienated and forced into hostility, and friends that still remained "sickened" at the folly and violence of his language, and at the irreparable mischiefs wrought by it to the cause which he claimed for his own. Meanwhile he was embittered by seeing "enlargement and deliverance arise from another place." The sober, conscientious, Christian anti-slavery sentiment of the country was clearly enlightened, and resolutely and wisely led, by such men as Albert Barnes, Leonard Bacon, William Ellery Channing and Francis Wayland—men for whose persons, whose arguments, and whose measures Mr. Garrison had no words but bitter denunciation and insult, and all the more as he saw them leading on to success where he had miserably failed. The attempt to represent that the only consistent and sincere anti-slavery of the nation was confined to Garrison and the infinitesimal faction of his adherents—an attempt pertinaciously prosecuted by him during his lifetime, and now renewed since his death—needs to be rebuked in the name of public morality; and not less, the mischievous lesson that is deduced from this false representation, to wit, that extravagant statement, sweeping denunciation, and personal abuse of antagonists, may be relied on to carry almost any crotchet of "reform," if only they are stuck to long enough.

The public career of Mr. Garrison, to which we have mainly

confined our attention, is not difficult to understand. His personal character as exhibited in this book would be a more complicated study, very interesting, but less important to the world. Certain fine qualities he had in a high degree. His courage lacked nothing, but a little modesty, of being perfect and entire; but he advertised it too much, in his newspaper. He was completely superior to mercenary considerations, and took joyfully the spoiling not only of his own goods, but of other people's; no one of the proprietors of Pennsylvania Hall seems to have equalled him in the happy serenity with which he witnessed the destruction of that valuable property. For the great cause which he had at heart, he was willing to bear the loss of friends, so willing, in fact, that as they turned, grieved or indignant, from his door, he usually kicked them down the steps, only not with an actual boot of leather—that he held to be sinful. His sympathy with the slaves was deep and sincere; the groans of their prolonged bondage were torture to his soul; yet even this torture he was willing to bear cheerfully for an indefinite period (no matter what their preference might be) rather than have them emancipated on incorrect principles; [I. 348, 352,] so far was he from being a reckless enthusiast in his humanity. Conscious of superiority to such vulgar forms of selfishness, he sincerely thought himself (there is much evidence of this, sometimes pathetic, sometimes amusing) to be a perfect man.

One is surprised and almost sorry to find it claimed for him that he is not passionate or vindictive—that when he was running amuck through society, striking and stabbing indiscriminately all but those that ran with him, it was a mere matter of policy, about which he chatted “gladsomely” with his friends. In like manner, we are pained to discover that he was far from being the pachyderm which his recklessness of the feelings and reputations of others indicates him to be. He is sensitive to the pains which he delights to inflict or see inflicted on other men. If he fairly chuckles with joy at preventing the colonizationists from getting a place for their meeting [I. 450], it is not because he does not go bemoaning the wickedness of the churches in not being willing to lend him or his friends a meeting-house. His devoted labors to make other people

“odious, and put them beyond the pale of intercourse” were compatible with bitter complaints that he found he had made himself odious instead. The most abusive of writers is continually grumbling at being abused. He calls on John Breckenridge, who loses his temper and becomes “really abusive;” Garrison bears it with a grieved and injured spirit, but with angelic meekness, goes home and down on his knees for his enemy; and then puts the knife into him in the next *Liberator* as “ferocious and diabolical.”—[L. 449.]

Mr. Garrison’s religious faith, through this period of his life, seems genuine, deep and practical. Not Archbishop Laud, nor Saint Peter Arbuez, gives evidence of a more honest piety, or more strikingly illustrates Isaac Taylor’s definition of fanaticism, as the combination of the religious sentiment with the malign emotions.

The general purpose of fairness, of which there are many honorable evidences in the work under review, is indicated by the fact that in all this article we have hardly gone outside of the volumes themselves for proofs or illustrations. It is only now and then (making due allowance) that we find positively and censurably false statements in the language of the biographers; and as for their suppressions, who can blame them for what they have left out, when we think what sort of stuff it is? When this monumental work is finished, the truth of history will perhaps be sufficiently vindicated, if some one, with careful and impartial hand, shall go through the files of *The Liberator*, and gather material for a supplementary volume of *The Omitted Pages of the Life of William Lloyd Garrison*. No very large volume would be required to give a sufficient exhibition of those methods which he adopted in cold blood, “that good might come,” and which won for his whole life-work the aptly descriptive title of “malignant philanthropy.”

LEONARD WOOLSEY BACON.