


THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

BY EDGAR W. NYE.

Y father was a native of the State of Maine and a relative of Joshua Nye, whose prohibitory efforts have so long afforded entertainment for man and beast. The family record extends back to Cape Cod, where many of our people may still be found on Buzzard's Bay and toward the interior of Massachusetts. This fact I have kept concealed from the Nyes of Cape Cod up to this time, but I can no longer do so.

My birthplace consisted of a small hamlet called Shirley, now a station on the Bangor and Moosehead Lake Railroad, but at that time a happy and peaceful neighborhood clustering about a red sawmill in the midst of a rich belt of white birch and gum-arabic trees.

Few would have selected this as a birthplace, perhaps, but I have never had cause to regret it. Having now served its purpose, however, it seems content to recline on its laurels, and is in fact smaller to-day than when I chose it as a suitable site for my object.

Our humble home lay in the valley of the bright Piscatequis, within the shadow of the pine-clad pinnacle of Squaw Mountain, where the moldy blue bloom of the huckleberry slumbered in the quiet shade of the hemlock, or wooed with sweet and cunning coolness the advances of the wild bear and the woodchuck of the Katahdins.

We grew for the Boston and Bangor market the spruce gum that rounded the cheek of beauty in the high schools at Waterville and the Christmas tree that gladdened the hearts of the children of the prairie. In the rich soil of the valley, under the tropical sun of the Skowhegans, we reared the large red apple of commerce, and fashioned the richly carved ox-yoke which hung about the well-rounded shoulders of the bright red steer of the Kennebeckers.

My early life was uneventful after the 25th day of August, 1850, at which time I decided upon Shirley, and utilized it as the birthplace of greatness. It was, for the first three years, such a history as might be written of an ordinary person. Beyond getting strangled in a set of knitted harness by accidentally hanging myself over a stone wall till cut down by the authorities, and afterwards developing a style

of somnambulism which frightened the neighbors almost to death, I led a quiet life for three years.

Yet we were well thought of even then, and were acquainted with prominent people, especially the Hamlins and the Brownes, Stephen and Ephraim Browne, the uncles of Artemus Ward, being my father's schoolmates. So we were well connected even then, and I was already receiving a training which was to fit me so well in after years for the atmosphere of courts.

In the early part of the latter half of the present century, and while yet a child, I girded up my loins and, without other luggage, traveled west-erly, taking with me my parents, who pleaded so hard to go that I could not well refuse them, especially as I had no other people with whom to leave them. Our journey was extremely exciting and filled with strange events. The latter part of it especially, which lay through the dense forests of Wisconsin, under the guidance of an old trapper named Thomas G. Nesbitt, was full of hairbreadth escapes and a noticeable paucity of food.

For quite a space of time we journeyed on by short stages, compelled each day to eat such wild animals as crossed our path, whether in season or not, and also the unbolted meal made of unsifted oats, with which we also fed the beasts of the outfit, so that even unto this day the oatmeal of civilization is to me a *bête noir* of great virulence. Finally our caravan came to a halt in the valley of the river Kinnick-Kinnick, and founded a settlement by treaty with the Indians, who, we found, had already preceded us. With the permission of the Government, and at the earnest solicitation of the Indians, we settled upon one hundred and sixty acres of beautiful ferns and bright young rattlesnakes, and it was here that my younger brother and an uncle were bitten by the cheerful fauna of that region. Whisky internally and plug tobacco externally, however, soon overcame the poison of the rattlesnake.

The Indians were extremely friendly at times, and preferred our salt-rising bread to the bread of idleness, which they had been using before we got there. We built up a good trade with them by exchanging brass rods, tin roofing, and pain-killer for beaver, buckskin, and ginseng-root, which we afterward bartered with the merchants of St. Paul for salt and other

delicacies, such as molasses, salt mackerel, embroidery, gunpowder, horse medicine, and saleratus. We constructed a low chalet of bass-wood, shingling it with swamp grass, and the following year put in a glass window. In this region I grew to ladhood, studying the benefits of industry and early attaining among the Indians a degree of social recognition of which I am still justly proud.

My life thus far had been one of earnest endeavor and vigilance, but I can see now that



TRADING WITH THE INDIANS.

it was fitting me even then for the position which I was afterward to occupy, of Justice of the Peace, during six of the most eventful years in the life of the nation. If I had thought of it in time, I would have studied a good deal more by the light of the pine-knot, but it did not occur to me until too late to be of use to me in an autobiography.

It is fair to say that my parents were very poor, but they were so honest that it occasioned comment. As they grew older they found that their integrity had become so fixed upon them that they could not throw it off. I shall never forget the time when it came over them like a clap of thunder from a clear sky that this habit had fastened itself upon them. "We are now past middle life," they said, "and it is hard to teach an old dog new tricks. We shall no doubt die as we have lived. But you," they said, with much feeling, "you are yet young. Your principles are still plastic; you are like versatile clay in your own hands. You can be what you will. Shun, if you can, the errors we have made. Do not allow any habit whatever to obtain entire control over you."

I now budded into manhood. It was a great hit. I had obtained quite an education—that is, mostly a practical education. I had attended school off and on, between massacres, by working out in summer by the month and then attending school winters, by dint of building fires and sweeping out the school-house for my board. Of course the board was not extensive, but almost every day some well-to-do and forehanded scholar would leave a doughnut or a piece of "bread and jell" in his desk and forget it, or else voluntarily give me a nice, durable boiled egg for writing his composition for him; and so I got along real well and always with a blithe heart. That is one thing which aroused the admiration of one and all, an admiration in which I was at last compelled to join, viz: I had a blithe heart.

Passing on rapidly over this perhaps dull and uninteresting portion of a biography, let us proceed to the actual moment when a boy really blooms into manhood, and has singlehanded and with bare knuckles to meet the great, coarse, brutal world.

I remember very well when the day came on which I was gently but firmly invited to angle, cut bait, or go ashore. It was when I had outgrown the home nest. I was timid and of a shrinking nature. So were my clothes. At this time I was invited to buy into the farm with the privilege of allowing my wages to go in toward the payment of principal and interest,—interest first, then principal, like the motto of a political patriot from New York. I made a few rapid calculations covering one side and part of one end of the barn, showing that I would have to give up operas, balls, cigars, wine, underwear, summer vacations at Newport, and my club; that I would have to let my beard grow, cover myself with metallic paint, and work very hard all the pleasant weather in the field, and all the bad weather in the barn or cellar. Thus, as crops and prices were, I found that my wages and my own share of the crop would pay the interest and leave a small sum each year which would help to make up the deficiency between the actual cost of the crop and the price received.

I hope I make this entirely clear to the reader.

So I said: "No, I think that farm life, of course, for those who can afford it, is the most independent, the most chaste and lonesome one of which I know; but I am not worthy of it. I am too restless. I am too dependent on my fellow-man. I want to see him and look in his face and catch his reflected sunshine. I cannot milk a cow a month without drying her up.



"THE BOYS."

I cannot impress my own indomitable spirit of push and enterprise upon the hens as some can. I cannot pay for a team each year with gopher pelts as others do. I cannot stack wheat so that all the rain for thirteen miles will not come and run into the very midst of it. I am also too selfish to farm it, and besides, I have n't the money. Give my place to some more worthy man."

There was another thing about it which made it seem imperative that I should go away. Where I lived I was still regarded as a boy. I saw that where I had grown up and been whipped repeatedly I should never be able to secure absolute reverence. There are grizzly persons there now, three-score years old, who have not yet found out that they are men, because the community call them "the boys" yet, and address them by their first names, and so they have never shucked their boyhood; thus the smell and the sound of the battle of life have never been borne to them. They are silver-haired children yet, with big, fat, dimpled minds on which the world has made no scar. So one day, with tears, I turned my back upon the old home, which, although it had made rather a disagreeable specialty of industry, it seemed to me, yet held every element of a good home. Not as a fugitive with bruises and bitterness only to show for the past,—that would have been easier,—but as a boy whose home had been made always as cheerful for him as circumstances would permit, I plumed my wings for the wild and woolen West.

Securing second-class passage and not knowing exactly whither, so that it was west, I slept the nights away sitting upright in a coach, and landed finally in a territorial town accompanied

by thirty-five cents, with which I desired to aid the flourishing young city in her wonderful growth. I was also associated with a pale yellow trunk which cost three dollars and had been rained on, so that when I landed at Cheyenne the inflated thing peeled.

I cannot think of anything sadder than to be associated with a trunk which has made claims to respectability which it was not able to maintain. This trunk when new had aimed to impress people with the idea that it was a leather trunk, but when adversity came, it surrendered and peeled. When the wall-paper came off it was quite a plain trunk, and those who came in contact with it did not treat it with respect. I went to the best hotel, registered, and by some strange accident got a pretty good room; but I had to hurry and do it before my trunk got up there. Some would not have gone to the best hotel under such circumstances. They would also have said that I had no right to do so, but there is another way to look at that. Every hotel runs its business on a basis calculated to make it pay, allowing a percentage for losses in cases of this kind. I have been paying my percentage ever since, and probably paid it also when I paid my bill there several weeks afterward, which I did. But this was the nearest I ever came to being on the dividend side of the ledger of a hotel.

It would take some time to tell how I got the money to pay this bill, and how the lonely little lop-eared, écru-colored trunk stood there in the baggage-room waiting for the day of its redemption to draw nigh; but suffice it that a lucky accident put me in the way of earning ten dollars by copying the minutes

of a military court-martial then in session, and a tall angel with wings concealed under the cape of a Chumley overcoat was the means. His name was Remington, and I earnestly hope that he will find, when his life is over, that suitable arrangements have been made for his comfort.

Later I struck hard pan again, but the idea of despair did not enter my head. There is a general air of picnic and irresponsibility about a new country which certainly goes far to take the sting out of poverty. Stranded in New York, I would be tempted to fall from some elevated structure, perhaps, or with a shriek of despair to throw myself from the prow of some swift ferry-boat into the moaning tide; but where all is new, and where prosperity is ever generous, knowing that swift changes may in a few years or even months darken its own horizon, hope is the most hardy shrub that hangs upon the trellis of the heart.

(The above sentiment was written in an album at the age of eighteen years.)

If a boy could be made to believe that this one hour or day of battle with adversity may be the hand-to-hand fight of his life, compared with which all others following it may be mere skirmishes; if he could only know or even believe that the sky would never be again so somber, or his horizon so opaque — in nine cases out of ten he would win; but he fears too often that this is the beginning only of a long life of despair and disappointment. At that time I fully expected for a few days that I would have to assist in taking care of the Union Pacific Railroad, as a lawyer friend of mine had already done — going to California in considerable style and returning by easy stages as a section hand.

But the opportunity to do reporting at a small salary came to the surface soon after, and I improved it. The salary was not large; it was not oppressive. It was not calculated to canker the soul. By putting handles on it every Saturday evening, I was enabled to carry it home by myself, the distance being short. I used it wisely, not running through it as some would have done. In this way at the end of the year I had two dollars in money

and a nice new set of whiskers. I also had acquired a gum overcoat, whose views one could easily get by being thrown in its society for a few minutes on a warm day.

It was at this time that I was chosen by the will of the people to go and sit on the woosack as Justice of the Peace. I do not quite remember the name of my predecessor, but I think it was Twitter. I know that I trembled for fear that I should not successfully fill his place, and so I used to go over to the penitentiary, where he was stopping for a few years, to get points from him as to my course of action. It strikes me now that his name *was* Twitter. At first I sought to evade the great responsibility, and told the people to search far and wide and that possibly they would find a more worthy man. They went away and were gone quite a long time. Then they came back and said, No, they could not find any one who seemed to be raised up as I was, to lead our people through the doubts and dangers of the coming years, up into the glorious light of peace and prosperity.

"Oh, go away," I was heard to say to them; "I fear that you are joshing me."

I was elected quite vociferously, for the people of the West are a humor-loving people and so entered into the thing with great glee. Therefore, on the first of January I procured a compressed room with a real window in it, through which the glad sunlight and 'most any other medium-sized object came softly stealing. Furnishing this room by means of a little bright red stove and a copy of the Revised Statutes,



THE MARRIAGE OF BEAUTIFUL SNOW.



BRONCO SAM.

I was ready to mete out substantial justice to those who would call and examine stock and prices.

It was really pathetic to see the poor little miserable booth where I sat and waited with numb fingers for business. But I did not then see the pathos which clung to every cobweb and darkened the rattling casement. Possibly I did not know enough.

I forgot to say that the office was not a salaried one, but solely dependent upon fees, the county furnishing only the copy of the Revised Statutes and a woosack, slightly and prematurely bald. So while I was called Judge Nye, and frequently mentioned in the papers with great consideration, I was out of coal about half of the time, and once could not mail my letters for three weeks because I did not have the necessary postage. Friends in the Eastern States may possibly recall the time when my correspondence, from some unknown cause, seemed to flag. That was the time. Of course I could have borrowed the money, but I had, and still have, a foolish horror of borrowing money. I did not mind running an account, but I hated to borrow.

The first business that I had was a marriage ceremony. I met the groom on the street. He asked if I could marry people. I said that I could to a limited extent. He said that he wanted to get married. I asked him to secure the victim, and I would get the other ingredients. He then wished to know where my office was. It occurred to me at that moment that there was no fire in the stove; also, no coal; also, that the west half of the stove had fallen in during the night. So I said that I would

marry them at their home. He maintained that his home was over eighty miles away and that it would consume too much time to go there.

"Where are you stopping at?" I inquired—using the Pike County style of syntax in order to show that I was one of the people.

"Well, we met here, Squire. She come in on the Last Chance stage, and I 'm camped up in Gov'ment Cañon, not fur from Soldier Crick. We can go out there, I reckon."

I did not mind the ride, so I locked my office, secured a book of forms, and meeting the young people at the livery stable went out with them and married them in a rambling, desultory sort of way.

The bride was a peri from Owl Creek, wearing moccasins of the pliocene age. The rich Castilian blood of the cave-dwellers mantled in her cheek along with the navy-blue blood of Connecticut on her father's side. Her hair was like the wing of a raven, and she wore a tiara of clam-shells about her beetling brow. Her bracelet was a costly string of front teeth, selected from the early settlers at the foot of Independence Mountain. With the shrewdness of a Yankee and the hauteur of the savage she combined the grotesque grammar of Pike County and the charming naïveté of the cow-puncher. She was called Beautiful Snow. But I think it was mostly in a spirit of banter. She was also no longer young. I asked her, with an air of badinage, if she remembered Pizarro, but she replied that she was away from home when he came through. The cave-dwellers were a serious people. Their plumbing was very poor indeed; so also were their jokes. Her features were rather classic, however, and—I was about to say clean-cut, but on more mature thought I will not say that. Her nose was bright and piercing. It resembled the breast-bone of a sand-hill crane.

The groom was a man of great courage and held human life at a very low figure. That is why he married Beautiful Snow without any flinching; also why I have re-



ONE OF THE ROAD-AGENTS.

frained from mentioning his name; also why I kissed the bride. I did not yearn to kiss her. There were others who had claims on me, but I did not wish to give needless pain to the groom, and so I did it. He had no money, but said that he had a saddle which if I could use I was welcome to. I did not have anything to put the saddle on at home, but rather than return empty-handed I took it.

It was soon after this that I decided to give my hand in marriage to my present wife. Concluding that I had more poverty than one person was entitled to, I made up my mind to endow some deserving young woman with a part of it. There was really something rather pathetic in the transaction, viewing it from this distance across the level plateau of gathering years. But it did not seem so then.

The sorry office with its hollow-chested wood-box and second-hand stove, red with the rust of time and the rain of heaven, the empty docket, the shy assault and battery, the evasive common drunk, the evanescent homicide, the far-away malice prepense, the long-delayed uxoricide, the widely segregated misdemeanor, the skittish felony,—all, all seemed to warn me and admonish me against matrimony, for there were two other justices and they got all the business.

I was elected fourteen years ago, and it never occurred to me that it was a piece of political humor until last week, when I was thinking over my past life.

Thus I married, and one evening while the town lay hushed in slumber, and only the mountain zephyr from the grim old Medicine Bow range rustled the new leaves of the quaking aspen and the cottonwood, I moved. Not having any piano or sideboard I did the moving myself. It did not take long.

Later on, the legislature, seeing that the county would have to provide for me in some way, decided to abolish one of the other justices. Then trade picked up. I was also *ex-officio* coroner. I would marry a quick-tempered couple in the morning, sit on the husband in the afternoon, and try the wife in a preliminary way in the evening for the murder. Thus business became more and more brisk. Sometimes a murderer would escape the grand jury and get lynched, but he did not escape me. If I could not try him in life's bright summertime, I could sit on him and preside over his inquest after the lynching. We had considerable excitement, too, in those days, for the town was young and laws were crude. Lawyers were still cruder. I know this because I was admitted to the bar at that time myself.

I rose early each morning while my heart and the dawn were breaking, and while the coyotes sang in the suburbs of the city. I

lived on the side facing the cemetery, for rent was cheaper there. In the early dawn a coyote band of soloists used to come over between the cemetery and my 'dobe house and sing. Those who have never heard a coyote's chastened welcome to the jocund day do not know what compressed despair and unavailing regret can be concealed in the wail of a wild animal. To a man who was doing his own work, and cutting enough jack-pine firewood before breakfast to do for the day, the shrill notes of the coyote, echoing among the gray slabs which marked the lonely resting-places of the dead, were not filled with delicious joy. I judge that the coyote has been politically on the wrong side for three or four thousand years, and that his sorrow has become chronic and his nature soured. Possibly it is something else, but the bitterness, the diatonic hopelessness and forbidding despair which he gets into one little bar of music would do a good business in the drama if it could be properly staged.

The most attractive day's work that I remember was the preliminary examination of a band of stage-robbers, captured by Sheriff Boswell and a posse in the early morning. I examined them in the forenoon and held a double inquest in the evening on two gentlemen from a tie camp in the mountains. That was my busy day. I think Bronco Sam called that day also to be married to Mademoiselle Walk-Around-the-Block. Bronco Sam was a semi-Greaser, whose parents on his father's side came from the Congo Basin and settled among the peanut vines and citron groves of Middle Georgia. I was too busy to marry him that day, and so he went elsewhere, fearing that if he put it off he might change his mind. Later he shot his wife, and then blowing out his brains instead of turning them off he closed his career with the regular red fire and fortissimo bass-drum of the new West.

The stage-robbers had among them the gentlemanly, genial, and urbane Irvin and the brainy but somewhat erratic and felonious "Kid." They were captured by a band of gritty frontiersmen under Sheriff Boswell. Boswell was not a toy frontiersman with long, accordion-plaited hair, tied back with blue ribbon, in which at springtime the swallows come to build their nests and rear their young. He was a plain, quiet man, with the scars of Indian arrows all over him, the record of an early day when you could not fight Indians by means of a Pullman car. I always admired him because he cut his hair and manicured his nails even in the early days. Boswell was not reckless of human life, and in fact killed very few people, but if a bad man had to be captured and brought to camp in good order, he generally had the job.

Once I heard a shot in the hallway of my place, and going to the porch on the second floor rather cautiously, I saw the rest of the tragedy. Windy Smith had been shot by a gambler whose name I've forgotten, though I had to try his case a day or two afterward. Some shouted, "Take away his gun."

I said, "Yes, certainly, take away his gun." I am not a good hand to remove guns at such a time, but I can direct others. I was born to command.

Then some one yelled, "Lynch him." A dozen healthy men made a grab for him, but Boswell came along then and took the gentleman home with him. A day or two after, fearing that he would be lynched if brought to my office, I examined him at the courthouse, which also contained the jail.

Reading a charge of wilful murder to him, I asked him to plead, but he said nothing. Then I asked him his reason for killing Smith. He had none. His reason had fled. The scare he got at the time when he expected every moment to be lynched had driven him mad.

These road agents, however, were a picturesque little picnic party. They had probably not slept in a house for two or three years, and they needed repairs. They removed their spurs and piled them up in the corner of the room like a large bed of cactus. Their side-arms and Winchester's made quite a little hardware store on top of my desk. They were disagreeable men in some respects, and yet they did much to elevate the stage, especially the Rock Creek and Black Hill stages. Irvin was tried finally for some minor felony and got nine years. On top of this, in some way, he was also indicted for murder in the first degree and got a life-sentence. The jailer found him in tears afterward, in his cell.

"Why do you weep?" asked the gentle jailer, looking sadly into the uncertain light.

"Because," said the sobbing outlaw, "I shall be so busy serving out my life-sentence that I do not see how in Sam Hill I am going to get time to serve out those nine years for plain robbery."

But incidents of six years' life on the bench would require too much time and space for a short sketch like this, and so I will not add to those given already, except one which will show that courts do not always receive that respect and reverence to which they are entitled.

We had a German *restaurateur* who could cook well, but prosperity overthrew his good resolutions, and so about every thirty days he would give way to a taste for the native-grown wines of Kentucky, and he would then start out as a painter and decorator of an otherwise quiet

and gentlemanly little town. At such times it became necessary to extend the strong arm of the law, and to issue the ukase for the arrest of Wilhelm in order that the peace and dignity of the Territory might be maintained. After several such arrests, and a fine with its attendant trimmings, Larry Fee, an officer, was again required to take him to the fountainhead of justice.

"Who makes owid dot vorrand?" asked Fischer.

"You will have to go before Judge Nye," said the officer.

"Chudge Nye!" says Fischer. "Chudge Nye! Dot feller dot comes down py der debo fen der drain gomes een? You baid your sweed life he ish no chudge. He looks more like dot beenuts poy on der drain."

At another time I was alone with a criminal called Dirty Murphy. The officer had gone to get witnesses for the prosecution of Murphy on the charge of larceny. I needed some more coal on the fire and I had no valet. The coal was down a flight of stairs in a crypt under the sidewalk. I could not leave D. Murphy alone for fear that he would steal the rapidly cooling stove and fly with it; so I asked him if it would be too much trouble for him to go down and get a hod of coal for me, so that at his trial we could make it warm for him. He said certainly not. I gave him the hod, and although it has been something over thirteen years he has not yet returned. On leaving the woosack to my successor I told him about Dirty Murphy, and said that he was liable at any moment day or night, footsore and weary, to come back, and that it would be a good idea to leave the door ajar for him; but it was not done, and so at this writing I do not know where he is.

Of course, during the six years of my judicial life I met with many reverses, especially at the hands of the Supreme Court, but I am proud to say that during all that trying time I was sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust in the people even though the higher courts did not sustain and soothe my decisions as I wish they had.

Looking back over those eight years of life in the new West where a State has since blossomed into being, and where the eagle's nest of the snow-capped Rocky Mountains has given place to the mare's nest of doubtful political methods, I am forced to ask myself this question: Is there anything in the way of official triumph and official honor in all this that cannot be attained by most any bright young American? Certainly not. Patient endeavor, untiring industry, and political purity, coupled with a profound intellect and massive thought-works, will surely win in the struggle for prefer-

ment, and there is no reason why any young man so equipped who reads these lines may not ultimately rise also to a position as justice of the peace.

Every year, and in fact almost every month, some justice of the peace dies. Who are to fill these places? The young men of the nation. The bright-eyed students and farm

hands who are just attaining their majority. Fit yourself, therefore, young man, that you may be able, when the time shall come, to occupy the woosack thus left vacant by the death of older justices of the peace, and if you do so with credit to yourself I shall feel that this brief bit of autobiography has not been written in vain.

Edgar W. Nye.

MAZZINI'S LETTERS TO AN ENGLISH FAMILY.



It has been the privilege of the writer to see the originals of Joseph Mazzini's letters to an English family, now for the first time to be given to the public by Madame Venturi, the surviving daughter of William Henry and Elizabeth Ashurst.

The name of Ashurst is not altogether unknown in America. Frequent mention of it occurs in the life of William Lloyd Garrison written by his sons, and Mr. Garrison himself has told us, in his introduction to a volume upon "Joseph Mazzini: His Life, Writings, and Political Principles," issued shortly after the exile's death, that it was at Mr. Ashurst's beautiful home at Muswell Hill that he first met the great Italian. "There," he says, "our personal friendship began [1846], which revolving years served but to strengthen." Twenty-one years later, on a visit to England in 1867, Mr. Garrison and Mazzini met again. "The interviews I had with him — alas, all too brief! for of his company one could never tire — were," says Mr. Garrison, "at the residence of Mr. Ashurst's son . . . and of his son-in-law, James Stansfeld, M. P." . . . His "altered appearance affected me sadly. There were, indeed, the same dark, lustrous eyes; the same classical features; the same grand intellect; the same lofty and indomitable spirit; the same combination of true modesty and heroic assertion, of exceeding benignity and inspirational power, as in the earlier days, but physically he was greatly attenuated, stricken in countenance, broken in health, and evidently near the close of his earthly pilgrimage. But no marvel! During our long absence from each other what mighty intellectual forces he had brought into play! . . . What hairbreadth escapes, what fiery trials, had been his!"

The intimacy between the Italian exile and the Ashurst family began soon after he succeeded in proving the fact that his correspondence had for a long period been violated by the English Government. His letters were sys-

tematically "opened and resealed, with all the ignoble arts of a Fouché," before being delivered at his house. This, incredible as it may seem, was done in a room set apart for such purposes at the Central London Post-office, and the information obtained by this means was regularly forwarded by the English Ministry to the Austrian Government, which was thus enabled to entrap and arrest the brothers Bandiera and other Venetian exiles at Naples, and to cause them to be shot by the Neapolitan Government in cold blood, without even the semblance of a trial. All these things, and the indignation they called forth in England, are matters of history, matters upon which it would be more interesting to dwell had the popular wrath been carried to the point of compelling the abandonment of the system; but that, unhappily, survives to this day. Special interest, however, lies for us in the fact that indignation at the wrong and sympathy for the personal sorrow thus inflicted upon Mazzini impelled Mr. Ashurst's son and eldest daughter to seek his acquaintance and to invite him to their father's house. It is obvious that the exile was as much attracted toward them as they were drawn toward him; for although it was his habit to shun English society, he at once agreed to go to Muswell Hill on the following Sunday, and it quickly became, to use his own phrase, "an established institution" that he should there pass his Sundays with those whom he called his second family. The tone of his letters when separated from them is indeed that of a son and brother, and they regarded the relationship given and accepted as their highest honor.

The first idea of publishing some, at least, of Mazzini's letters occurred to Madame Venturi as far back as 1851, during a conversation with the exile's mother. Madame Mazzini then suggested that her young friend should write her son's life, and, as a portion of the necessary materials, gave her the complete collection of his letters home, and allowed her to note down certain details and anecdotes concerning his childhood and early youth which