

of nearly seventy millions of little and big agitated campaigners?

No; in the general good order—punctuated by not very important exceptions—the nation again disappointed those who are unfriendly to republican institutions. Riots came, indeed, neither during nor after the election. The quiet and good-natured way in which the defeated took the victory of their opponents constitutes another disappointment to our unfriendly critics.

All of which illustrates and enforces the truth of

Professor Woodrow Wilson's contention that Americans have always been a law-regarding race. He holds that this regard for law was apparent in the war of the Revolution; and that, later, «neither side could have fought the battles of the war of 1861-65 until they had satisfied themselves that they had a legal right to do so»; adding with a smile: «That they both thought themselves in the right proves what subtle litigants they were.» It is this respect for law that gives the great decisions of the suffrage their acceptance and effect.



## OPEN LETTERS

### Helen Keller at Cambridge.<sup>1</sup>

HELEN KELLER'S teacher, Miss Sullivan, called upon me in June last at the Cambridge School, and asked me if I would admit Miss Keller to the classes with hearing and seeing girls, and fit her for the Harvard examinations. This proposition startled me, and I replied that I thought it impracticable. However, Miss Sullivan was, as usual, deeply in earnest, and urged me not to decide at once. She afterward gave me the opportunity to discover Miss Keller's mental power, and also to learn somewhat of her educational progress. I decided that it was possible to fit Helen for the examinations, and determined to make the trial.

During the summer Miss Keller was kept free from mental effort. She was already in good health, but she gained more strength by her summer pleasures; and she appeared at her new Cambridge home in season to present herself with the other pupils at the school on the morning of the first day. She has lost no time since.

In the school we are dealing with Miss Keller as we do with normal girls of sixteen. She has the new experience of leaving her home in the morning, and of spending the usual hours in the school building, where she has her class exercises with the other members of the school. She returns to her home at the same time that the other pupils do, and mainly occupies her afternoons and evenings as they do, though naturally she takes a longer time to prepare her lessons than they do, who see.

It is our endeavor to keep her from the distractions which would arise if she were to accept social invitations; but she receives her friends, as do the other ladies of the household in which she lives, on Friday afternoons and evenings. She associates freely with her schoolmates at all times, sharing their walks and social pleasures, much to their delight. Many of them have learned to talk rapidly with her, using the manual alphabet.

I could do little for Miss Keller were it not that Miss Sullivan continues her loving superintendence, and follows her with the ministrations that she has so willingly rendered all these years. Thus, while the direction of

Helen's intellectual work has been committed to me, I find it necessary to depend upon Miss Sullivan for certain assistance which no acquaintance less thorough and familiar with the past would be sufficient to suggest. I am day by day impressed by the magnitude of the work that we are called upon to perform for this marvelous girl, and I can only trust that I may be in some degree equal to the demand.

Miss Sullivan and I have always before us a sense of the novelty of the work, and we feel that we cannot lay it out far in advance. We are obliged to be constantly on the alert, watching developments, and prepared to do whatever is best at the time. While, therefore, we have the Harvard examinations before us as a goal, we are not willing to say to-day that Helen will take those examinations at any given time in the future, or that we shall not at another stage find that her nature demands a cultivation different from that which is planned for the average woman. We simply desire to feel free to take one step at a time.

In accordance with these plans, the first step was taken in October, when Miss Keller came to school with the other «new» pupils, and a rough classification of them all was made. It was at that time thought best for Helen to take up the subjects of arithmetic, English, English history, Latin, and advanced German. This work is progressing well. It was desirable, however, to get a more exact estimate of Helen's progress, and for this purpose I gave her at once four Harvard examination-papers that had been used at the college in June last by the candidates for admission. The subjects were those in which I supposed that Miss Keller was most advanced; but as she had never tried such an examination, and had had no preparation for an examination of any kind, the test would have been esteemed severe by a boy or girl in possession of all the faculties. Usually these papers are not tried until the candidate has been under special training of a technical character for a series of years. The conditions that I established were made the same as in the college, though the questions were of necessity read to Miss Keller, and the strain upon memory was greater.

The result was informally submitted to the members

<sup>1</sup> See also reference to Helen Keller in the article in this number on «Speech-Reading.»



of the Harvard faculty who had read the admission examination-books, and in every case I was assured that the grade was sufficient—in some respects more than sufficient—to pass the candidate. In reading these papers myself, I was struck by the literary style, which was original, and by the leisurely way in which the thoughts were brought out. Miss Keller seemed to me more willing to put a living interest into her papers than the average candidate is; and while she showed the most accurate acquaintance with the particular matter under discussion, she also showed a general cultivation which was as grateful to me as it was unusual. It was evident that the mind that was displaying itself had not been cramped by the technical training which is too often put in the place of a broader and more important instruction.

By these papers Miss Keller has shown that it would be an easy matter for her to pass the Harvard examinations in five or more hours in June next; but the question must be settled later in the year.

THESE words are written on the fifth of November. Helen has just finished her first examination in the work that her class in Latin has done since school opened. She had studied Latin only about one half of a year, and that separated from this date by two years. Her paper was marked «A» which signifies almost perfect. It was written under my immediate personal supervision, the questions being read to her. She was allotted an hour, and she finished the paper in fifty minutes.

It is impossible at this stage of the work for us to convey to Helen all the explanations of the teachers; but in spite of this, it is within limits for me to say that she keeps up with speaking and hearing girls. I have to-day unexpectedly asked for a report from each teacher on her work. One very rapid speaker among them says that at first she was aware of a change in her way of presenting the lesson, arising from an effort to give her information slowly; but that now she does not notice Helen's presence, and treats the class as though she were not there. In replying to «snap» questions, Helen is no more ready than other girls, but when she has time she does better work than the others. This teacher, as well as the others, thinks Helen's mental processes do not differ from those of other girls.

In German it is said that «Helen has always a clear, beautiful, accurate picture of the thing that she is reading of or describing. Very often other girls give a great many words and say nothing; Helen, never.» In Latin it is reported that Helen is quicker and more accurate than the average girl, and the teacher makes no change in her methods of instruction. Helen's English teacher thinks that there is little need of further instruction in that department, at least before admission to college.

After Helen had been three weeks in school her teacher in history asked her to prepare a theme on «The Qualities Which Make a Noble Man and a Great King,» and she produced the following:

#### WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A NOBLE MAN AND A GREAT KING?

«A noble man!» What do I mean by «a noble man?» I certainly do not necessarily mean a man of high rank, power or wealth, as the Romans did; but, to my mind, a noble man is he who strives to attain that which is beautiful and imperishable—love. Love is the foundation on which all nobility must

rest. If a man has love in his heart it will find its expression in many beautiful qualities, such as patience, courage, and charity. He is patriotic, honest and firm; he labors, not for promotion, but for the sake of the good which his work will bring to those around him. He is a true friend, whom all can trust, and all that is beautiful and good calls forth his warm enthusiasm. In a word, he is always «valiant and true.» A truly great king possesses all these qualities, and many others, which are necessary in the discharge of his many arduous duties. He will be self-controlled, clear-headed and quick to perceive the right thing to be done, and the best way of doing it. He will be strong, honorable and just; he will respect all the sacred things of life, such as liberty, property and education; and he will encourage the pursuits of peace—science, art, literature, agriculture and so forth. When he fights, it will be to defend his country against its foes, not for the sake of conquest or vengeance. In short, he will be «like unto the King of kings.»

Such a man, and such a king was King Alfred of England. He did not seek his own glory or fame; he had but one ambition, and that was to leave his people better and happier than he found them. After having driven out the Danes, who had for many years been ravaging and plundering the country, he first gathered the wisest, best men from all parts of his dominion around him, and then he set to work patiently to establish law, justice and order in the land. He rebuilt the old monasteries, and founded new ones, so that the people might learn to read and write, and gain useful knowledge; he himself translated some of the best books he could find from Latin into English. Consequently history tells us that he was the best and most beloved king England ever had.

Perhaps this is not a remarkable theme; but when we remember that it was written with a type-writer by one only sixteen years of age, who could not see what she was doing, who could not look back to recall the construction of a former sentence or phrase, who had never heard her teacher's voice, or when one thinks of one's self trying to do such a feat blindfolded, it takes on a different appearance. The punctuation alone is far better than that of most adults who have their eyes and ears, and who have enjoyed many years of instruction. So far as I can observe, there is but one slip. In the second paragraph, between the words «first» and «gathered,» the period key seems to have been struck instead of the space key near by it; but this many a seeing type-writer might do.

The day before the theme about King Alfred was written, Helen's teacher of English asked her to write a paper on «The Character of Rosalind,» and the following was the result:

#### CHARACTER OF ROSALIND.

What first strikes us in Rosalind's character is its buoyancy. As soon as she begins to speak, we know that she is young, fair and lovable. When we first meet her, she is grieving over the banishment of her father; but, on being chided by her cousin, Celia, for her sadness, we see how quickly she locks up her sorrow in her heart, and tries to be happy because Celia is happy. So when we hear her merry laugh, and listen to her bright conversation, we do not imagine for a moment that she has forgotten her sorrow; we know she is unselfishly trying to do her duty by her cousin. And when we see the smile fade from her sweet face, and the light from her eyes, because a fellow-creature is in trouble, we are not surprised. We feel that we have known all along that her nature was tender and sympathetic.

Rosalind's impulses, her petulance, her tenderness and her courageous defence of her father seem perfectly natural, and true to life; but it is very hard to put in words my idea of her character. It seems almost as if it would lose some of its beauty and womanliness, if I tried to analyse it, just as we lose a beautiful flower when we pull it to pieces to see how many stamens it has. Many beautiful traits are wonderfully blended in her character, and we cannot help loving the vivacious, affectionate and charming Rosalind.



In this school-girl's theme the teacher found but one word to mark. That was « buoyance » instead of « buoyancy »; and this shows a trait of Helen's style, for she is apt sometimes to use a word in an unusual form or sense which she has met in her reading.

*Arthur Gilman.*

**Helen Keller.**

SHE lives in light, not shadow,  
Not silence, but the sound  
Which thrills the stars of heaven  
And trembles from the ground.

She breathes a finer ether,  
Beholds a keener sun;  
In her supernal being  
Music and light are one.

Unknown the subtle senses  
That lead her through the day;  
Love, light, and song, and color  
Come by another way.

Sight brings she to the seeing,  
New song to those that hear;  
Her braver spirit sounding  
Where mortals fail and fear.

She at the heart of being  
Lonely and glad doth dwell—  
Spirit with scarce a veil of flesh,  
A soul made visible.

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**« Ian Maclaren » as a Theologian.**

THEOLOGY and literature have not always been on good terms, and a great deal is said and done to widen the breach. It is not long since a book was published the object of which was to define the religion of a man of letters, as though it were something unlike that of other men. Not having read the book, I am unaware if it claimed that the conscience and the affections and the will of a literary man are so unlike those of other men that he requires a distinct religion, though it is difficult to imagine any other basis for one. If the claim can be substantiated, I see no reason why it should not be elaborated, and if it contemplates future existence, why it should not proceed to define the heaven held in reserve for the religious man of letters, and the particular form of hades reserved for the irreligious.

Happily, the general tide of thought does not set in this direction, and not only is the man of letters not relegated to his single category, but he is more and more counted as belonging to the ordinary run of humanity, with no need of a special religion, nor even as devoted to one vocation. It is a fortunate thing when a true man of letters turns his attention to theology, provided he rises to the height and dignity of the subject. There are enough who are ready to load it with sneers and to assail it with criticism, but an honest and earnest treatment of it is always to be welcomed; for, instead of the man of letters needing a religion of his own, it is other people who need his religion. The above-mentioned book inverted the whole business. Religion has

been too much in the hands of theologians; it needs the light which can be thrown upon it by those close observers and interpreters of human life who dwell in the world of letters. The great writer is simply one who sees human life as it is, and sets it down in proper literary form.

Theology now goes half-way toward putting itself into the hands of literature by confessing that its field is largely the same—namely, life and nature. This is not a new departure, nor is it strictly an outcome of progress, but is rather a return to the beginning. The standpoint of Jesus was not in dogma, nor in ecclesiasticism, but in human life and its simple and evident relations to God and man. He found himself in life, and he made that the field of his action. Its natural and evident relations indicated his duties. The sources of the revelation of God which he made were in his own nature and in the world of human life about him. The fulfilment of his nature as the Son of the Father, and the life he lived in the world, constitute the gospel. The return to this conception is the chief characteristic of present-day theology. Hence the theologian of the new era need not be a metaphysician, nor of necessity a scholar; but he will be one who can interpret life at first hand, and follow it in all its ways; he will also have the discerning eye with which to see nature and penetrate to its meaning. We already have this order of theologians in the chief poets of the century: Browning with his direct vision of God; Tennyson interpreting the mystery of human life under the law of evolution; Whittier, the prophet of its hopes; Longfellow and Lowell, its teachers in every-day ethics. The writers of fiction have not done so well, having been inspired by a theory of realism which holds them down to one-sided and external views of life, while the poets, by the necessity of their calling, treat humanity in an ideal way, which is the only real way. But even the novelists have often rendered good service to theology by giving the final blow to some outworn dogma, or by standing sponsor for some new truth.

It is a fine service that the author of « The Bonnie Brier Bush » has rendered to theology in translating that charming cluster of stories or sketches into the form of religious teaching. « The Mind of the Master » is a straight, clear, penetrating look at Jesus, with no side-lights from other sources. Neither dogma nor church influences his touch or gives shape to a sentence. He looks upon that sacred life with the same close, sympathetic, and comprehensive glance with which he took in the Scotch parish. And here is where its value lies. The sketches move us because they are genuine interpretations of life; « The Mind of the Master » satisfies because it interprets his life.

It is needless to say of an author who is so true to himself,—a feature of Scottish writers,—that one finds in this book the same sincerity, the same soulfulness, the same keen discernment of motive and temper, which pervade his other works; « Ian Maclaren » and Dr. Watson are interchangeable names. He comes to this country as a writer of moving pictures of Scotch life; those who read « The Mind of the Master » will confess that he is also a theologian, and the two conceptions will not only not contradict, but will support each other.

*T. T. Munger.*