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BY W. H. CHANDLER.

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PONTIUS PILATE AT VIENNE.

Translated and abridged from the "Courrier des Etats Unis."

Vienne in Dauphiny, a province of France, the ancient capital of transalpine Gaul under the Romans, is situated on the river Rhone. There, on the left bank of that beautiful stream, is seen a tomb of an ancient architecture, which, according to tradition, is the tomb of Pontius Pilate—Pilate, under whose government Jesus Christ suffered. *Pasius est sub Pontio Pilato.* It was in Vienne also that the Wandering Jew revealed himself in 1777—a most remarkable occurrence, the spot that contained the ashes of the judge of the Righteous, was to be trodden upon by a descendant of his accuser.

The following chronicle was extracted from an old Latin manuscript found in a monastery near Vienne.

It was under the reign of Caligula, when C. Marcianus was prætor at Vienne, that an old man, bent with age, yet of a tall stature, was seen to descend from his litter and enter a house of modest appearance near the temple of Mars. Over the door of this house was written, in red letters, the name of F. Albinus. He was an old acquaintance of Pilate's. After mutual salutations, Albinus observed to him, that many years had elapsed since their separation. "Yes," replied Pilate, "many years—years of misfortune and affliction. Accused by the day on which I succeeded Valerius Gratus in the government of Judea! My name is ominous; it has been fatal to whomsoever has borne it. One of my ancestors imprinted an indelible mark of infamy on the fair front of Imperial Rome, when the Romans passed under the *Candide Ferula* in the Samnite war. Another perished by the hands of the Parthians in the war against Artabanus. And I—miserable me!

"You miserable?" asked Albinus; what have you done to entail misery on you? True, the injustice of Caligula has exiled you to Vienne, but for what crime? I have examined your affair at the *Tabularium*. You are denounced by Vitellius, prætor of Syria, your enemy, for having chastised the rebellious Hebrews, who had slain the most noble of the Samaritans, and who afterwards withdrew themselves on Mount Garizim. You are also accused of acting thus out of hatred against the Jews."

"No!" replied Pilate, "No! by all the gods, Albinus, it is not the injustice of Caesar that afflicts me."

"What then is the cause of your affliction?" continued Albinus. "Long have I known you—sensible, just, humane. I see it; you are the victim of Vitellius."

"Say not so, Albinus—Say not that I am the victim of Vitellius—No: I am the victim of a Higher Power! The Romans regard me as an object of Caesar's disgrace; the Jews, as the severe Proconsul; the Christians, as the executioner of their God!"

"Of their God, did you say, Pilate?—Impious wretch! Adore a God born in a manger, and put to death on the cross!"

"Beware, Albinus, beware!" continued Pilate. "If the Christ had been born under the purple, he would not have been adored. Listen. To your friendship I will submit the events of my life; you will afterwards judge whether I am worthy of your hospitality."

On my arrival at Jerusalem, I took possession of the Pretorium, and ordered a splendid feast to be prepared, to which I invited the Tetrarch of Judea, with the high priest and his officers. At the appointed hour, no guest appeared. This was an insult offered to my dignity. A few days afterwards, the Tetrarch deigned to pay me a visit. His deportment was grave and deceitful. He pretended that his religion forbade him and his attendants to sit down at the table of the Gentiles, and to offer up libations with them. I thought it expedient to accept of his excuse; but from that moment I was convinced that the conquered had declared themselves the enemies of the conquerors.

At that time, Jerusalem was of all conquered cities, the most difficult to govern. So turbulent were the people, that I lived in momentary dread of an insurrection. To repress it, I had but a single Centurion, and a handful of soldiers. I requested a reinforcement from the Prefect of Syria, who informed me that he had scarcely troops sufficient to defend his own province. Insatiate thirst of empire!—to extend our conquests beyond the means of defending them!

Among the various rumors which came to my ears, there was one that attracted my attention. A young man, it was said, had appeared in Galilee, preaching with a noble unadorned, a new law in the name of the God who had sent him. At first, I was apprehensive that his design was to stir up the people against the Romans; but soon were my fears dispelled. Jesus of Nazareth spoke rather as a friend of the Romans than of the Jews.

One day, in passing by the place of Siloe, where there was a great concourse of people, I observed, in the midst of the group, a young man leaning against a tree, who was calmly addressing the multitude. I was told that it was Jesus. This I could easily have suspected, so great was the difference between him and those who were listening to him. He appeared to be about thirty years of age. His golden colored hair and beard gave to his appearance a celestial aspect. Never have I seen a sweeter or a more serene countenance. What a contrast between him and his hearers, with their black beards and tawny complexions! Unwilling to interrupt him by my presence, I continued my walk, but signified to my Secretary to join the group and listen.

My Secretary's name was Manlius. He was the grandson of the chief of the conspirators, who encamped in Etruria, waiting for Catiline. Manlius was an ancient inhabitant of Judea, and well acquainted with the Hebrew language. He was devoted to me, and was worthy of my confidence.

On returning to the Pretorium, I found Manlius, who related to me the words that Jesus had pronounced at Siloe. Never have I heard in the Portico, or read in the works of the philosophers, any thing that can be compared to the maxims of Jesus. One of the rebellious Jews, so numerous in Jerusalem, having asked him if it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not, Jesus replied: *Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's.* It was on account of the wisdom of his sayings that I granted so much liberty to the Nazarene; for it was in my power to have had him arrested and exiled to Pontus; but this would have been contrary to that justice which has always characterized the Romans. This man was neither seditious nor rebellious. I extended to him my protection, unknown perhaps to himself. He was at liberty to act, to speak, to assemble and address the people, to choose disciples, unrestrained by any pretorian mandate.

Should it ever happen—may the Gods avert the omen!—should it ever happen, I say, that the religion of our forefathers be supplanted by the religion of Jesus, it will be to the noble toleration that Rome shall owe her premature obsequies—whilst I, miserable wretch!—I shall have been the instrument of what the Christians call Providence, and we—Destiny.

But this unlimited freedom granted to Jesus, revolted the Jews—not the poor, but the rich and powerful. It is true. Jesus was severe on the latter; and this was the reason, in my opinion, not to control the liberty of the Nazarene. "Scribes and Pharisees!" would he say to them, "you are a race of vipers!—you resemble painted sepulchres! At other times he would sneer at the proud alms of the Publican, telling him that the mite of the widow was more precious in the sight of God."

New complaints were daily made at the Pretorium against the insolence of Jesus. I was even informed that some misfortune would befall him—that it would not be the first time that Jerusalem had stoned those who called themselves prophets—and that, if the Pretorium refused justice, an appeal would be made to Caesar.

This I had prevented, by informing Caesar of all that happened. My conduct was approved of by the Senate, and I was promised a reinforcement of troops after the termination of the Parthian war.

Being too weak to suppress a sedition, I resolved upon adopting a measure that promised to re-establish tranquility in the city, without subjecting the Pretorium to humiliating concessions. I wrote to Jesus, requesting an interview with him at the Pretorium. He came.

Oh, Albinus! now that my blood runs cold in my veins, and that my body is bent down under the load of years, it is not surprising that Pilate should sometimes tremble; but then I was young—in my veins flowed the Spanish, mixed with the Roman blood, as incapable of fear as it was of perjuried emotions.

When the Nazarene made his appearance, I was walking in my basilic and my feet seemed fastened with an iron band, to the marble pavement. He was calm, the Nazarene—calm as innocence. When he came up to me, he stopped, and by a simple gesture, seemed to say to me: here I am.

For some time, I contemplated, with admiration and awe, this extraordinary type of a man—a type unknown to our numerous sculptors, who have given form and figure to all the gods and all the heroes.

"Jesus," said I to him at last—and my tongue faltered—"Jesus of Nazareth, I have granted you, for these last three years, ample freedom of speech; nor do I regret it. Your words are those of a sage. I know not whether you have read Socrates and Plato; but this I know, that there is in your discourses, a majestic simplicity that elevates you far above those great philosophers. The emperor is informed of it; and I, his humble representative in this country, am glad of having allowed you that liberty of which you are so worthy. However, I must not conceal from you, that your discourses have raised up against you powerful and inveterate enemies. Neither is this surprising. Socrates had his enemies, and he fell a victim to their hatred. Yours are doubly incensed against you, on account of your sayings;—against me, on account of the liberty extended towards you. They even accuse me indirectly of being leagued with you, for the purpose of depriving the Hebrews of the little civil power which Rome has left to them. My request—I do not say my orders—is, that you be more circumspect for the future, and more tender in rousing the pride of your enemies, lest they raise up against you the stupid populace, and compel me to employ the instruments of justice."

The Nazarene calmly replied: "Prince of the earth, your words proceed not from true wisdom. Say to the torrent to stop in the midst of the mountain because it will up-root the trees of the valley; the torrent will answer you, that it obeys the laws of the Creator. God alone knows whither flow the waters of the torrent. Verily, I say unto you: before the rose of Sharon blossoms, the blood of the just will be spilt."

"Your blood shall not be spilt," replied I, with emotion. "You are more precious in my estimation, on account of your wisdom, than all these turbulent and proud Pharisees, who abuse the freedom granted them by the Romans, conspire against Caesar, and construe our bounty into fear. Insolent wretches!—They are not aware that the wolf of the Tiber sometimes clothes himself with the skin of the sheep. I will protect you against them. My Pretorium is open to you as a place of refuge—it is a sacred asylum."

Jesus carelessly shook his head, and said, with a graceful and divine smile: "When the day shall have come, there will be no asylum for the Son of Man, neither on earth nor under the earth. The asylum of the Just is there (pointing to the heavens). That which is written in the books of the prophets must be accomplished."

"Young man," answered I mildly, "you oblige me to convert my request into an order. The safety of the province which has been confided to my care, requires it. You must observe more moderation in your discourses. Do not inflame my orders; you know them. May happiness attend you.—Farewell!"

"Prince of the earth," replied Jesus, "I come not to bring war into the world, but peace, love, and charity. I was born the same day on which Caesar Augustus gave peace to the Roman world. Persecution proceeds not from me. I expect it from others, and will meet it in obedience to the will of my father, who has shown me the way. Restrain, therefore, your worldly prudence. It is not in your power to arrest the victim at the foot of the tabernacle of expiation."

So saying, he disappeared like a bright shadow behind the curtains of the basilic. Herod the Tetrarch, who then reigned in Judea, and who died devoured by vermin, was a weak and wicked man, chosen by the chiefs of the law to be the instrument of their hatred. To him the enemies of Jesus addressed themselves, to wreak their vengeance on the Nazarene. He was immediately put to death, but though proud of his regal dignity, yet he was afraid of committing an act that might diminish his influence with Caesar.

Herod called on me one day at the Pretorium; and on rising to take leave, after some insignificant conversation, he asked me what was my opinion concerning the Nazarene. I replied, that Jesus appeared to me to be one of those grave philosophers that great nations sometimes produce; that his doctrine was by no means dangerous; and that the intention of Rome was, to leave him the freedom of speech which was justified by his actions. Herod smiled maliciously, and saluting me with ironical respect, he departed.

The great feast of the Jews was approaching; and their intention was to avail themselves of the popular exaltation, which always manifests itself at the solemnities of the passover. The city was overflowing with a tumultuous populace, clamoring for death of the Nazarene. My emissaries informed me that the treasure of the Temple had been employed in bribing the people.—The danger was pressing. A Roman centurion had been insulted.

I wrote to the prefect of Syria, requesting a hundred foot soldiers and the same number of cavalry. He declined. I saw myself alone with a handful of veterans in the midst of a rebellious city—too weak to suppress disorder, and having no other choice left than to tolerate it.

They had seized upon Jesus; and the seditious rabble, although they knew they had nothing to fear from the Pretorium, believing on the faith of their leaders, that I winked at their seditions: continued vociferating—"Crucify him, crucify him!"

Three powerful parties at that time had combined together against Jesus. First, the Herodians and the Sadducees, whose seditious conduct appeared to have proceeded from a double motive: they hated the Nazarene, and were impatient of the Roman yoke. They could never forgive me for having entered their holy city with banners that bore the image of the Roman emperor; and although, in this instance, I had committed a fatal error, yet the sacrifice did not appear less heinous in their eyes. Another grievance also rankled in their bosoms. I had proposed to employ part of the treasure of the Temple in erecting edifices of public utility. My proposal was scowled at. The Pharisees were the avowed enemies of Jesus.

They cared not for the Governor; but they bore with bitterness the severe reprimands which the Nazarene had, during three years, been continually throwing out against them wherever he went. Too weak and too pusillanimous to act by themselves, they had eagerly embraced the quarrel of the Herodians and Sadducees. Besides these three parties, I had to contend against the reckless and profligate populace, always ready to join in a sedition, and to profit by the disorder and confusion that result therefrom.

Jesus was dragged before the Council of the Priests and condemned to death. It was then that the High Priest, Caiaphas, performed a derisory act of submission. He sent his prisoner to me to pronounce his condemnation and secure his execution. I answered him that, as Jesus was a Galilean, the affair came within Herod's jurisdiction, and ordered Jesus to be sent thither. The wily Tetrarch professed humility, and protesting his deference to the lieutenant of Caesar, he committed the fate of the man to my hands.

Soon my palace assumed the aspect of a besieged citadel: every moment increased the number of the seditions. Jerusalem was inundated with crowds from the mountains of Nazareth, the towns of Galilee, and the plains of Esdrelon. All Judea appeared to be pouring into that devoted city.

I had taken to wife a girl from among the Gauls, who pretended to see into futurity. Weeping and throwing herself at my feet, "Beware," said she to me, "beware, and touch not that man, for he is holy. Last night, I saw him in a vision. He was walking on the waters—he was flying on the wings of the wind. He spoke to the palm trees, to the fishes of the lake—all were obedient to him. Behold! the torrent of Mount Cedron flows with blood—the statues of Caesar are soiled with the filth of the gemonies—the columns of the Pretorium have given way, and the sun is veiled in mourning like a vestal in the tomb! O, Pilate! evil awaits thee. If thou wilt not listen to the words of thy wife, dread the curse of a Roman Senate—dread the frowns of Caesar!"

By this time my marble stairs groaned under the weight of the multitude. The Nazarene, was brought back to me. I proceeded to the Hall of Justice, followed by my guards, and asked the people in a severe tone, what they demanded? "The death of the Nazarene," was their reply. For what crime? "He has blasphemed; he has prophesied the ruin of the Temple; he calls himself the Son of God—the Messiah—the King of the Jews." Roman justice, said I, punish not such offences with death. "Crucify him!" shouted forth the relentless rabble.

The vociferations of the infuriated multitude shook the palace to its foundation. One man alone appeared calm in the midst of the tumult. He was like unto the Statue of Innocence placed in the temples of the Euménides. It was the Nazarene.

After many fruitless attempts to protect him from the fury of his merciless persecutors, I had the basest of all measures which, at that moment, appeared to me to be the only one that could save his life. I ordered him to be scourged; then, calling for a ewer, I washed my hands in presence of the clamorous multitude, thereby signifying to them my disapprobation of the deed.

But in vain. It was his life that these wretches thirsted after. Often, in our civil commotions, I witnessed the furious animosity of the multitude; but nothing could ever be compared to what I beheld in the present instance. It might have been truly said that, on this occasion, all the phantoms of the infernal regions had assembled together at Jerusalem. The crowd appeared not to walk; they were borne off and whirled as vortex, rolling along like living waves, from the basilic to the Pretorium, and from the Pretorium to the basilic, shrieking and howling, and uttering the most execrable imprecations.

By degrees the day darkened like a winter twilight, such as had been seen at the death of the great Julius Cæsar. It was likewise towards the idea of March. I, the contumacious governor of a rebellious city, was leaning against a column of my basilic, contemplating with dreary gloom, this Theory of Tartarus dragging to execution the innocent Nazarene. All around me was a desert. Jerusalem had vomited forth her indwellers through the funeral gate that leads to the Gemoniæ. An air of desolation and sadness enveloped me. My guard had joined the cavalry, and the Centurion, to display a show of power, was endeavoring to maintain order. I was left alone, and my breaking heart admonished me, that what was passing at that moment appertained rather to the history of the gods than to that of men. Loud clamors were heard proceeding from Golgotha, which borne on the winds appeared to announce an agony such as never had been heard by mortal ear. Dark clouds lowered over the pinnacle of the Temple, and their large raptores settled over the city and covered it as with a veil. So dreadful were the signs that were manifested, both in the heavens, and on the earth, that Dionysius, the Areopagite, is reported to have exclaimed: "Either the Author of Nature is suffering, or the Universe is falling apart."

Towards the first hour of the night, I threw my arms around me, and went down into the city towards the gate of Golgotha. The sacrifice had been consummated. The crowd were returning home, still agitated, it is true but gloomy and sad, taciturn, desperate. What they had witnessed, had struck them with terror and remorse. I also saw my little Roman Cohort pass by mournfully, the standard bearer having veiled his face in token of grief, and I overheard some of the soldiers murmuring strange words which I did not comprehend. Others were recounting prodigies almost similar to those which had so often smote the Romans with dismay by the will of the gods. Sometimes groups of men and women would halt, then, looking back towards Mount Calvary, would remain in motionless, in the expectation of witnessing some new prodigy.

I returned to the Pretorium sad and pensive. On ascending the stairs, the steps of which were still stained with the blood of the Nazarene, I perceived an old man in a suppliant posture, and behind him, several women in tears. He was himself at my feet, and wept bitterly. "It is I to him mildly—who are you, and what is your request?"—"I am Joseph of Arimathea, replied he, "and I am come to beg of you, on my knees, the permission to bury Jesus of Nazareth."—"Your prayer is granted," said I to him, and at the same time, ordered the centurion to permit the man to superintend the interment, lest it might be profaned. A few days afterwards, the sepulchre was found empty. The disciples of Jesus published all over the country that he had risen from the dead, as he had foretold.

A last duty remained for me to perform, it was to communicate to Caesar the details of this deplorable event. It did the same night that followed the fatal catastrophe, and had just finished the communication when the day began to dawn.

At that moment the sound of clarions playing the air of Diana, struck my ear. Casting my eyes towards the caesarean gate, I beheld a troop of soldiers, and heard at a distance, other trumpets sounding Caesar's March. It was the reinforcements that had been promised me—two thousand chosen men, who, to hasten their arrival, had marched all night. "It has then been decreed by the Fates," cried I, wringing my hands, "that the great iniquity should be accomplished—that, for the purpose of averting the deeds of yesterday, troops should arrive to-day! Cruel destiny, how thou sportest with the affairs of mortals! Alas! it was but too true, what the Nazarene exclaimed when writhing on the cross: ALL IS CONSUMMATED!"

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[For the Evansville Journal.]

Lines to a Young Lady in Evansville.

Spring's gentle showers again awake
New charms for every one but me,
No more can I its joys partake,
My soul is captive held by thee.

I saw thee in the house of prayer—
Thy beauteous form—thy earnest eye,
Thou seemedst at a seraph-lingerer there
To lure us to thy native sky.

I saw thee in the magic dance,
Unheeded passed all others by,
Thy airy step—thy laughing glance,
They sealed my soul's captivity.

Ah! could I hope one thought of me
Within thy gentle breast would dwell,
Once more my lot might happy be,
Whose present sorrows none can tell.

Correspondence of the New York Tribune.

VISIT TO MR. CLAY AT ASHLAND.

LEXINGTON, KY., May 25, 1845.

I have at last realized one of my dearest wishes, that of seeing Henry Clay at Ashland. I called on him with a friend this morning, but he was absent on his farm, and Charles the "freed slave," told us he would not be at home until the afternoon, so we returned to Lexington, and at 5 P. M. retraced our steps to Ashland. Mr. Clay had returned, and meeting us at the door, took hold of our hands before I could even present a letter of introduction, and made us welcome to his house. His manners completely overcame all the ceremonies of speech I had prepared, and I was so nervous as to give my left hand instead of the right for his grasp. But we were soon perfectly at home, as every man must be with Henry Clay, and in a half-hour's time we had talked about the various scenes of the country I had visited in the past year, Mr. Clay occasionally giving us incidents and recollections of his own life, and I felt as though I had known him personally for years. He is at present rather feeble in health, and was obliged to resort to glasses on reading my letter, but his steps and his voice are firm and strong as those of a man in prime of life. The room into which we were shown, was a species of sitting and audience room; a bust of Mr. Clay graced a niche in one corner, and one which I judged to be Theodore Frelinghuysen's stood in an opposite corner. On one of the side walls hung the original or a copy of "Washington and his family," on the other the engraving, representing Mr. Clay standing out in the field with a globe at his feet; besides these there were some family portraits, which, with a splendid cut-glass vase, standing upon a centre table, made up the furniture of the room. Here Mr. Clay sat in his easy chair every thing about him neat and simple as his of stum from a silver box, on the lid of which I could see a log cabin engraved, he looked and seemed more like the quiet happy farmer than any thing else. Mr. C. has lived at Ashland forty years, the place bore that name when he came to it, as he says probably on account of the quantity of Ash timber on it, and he has made it the most delightful retreat in all the West. The estate is about six hundred acres large, all under the highest cultivation, excepting some two hundred acres of Park, which is entirely cleared of underbrush and small trees, and is, to use the words of Lord Morpeth, who staid at Ashland nearly a week, the nearest approach to an English Park of any in this country.—It serves also for a noble pasture, and here I saw some of Mr. C.'s fine horses and Durham cattle. He is said to have some of the finest stock in all Kentucky, which is to say the finest in America, and if I am able to judge, I confirm that report. The largest part of his farm is devoted to wheat, hemp, rye, &c., and his crops look most splendidly. He has also paid great attention to ornamenting his lands with beautiful shade trees, shrubs, flowers, and fruit orchards. From the road which passes his place on the north-west side, a carriage course leads up to the house, lined with locust, cypress, and cedar and other rare trees, and the rose, jasmine and ivy were clustering about them, and peeping thru' the grass and boughs like so many laughing fairies as we drove up.

Ashland is about a mile from Lexington, East, on the road leading out of Main street, and is on one of the loveliest situations around that delightful town—Mr. C.'s mansion is nearly hidden from the road by the trees surrounding it, and is as quiet and secluded, save to the throng of pilgrims continually pouring up there to greet its more than royal possessor, as though it were in the wilderness. Some parts of it are now undergoing repairs, and Mr. Clay took us about to see his contemplated improvements. The houses of his slaves are all very neat, and surrounded by better gardens, and more shrubbery than one half of the farm houses in the country, and all the inmates were as happy as human beings can be. Charles, of whom so much has been said, is a kind of second master of household to Mr. Clay, and enjoys the greatest trust and confidence. To him can the keys of the wine-cellar be given without fear, and on all occasions were help was needed, Mr. Clay called for Charles. Charles brought us up wine, Charles was at the door, at the carriage, at the gate, every where in fact, and as polite and civil as a man asking for office. He is a fine looking, middling sized Negro, about 30 years old, and I do not believe he could be drawn from Mr. Clay except by absolute animal force, so great is his devotion to him. As I said, Mr. Clay has lived at Ashland forty years—he said he had seen Cincinnati grow from a small village to its present size, and had witnessed the growth of much of the West in the same time. Speaking of Cincinnati, he said it was the only city, the causes of whose rapid rise he could not compass. He has never been in St. Louis, though he has land near that city, and intends visiting soon to effect

a sale of his property there. He concurred with me in the opinion that St. Louis was to be ultimately the great city of the West.—Mr. C. is visited perhaps more than any man in the country, and he enjoys showing his his friend the lands which he has brought to such perfection, and he is constantly adopting every improvement that is suggested. In fact he is the prince pastoral, the real *bona fide* farmer, and every part of his estate, flocks and herds show it. Beside the six hundred, he has about two hundred acres at a distance in the rear of Ashland, and these two lots form his estate. As it was nearly night when we called on Mr. Clay, we had hardly time to see things properly, and he urged me to come up again. I went up the day following in company with the "Swiss Bell Ringers," who were also on a visit to Ashland. Mr. Clay received the band and myself warmly at the door, and after a few civilities, put on his white hat and walked through the grounds with us, talking freely and familiarly to all.

He is the most easy and affable man I have ever seen. He picked a rose for each of us—mine I have most carefully preserved, and shall give it to my lady-love when I find one, and she may consider it a prize! He told me while we were walking, about Lord Morpeth's early rising while at Ashland, and said he used to go on foot a mile down to the post, and bring up the mail before he was out of bed. Some sprigs of nobility are not so truly great and humble, I surmise, but of Morpeth Mr. Clay spoke in the highest terms. After an hour spent in the Park and garden, the "Bell Ringers" proposed giving Mr. Clay and his family a specimen of their music, and we of course adjourned to the house. Here for the first time I saw Mrs. Clay, and a son, Mr. John Clay; besides these were present some half a dozen young gentlemen and ladies whom I did not know, and an old French gentleman, Mr. Mentell, and his lady. Mr. Clay was expecting the Bell-Ringers and had invited for the occasion a few friends. They performed before him in the room I have already described, to his very great delight. Mrs. Montell a woman of remarkable mind for so old a person, was Mr. Clay's referee on all points of musical criticism, for, she seemed intimate with all great compositions and artists, and she decided this to be the last and crowning novelty of the musical world. On this occasion Mr. Clay sent for some of his home-made wine, pressed at Ashland from the Catawba grape—it was most delicious, something like sparkling Hock in flavor, but of a richer taste. After performing several pieces in the house, the Bell-Ringers went out into never heard anything so perfectly bewitching as the sound of the bells during that chime. Faintly the sounds came stealing through the branches of the old trees, and seemed to drop all liquid and trembling from the leaves, the air and the delicate vines climbing on the window-sashes. Mr. Clay said he would be glad to have a chapel in the Park, if he could always hear such voices from it. It was to me a rare time and treat. There I was at Ashland, and there was before me the man whom I had so long loved without seeing him, and my great heart-longing was satisfied.

I recollect, so long ago as when a mere boy, how earnestly my father hoped to live to see Henry Clay President, how he told me he was one of the first, noblest, and most eloquent men living—and what I then heard gave a hue to my mind—I grow up to feel as a father had felt—I too heard his mighty voice above the storms of civil war in his own land, quelling it as with a master's spirit—I too heard the echoes of that voice rushing like a mighty wind among the tombs and altars of the Greeks, kindling life from Spartan ashes—and up from the hills and valleys of Bolivia it rose like a song rising the hearts and hands of the oppressed until they become free, and why should I not love Henry Clay? All that was beautiful or venerable clustered on his brows, and I sought him as the worshiper seeks his Oracle—not that I worship men—but that I worship the heroic and beautiful dwelling in them. I shall ever look upon my visit to Henry Clay and Ashland as the brightest spot in my life. I have brought away from there in my recollection a thing of beauty—and quiet and peace.

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever!" Before parting with Mr. Clay he gave me two Ashland canes, one for myself and one for you, which I shall deliver to you ere long. The Sun was behind the woods when our last visit terminated, and I left the Sage-Farmer with as much regret as though he had been my brother. God bless him and his forever! What crown would lend lustre to his brow, since it has been twined with the greenest wreaths a free people could give? May the evening of his years be as cloudless as his noon has been glorious, as, though I may never sit in the White House as President, he is above that point, where office, however high, can add lustre to his fame.—On Sunday, the day following my visit to the Mansion at Ashland, I could not resist the inclination to see once more a place to me so very hallowed. On my way up I passed Mr. Clay, who with his wife had started for church—alas! though I, as I looked upon his high calm brow for the last time, can this be the gambler, Sabbath breaker, blasphemer, all these vile characters blended, which have been ascribed to him and cried abroad by men whose lips were too foul to speak as great name as he will bear when they and their memories are less than ashes? One hour with Mr. Clay at home, and he who enjoys that hour, says in his heart, "That is the simplest and noblest man I have ever looked upon!"

Truly yours, S.