

me introduce to your notice a second series o' Appleton's reprints frae the *London Times*.

THE MAJOR.—Is it equal to the first?

THE LAIRD.—Superior, if anything, in my humble opinion. There is not a single paper which is not a gem in its way. In particular, the article on *Uncle Tom's Cabin* contains many nuts well deserving o' a deliberate cracking. Maybe you will thole me to read the concluding sentences thereof. Abolitionist as I am, the essay has made me think twice about twa or three matters that I thought my mind had been made up upon.

THE MAJOR.—*Legs, Laird, legs!*

THE LAIRD.—That's Greek or Gælic, I jealouse, but nae matter, here is the passage:—

"The world is working its way towards liberty, and the blacks will not be left behind in the onward march. Since the adoption of the American Constitution, seven States have voluntarily abolished slavery. When that Constitution was proclaimed there was scarcely a free black in the country. According to the last census, the free blacks amount to 418,173, and of these 233,691 are blacks of the South, liberated by their owners, and not by the force of law. We cannot shut our eyes to these facts. Neither can we deny that, desirable as negro emancipation may be in the United States, *abolition must be the result of growth, not of revolution, must be patiently wrought out by means of the American Constitution, and not in bitter spite of it.* America cannot for any time resist the enlightened spirit of our age, and it is manifestly her interest to adapt her institutions to its temper. That she will eventually do so if she be not a divided household—if the South be not goaded to illiberality by the North—if public writers deal with the matter in the spirit of conciliation, justice, charity, and truth, we will not permit ourselves to doubt. That she is alive to the necessities of the age is manifest from the circumstance that, for the last four years, she has been busy in preparing the way for emancipation by a method that has not failed in older countries to remove national troubles almost as intolerable as that of Slavery itself. We have learnt to believe that the Old World is to be saved and renewed by means of emigration. Who shall say that the New World—in visible danger from the presence of a dark inheritance bequeathed to it by Europe—shall not be rescued by the same providential means? The negro colony of Liberia, established by the United States, extends along the Western coast of Africa, a distance of more than 500 miles. The civilized black population amounts to 8,000 souls. The heathen population is over 200,000. The soil of the colony is fertile, its exports are daily increasing, it has already entered into diplomatic relations with Great Britain and France. A Government is established, which might have been framed by the whitest skins; 2,000 communicants are in connection with its churches; 1,500 children attend its Sabbath Schools. Education has become—would that it were so here—a national obligation; and the work of instruction and conversion is carried on by educated negroes among their brethren, who cannot fail to appreciate the service

and accept the blessing. The refuge afforded by Liberia for the gradual reception of the manumitted and civilized slaves of the United States, we hold to be the most promising element in the question, upon the tranquil settlement of which the happiness and political existence of the United States depend. It will enable America to save herself, and to achieve a work far nobler than that of winning her own political independence. The civilization of Africa hangs largely upon her wisdom. A quarter of the world may be Christianized by the act which enables America to perform the first of Christian duties. We have said that the process of liberation is going on, and that we are convinced the South, in its own interests, will not be laggard in the labor. Liberia and similar spots on the earth's surface proffer aid to the South, which cannot be rejected with safety. That the aid may be accepted with alacrity and good heart, let us have no more *Uncle Tom's Cabins* engendering ill-will, keeping up bad blood, and rendering well-disposed, humane, but critically-placed men their own enemies and the stumbling-blocks to civilization and to the spread of glad tidings from Heaven.

THE DOCTOR.—There is much truth in these remarks, begging Mrs. Stowe's pardon for being so bold as to say so.

THE MAJOR.—Here is a novel, oh, Doctor! which I commend to your very special attention. It is to be *read*, mind you, and not dipped into.

THE DOCTOR.—What name does it answer to?

THE MAJOR.—*Basil, a story of Modern life. By Edward Wilkie Collins, Author of "Antonina," "Rambles beyond Railways," &c.*

THE DOCTOR.—The title likes me not. Your *modern life stories* are, generally speaking, pestilently dull affairs, abounding with wax candles and silver plate, redolent of musk and attar of roses.

THE MAJOR.—Mr. Collins, I can assure you, deals in no such combustibles. The fiction which I refer to is composed of sterner stuff. William Godwin in his freshest and most vigorous days might have fathered *Basil*, without a blush. It is a story full of terrible earnestness, and though the writer strikes but a few notes, these thrill you like the blast of a giant's trumpet. Since the appearance of Jane Eyre I have read nothing to compare with this most masterly tale. It is bone, sinew, and muscle from beginning to end. Besides *Basil*, I have just finished perusing another delightful volume published recently by the Harpers. This is the book,—"*Corneille and his times*."

THE DOCTOR.—It strikes me like a dream, that I have seen something very like it, many years ago.

THE MAJOR.—Very probably. In his preface the author says:—"I have reprinted in the present volume, one of the first works of my youth,—a work published for the first time nearly forty years ago. I have made many changes in it."

THE DOCTOR.—I now distinctly remember the essay. It contains some excellent criticisms.