

men, though severed from us by the gulfs of centuries, trod the same life-paths in which we are walking to-day; struggled with the same mysterious problems of existence; had the same hopes and fears beating in their bosoms; and looked up into the same heavens with trembling awe or saintly hope. Who can doubt that many of those who so bravely lifted up the song of faith on earth now wear the singing robes of heaven! "Being dead they yet speak to us." Their rapturous strains linger on earth to cheer us poor pilgrims through the night and darkness. Theirs were truly

"Songs that gushed from the heart.
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eye-lids start."

"Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer."

All their rich experience, their holy attainments, reached by sore toil and endeavour, are treasured for us in the songs they sang, in the strains they chanted when workers and weepers here below. Though the hymns of these grand, old singers were written in different centuries, by men of various creeds and churches, yet because they were heart-utterances, they rise in the grandeur of loud peals of harmony. Their voices are many, but a substantial unity pervades their anthems of praise, as though they were parts of one grand oratorio. It is like the unison of the "many-voiced ocean" as we listen to the tramp and roll of its waves along the shore, when every little flood is clapping its hands, and every billow sends up its music from cliff and cave, and all are but parts of one glorious harmony. Or like the music of the storm in a pine forest, as in stately march it walks along from branch to branch, or thunders amid the lofty boughs, making a grand diapason in creation's oratorio. So with these old singers whose voices

"Echo along the corridors of time."

The one name which is above every name has made all their music. From the first century to the present, they combine harmoniously, and form a meet prelude to the everlasting song of the great multitude from all kindreds and tongues and people, who shall pour, in concert, the torrents of hallelujahs through heaven's arches and gateways of praise, in ascription "to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

We have now arrived, in our rapid survey, at the Reformation. Through the struggles and turmoils of the dark ages, humanity at length reached the happy vantage ground from which modern pro-

gress takes its rise. The revival of learning, the invention of printing, the diffusion of intelligence, the discovery of America were all preparatory steps in the great march of Providence for a far mightier event—the emancipation of the mind and conscience of Europe from the spiritual thralldom under which they had lain for centuries. The Reformation struck the fetters from the human intellect and initiated a new era—an era of great men and great deeds,—adorned by the names of Luther, Calvin, Knox, whose achievements are the very heir-looms of the nations, the palladia of freedom and civilization, the foundation of that revived and restored christianity which has beautified and blessed the modern world. Shakespeare with his vast all-comprehending genius, Milton with his strain of immortal music, Newton the patriarch of science, the heroic Gustavus Adolphus, the lion-hearted Cromwell, the christian soldier and statesman, the Pilgrim Fathers and their great Democratic Republic in the new world—what names of power are these, all bearing witness to the restored faith of the Protestant ages, and the advent of a new intellectual and religious era whose far-reaching consequences are yet but faintly apprehended.

The first day of November A. D. 1517, is the date of the new epoch. On that day, in the town of Wittenberg in Germany, a wan-visaged young man dressed in monk's gown and hood, was seen marching with firm step and calm countenance to the door of the cathedral. Thereon, hammer in hand, he affixed certain documents and quietly returned home. The monk was Martin Luther; his paper contained certain theses against those vile Indulgences, or pardons for human sin, that were then sold by the voluptuous Pope Leo the Tenth, and preached over Germany, with brazen audacity, by Tetzel. "Pour in your money," cried the mercenary emissary of Rome, "and whatever crimes you have committed or may commit are forgiven! Pour in your coin, and the souls of your friends and relations will fly out of Purgatory the moment they hear the chink of your dollars at the bottom of the box." The righteous wrath of Luther was kindled against the profane imposture; and soon the blows of that little hammer that fastened to the church door his denunciations of the unholy system, reverberated throughout Europe, and startled men like thunder-peals. The printing press was at work; men were no longer in darkness; and soon the monk's voice was heard in all lands, and even within the walls of Rome itself. "Tush, tush!" said the polished, pagan-hearted Pope, "'tis only a quarrel of monks." It was far more than that. The hour ap-