

OUR TABLE.

I ask not from what land he came,
Nor where his youth was nursed—
If pure the stream, what matters it
The spot from whence it burst!

THE love of country is one of the most godlike sentiments which elevate and ennoble the human heart, covering, as with a robe of charity, many of the frailties of poor humanity. It is to this feeling the world is indebted for the loftiest deeds which grace its history—it is this which has taught the weak to endure almost beyond the power of mortal courage—which has linked together the good and brave through long years of danger and of toil, making the common cares of life light and unheeded as thistle-down borne on the careering wind.

In a country such as this, there can, of necessity, be but a comparatively small portion of patriotism, as a sentiment. Gathered together from every clime, the associations of our youth are far away, and the tales of our fathers are in other and distant lands, and there has the "heart's first love" been lavished. It is there we turn in our most cherished dreams of home. True, this is the less perceptible to the vast majority of the inhabitants of British America, that they yet pay their homage to the same sovereign, and that they yet live under the banner which guards the tombs of their sires. Nor can it ever be said of us, that the duty of patriotism has not been well fulfilled. Though all had owned their birthplace in the soil, they could not more freely have offered their lives to defend it. Their devoted loyalty and dutiful patriotism have, in this, well and justly won for our countrymen the admiration of the world.

It is, however, matter of deep regret, that when apparently safe from any common foe, dissensions creep in amongst us, sometimes almost shaking society to its base. The people of some particular country, or the votaries of some particular creed, become subject to distrust, and evil prejudices are engendered, which, inspiring the real enemy, by feeding them with hopes founded upon our disunion, threaten us with dangers which can only be averted by our again forgetting our various shades of difference, and rallying, like brethren, around our common flag—and, when thus united, we are more than a match for any and every foe. Wherefore, then, should disunion be permitted to rear among us her serpent-head, and, by her cunning, to render victory doubtful, where force will ever, as it has hitherto done, utterly and signally fail.

We have, indeed, much pleasure in the remembrance, that, in the day of peril, the denizens of every country, and the followers of every creed, were alike eager to fill the post of danger. There was no questioning then, "Of what clime art thou?" but the highest in the land stood in the ranks beside

his humblest fellow, with willing heart and strong arm, to strike a blow for *home*. Neither was this generous feeling responded to only by the children of "our own green isles." Even they whose childhood had been cherished under the "star-spangled banner," forgot all save that their grandsires had been, as their children were, dependent upon the impenetrable agis of chivalry and truth—the sky-towering pennon of earth and ocean's queen—and scorning the lawless plunderers, who, degrading the hallowed name of liberty, came to spoil the "land we live in," they emulated the daring pride of the native defenders of Britain's flag, and prepared to meet the invaders upon the very threshold of the soil.

Here was an exemplification of the duty of patriotism, but without opposition to the sentiment—for no American could have supposed that, in battling with outcasts, he opposed his country; and did the clarion summon Britain and her child to battle, our American brethren might not so readily seek the field. We could scarcely ask it of them—for difficult it must be, even in a just cause, to strike against our country; but, judging from recent events, we might assuredly rely upon them to form defensive armies, able and willing to repel aggression—ready to stand shoulder to shoulder with neighbours and friends, for the defence of the crown and laws, under which they have prospered, and of the firesides where dwell, in happiness and peace, the wives and families they love.

America is too young to possess the generous nobility which belongs to Britain, and her people know not of the high souled feelings nursed among those whose history is full of lofty grandeur. They date their glory from the revolution; and, unless among the heroes of that event, they look in vain for aught of which, as a nation, they can be proud. Unlike Britain, which, inured to war and victory, and confident in her own strength, can forget, whenever the sword is sheathed, all save the noble traits of her enemy, America engendered, during her doubtful wars, many prejudices, which are not yet sufficiently covered with the healing balm of time, to permit the descendants of those who bled to view the origin of the strife with an unjaundiced eye; and painfully conscious of an inferiority which few dare to own, there never has been a general cordiality in the friendship of the now powerful offspring towards her once gentle and indulgent mother. This enmity is, however, evidently forced and unnatural. There is in every American heart, a latent feeling of veneration and esteem for Britain, which, although often crusted over with a paltry jealousy, is readily warmed into life, by the benevolence of our Government and people, when citizens of the Union become naturalized subjects of the Crown. Their narrow prejudices vanish, when they experience the real freedom guaranteed by the laws of the Empire and of her colonies. Nay, even the *pride of ancestry*