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"WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

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IN THE FIRE:—A CHRISTMAS REVERIE.

The Christmas ball is over,
The mansion is at rest;
No sound is heard but the sleigh-bells,
Of the last departing guest.
Now these are hushed in distance—
And the moon-beams glimmer bright
Over snow-clad branches,
And fields all dazzling white.
The lights are all extinguished—
The good-nights have all been said—
The mistle-toe hangs forsaken,
The garlands are withered and dead.
The lover's farewell has been whispered,
The foot-falls have all died away
From off the marble stair-case
Within the mansion gray.
The portals all are fastened;
And the porter's echoing tread,
Melts at last into silence,
And the house is still as the dead.

But a maiden in rich attire,
Satin and lace like snow,
Leans over the oaken mantel
O'er the fire-light's ruddy glow.
And with vague imaginings
And wonderings, her eyes
See in its fitful glimmering
Strange forms and faces rise.

She sees the wise men kneeling
With gifts upon the ground,
Before that lowly manger,
And the Christ-child halo-crowned.

Where the back-log casts a shadow,
She sees a garden rise;
And a man in flowing garments
Within it prostrate lies.
Suff'ring a whole world's anguish!
Its crimes, its sin and pain,
And then the vision fadeth—
The Garden of Gethsemane
Gives place to Calvary's agony;
And she feels Life's fearful cost,
While a thorn-crowned Saviour
Hangs, mocked at, on the Cross.

Now all the dusky pulses
Of the slumbering coals beat low,
And before her deep eyes dreaming
Other visions come and go.

With pensive brow she stands
In the glow of the rhythmic fire—
With musing eyes she sees
A city—tower and spire,
Gleam in the throbbing coals
That mingle their light with the gloom,
And shine on the oaken panels
Of the ancient, stately room.
Here she sees a palace
With lighted windows gay—
And here, a shining cottage
And there, a hovel grey.
And here, a tall cathedral
Silently solemn and grand,
Holding upward lofty spires
Toward the gates of the other land.
And here rises a humble church,
As she dreamily watches on—
But then the glimmering brightness dulls,
The city has faded and gone.

And still she dreams and gazes
Into the fire's bed—
And another city rises

From the ashes of the dead.
Here frowns a monument tall
Above the church-yard moss,
Here gleams a marble tablet
And there a wooden cross.
And here a stately tomb
Solemn, and still, and lone,
Raising its arched roof upwards
On pillars carved in stone.
And many a humble slab
She sees in the ashes gray—
Then monument, tomb, and tablet,
Crumble and fall away.
And the light fades off the panels,
And the maiden in pensive mood,
Sees only ashes left to mark
The place where the cities stood.

Berkeley, Dec. 25, 1874.

ST. JAMES.

"IT WAS ME."

BY PROF. SILL.

The question is often asked, whether the above is a correct expression. That depends on the meaning attached to the word "correct." If compliance with the rules laid down in grammars is meant, the question must be answered—no. The rule requires the predicate pronoun, after the verb "to be," to take the case of the subject. If, however, by "correct" we mean supported by good usage (in spoken, or in written speech), and consistent with the principles of grammar because logically accurate, the question may be answered—yes.

The phrase is instinctively felt to be correct, in a certain definite class of cases (to be described below), and accordingly it is almost universally used in speech, whenever the idea is expressed suddenly, without any deliberate reference to remembered rules. Let us analyze this instinct, and discover the reason which underlies it.

Whatever the rules of grammarians may say, the principles of grammar demand that the inflectional form (or cases) of words shall express their true relations to each other. "Me" is the objective case of the pronoun, of which "I" is the nominative. "Me" therefore denotes the object, "I" the subject, of any conception. The phrase, "It was me" is correctly used, whenever the relation of the person designated by the pronoun is an object-relation. This relation to the action may not be formally expressed: it may even be only sub-conscious; but if it is a part of the fact, the case should express it.

For example, a person runs against you in a dark passage. He enquires, "Who is this?" You answer, "It is me." You instinctively use the objective case, because your meaning is that you were the object run into, not the subject of the action in any sense. If he had asked, "Who is holding me?" You would have properly replied, "It is I"; for in this case you wish to express that you are the subject of the action. This may perhaps be more evident, if we complete the phrase by adding a clause in each case. The whole idea would be, "It is me (whom) you ran into"; and "It is I (who) am holding you." Taking the pronouns in their abstract signification, it is as if to the former question you had replied,

"It is a *me* which you have run into; i. e. a person in the condition of receiving an action;" and to the latter question, "It is an *I* which is holding you; i. e. a person doing an action." Indeed, that is just what you have replied, since the two cases, "me" and "I," mean precisely those two things, and were formed for exactly that purpose.

Let us take another example. Suppose that some person of unstable equilibrium in entering a car treads heavily on your foot. He enquires anxiously of your neighbor, "Was that you?" You reply, with a twinge of pain that puts all grammatical rules to flight, "No, it was me." Your foot (and that is "you," for the time being, as you are only too deeply conscious) is emphatically not an "acting subject," but a "suffering object;" and the nominative case would be no adequate expression of its relation to the action.

Or, to take a more obscure case, you knock at a friend's chamber-door. He responds, "Who is there?" Your reply inevitably is (unless you have a grammar under your arm to which you hastily refer for directions) "It is me;" or more likely, "me," alone. It might at first sight seem that in this case you are the subject of the conception, as being the one who did the knocking, who is standing there, and who wishes to enter. But these are not the ideas that were uppermost in your mind. If they had been, you would have said, "I," or "I," merely. You say "me," because the prominent ideas were, "It is me whom you hear; it is me whom you may or may not wish to see: it is me to whom you will or will not give admission." You are in a meek, passive, objective relation to the person within. He is the subject of the affair, not you. If, on the other hand, you were an angry avenger, sword in hand, battering on the door, and a feeble and apprehensive voice said, "Who is it?" you would naturally shout, "It is I!" i. e. "It is I who am come to slay you." Now you are the subject, and he the object of the whole conception.

Why, then, it may be asked might we not say in the former cases, "Me am the one trodden on;" or "Me am the one at the door?" Because it would not express what we mean. It would imply, by its very form, a subject-relation which does not exist. It is precisely to avoid this error that we have universally adopted the other phrase. Moreover, if the "me" were to be made grammatically the subject at all, it could only be as a "third person," or thing spoken of, with its verb in the third person; which might be expressed by some such phrase as, "This particular 'me' is the one trodden on;" or "Left waiting at the door."

Nevertheless, it would be rash to advise any one to say "It is me," unless he is sure of his company. Among technical grammarians it might put him in extreme peril of his reputation. If one wishes to avoid even the appearance of evil he had better meekly obey the rule. The object of language is, after all, to communicate your thought; not necessarily to put it into the form you prefer. When you are among the Romans, it is certainly the best in the matter of speech to do somewhat as the Romans do. If in a company of three, all of them ask you as to the route you came, you will

HENRY DURANT.

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The world is full of half completed lives. The most of men are condemned either never to rise at all, or only to rise high enough to know how much there is to be desired beyond. The majority of good influences are destined to accomplish only a part of what they were aimed at. The majority of ambitions simply end in longing regret that they were never attained. And so, we say, the world is filled with those whose struggles have freed them from a small portion only of the cramping influences of circumstances; and have brought them to the accomplishment of a small portion only of what they themselves have most desired, or of what was best adapted for helping their fellow men. It is well then, for the encouragement of those of us who have all the struggle and all the endeavors before us, that we are permitted, if but for a single time in our experience, to contemplate the picture of a completed, a harmonious life. We may never succeed in making our lives such. But it is an encouragement to know that failure is not a certainty; that incompleteness to any great extent, is not a universal necessity. Such a picture is offered by the story of the labors and successes of Henry Durant, that man whose labors and successes have just ended forever, above whose form the grave has so lately closed, whose decease has left a whole community in mourning. Over his bier a Solon could safely declare, here lies a happy man, one who has been happier than any of those now living, for he attained to the security of accomplished labor. In the thought of his example,

with the difficulties he has encountered in the vicissitudes of his changing life, can safely be inspired with the feeling that the future may have in store for us the reward of care and toil, in the attainment of something like perfection of character and destiny. We do not, however, on these accounts alone, devote so large a space in our thoughts to his decease, nor pay such unusual tributes of respect to his memory, as we have during the past week. To us of the University he was something more than the model citizen, the great example, the fully developed man. He was in our minds far oftener, as founder of the Institution, as the one whose toil has done more than that of any other person to place us where we are to-day, as our former President. And so, on his death, we feel it fitting that we should collect the main facts within our reach as to his life and character, as well as those ideas which his own friends have given utterance to on the occasion of his funeral. We owe to his memory, we owe it to ourselves, to do so.

Dr. Henry Durant was a native of New England. Of his early life we have been unable to gather much information. He was a farmer's boy, and we are told that he had to struggle somewhat for his education. In Yale College, whence he received his degree, he was the room-mate of N. P. Willis, whom he always afterwards familiarly called "Nat Willis." He was in the ministry for a number of years, being, we believe, sent to California originally by the Home Missionary Society. Before this, however, he was a pastor of several Congregational Churches in New England, and was quite prominent there. His life since his arrival in California is well known in its outline to most of us. In 1853 he founded the College School. The College of California being organized through his efforts, he became professor in that institution. With his aid the foundation of

the State University was thus laid. On its formal commencement he was elected its President. After two years of active service, sickness, followed by physical infirmity, compelled him to resign, and thus finally to sever his connection with the enterprise with which he had been identified for so many years. Elected Mayor of Oakland, and, at the expiration of his term of office, re-elected, he occupied this post of honor until his death. As a minister he is almost entirely unknown to most of us. As an instructor many of us remember him. As President, more still of us had the privilege of feeling his influence, and admiring his gentleness. As the honored founder, who had retired in his venerable age from active duty, but whose heart was still in his old work, and whose presence was crowned with the esteem of all wherever he went, there was not one of us but knew him and respected him.

It is not our place to give any attempt at an analysis of his character. His personal friends are the only ones able to do that. Their remarks already publicly made have done much towards enabling us to understand him. The exercises which are yet to come in the shape of a special Memorial Service, will do yet more for us in this direction. One or two ideas, not yet brought forward in public, we have been able to glean in relation to this matter, and we take the liberty of setting them down here.

It has been in several quarters remarked that Dr. Durant might, had he chosen, have accomplished much for himself and for the world as a writer. We have taken some pains to inquire whether or not he was kept from entering this field simply by the multiplicity of his cares, and whether, in consequence, he had planned any literary work after retiring from the Presidency of the University.

It cannot at present be definitely said whether he had or had not. But those who know him best say that he seemed to have an unconquerable repugnance to the mechanical labor of writing. It was not a want of ideas; such a thought can have no place in the minds of those who were at all acquainted with him. Nor was it a lack of analytical power. He could, we are told, work out a train of thought in the most definite manner, and then proceed with ease to state it at length. In fact, during his life as a preacher, it was often his custom to prepare his sermons on Saturday for oral delivery on Sunday; to spend all the early part of the week in pastoral duties, and to devote this time to filling himself with the ideas which expressed themselves from the pulpit with great effect, but whose rapid preparation would very often exhaust him, and render him unwilling to enter on labor of the sort until the end of the week again. Such was his power of condensed thought, and such his disinclination to the slow development of it in manuscript. If he had been more willing to publish his thoughts to the world, the life that has displayed such magnificent practical results, would have run side by side with a theoretical life of great ideas, which would have benefitted his country as much, perhaps, as his noble efforts have benefitted the Pacific Coast.

If, in the latter part of his life, he had any plans for summing up his attainments in any Literary production, his reticence on such points prevented him, in so far as we have yet learned, from saying much about it. The few intimations we have received as to the probable character of those plans are not of sufficient authority to make it proper to state them here. We shall soon no doubt have fuller information on this subject.

Be this as it may, we can now only feel that the greatest loss our community has sustained during its short history, is that which we now deplore. The best evidence of his depth of thought, is the grandeur of the conception he had begun to work out in our Institution. The best good we, as a company of students, could have received from him, is the benefit of his noble example. Better than a treatise is the foundation of the University. Better than a hundred sermons is the influence of his quiet, earnest, triumphant life.

THE EXERCISES ON THE DAY OF THE FUNERAL.

MONDAY, JANUARY 25.

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An Assembly of the Students of the University was called at 9.30, A. M. in the Assembly Hall, at Berkeley, for the purpose, principally, of making the announcements of the funeral exercises, and for acting on resolutions in memory of Dr. Durant. President Gilman opened by saying, that all present no doubt understood the cause of their meeting together at such an unusual time. It was known to all that one of the oldest and best supporters of the University had been removed, one whose portrait now hung in the Hall, decorated with laurel branches grown at Berkeley, one who had had much to do with choosing the site of the Institution, who had been one of its most earnest friends and greatest assistants. It seemed but fitting that all the members of the University should suspend their ordinary avocations and go in a body to his funeral. To most of the students, doubtless, Dr. Durant was one of whom they had but little personal knowledge, but of whom they had all heard much. Some, however, both among the Faculty and among the students had had the privilege of an intimate acquaintance with him. And it therefore seemed right that the Assembly should listen to a few remarks on the character of the deceased, from one who was most fully able to speak from his personal knowledge. He would, then, invite Prof. Joseph LeConte to occupy a short time in addressing the Assembly.

Prof. LeConte rose, and opened what he had to say by remarking that it was true, no doubt, that most of those whom he addressed had not been well acquainted with the departed ex-President. All must have noticed, however, in going about the streets of Oakland, his erect form, his commanding presence. Those who had had the fortune to be to any extent in his society, were well aware of his geniality, his warmth, his almost womanly tenderness of manner; things which were visible even to those on but slight terms of acquaintanceship with him. His friends knew that these characteristics were but the revelation of a noble soul that lay beneath them all. Dr. Durant was a cultured man in every sense of the word; cultured deeply intellectually, but still more so morally. He was pervaded by culture. In everything he had a tendency upwards. His very defects of character, if it was right (which the speaker did not believe), to call such qualities faults, were really virtues. He had too much generosity, and this was sometimes abused, too much trustfulness, and this was sometimes mis-