THE LOYALIST.

"GOD AND MY COUNTRY."

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THE LOYALIST,

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GRATITUDE.

BY CAPTAIN MARRYAT, R. N.

'Do good unto others, Ben; then you will have the approval of your own conscience and the gratitude of your fellow creatures.

Such was the repeated injunction of my worthy father, and he continued to repeat it to me until his tongue was silent forever. But I must give my readers a slight sketch of my father and how he passed through his pilgrimage.

I should say that there never was a man who passed through life so placidly, I may say so happily. He was always deceived and never found out that he was so in the whole course of his life; and if that was not happiness, I do not know what is. Born to an estate of £10,000 a year, he came into his property when he was of age, and he had no brothers or sisters to provide for. As simple in his habits as he was in his disposition, he spent little upon himself; and a true Christian in heart he considered himself but as a steward in trust of his splendid income, and sought every means of doing good to others. Of the earlier part of his life I can say nothing, but I do recollect that, when I was a child of six or seven years old, my mother would loudly express her indignation at the way in which my father permitted himself to be robbed and plundered by undeserving people. Still there was little altercation, as my father was a very silent man. I have heard him say in reply to my mother that if we were only charitable to the good, our bounty would be very limited. And that kindness to a bad man might prevent him becoming worse even if it did not reform him, and, at all events, he was grateful. My mother used to shake her head, but it was impossible to be angry with my father; he was so meek, so patient, and so mild in his speech. However, my mother was called away, and I was left his only son, and my father's acts and injunctions met with no more reproof or remonstrance.

'Your mother was a good woman, a very good woman,' my father would say, 'but she was suspicious in her temper. I wonder what made her so? And as a boy I wondered too! for I thought that in such a beautiful world every body must be good. And my father would point out these beauties in creation, and ask me whether we ought not to feel grateful to the God who had made it so delightful for our use and enjoyment; I acknowledged the truth of what he said, and I felt sincerely grateful. Thus did I grow up at the knees of my father, fully convinced that this was the best of all possible worlds, and that it was overflowing with gratitude, as well as with milk and honey.

I think that I was about ten years old when I had my first lesson of exception to his general rule. I was walking close to the park gates when I perceived a large butcher's dog who was tearing to pieces a small terrier, who laid under his feet, alternately snapping and howling. I caught up some large stones, and hurled them, one after another, at the big dog, until he made a hasty retreat, leaving the poor little terrier still yelping on the turf. In my philantrophy I hastened to take in my arms the object of my commisseration and was pressing it with sympathy to my bosom, when the little beast still smarting I presume, from its punishment, turned its head sharply, and seized me by the nose. I dropped him from my arms, doubly pained with the bite, and such unexpected ingratitude on the part of the little wretch. But we were not to part so easily. The brute hung on, and had I not been assisted by the gate-keeper, my nose would not have hung on much longer.; as it was, I was disfigured for a long while, and the marks remain to this very day. As I remained in bed, for I was very ill, and indeed there was some suspicion that the dog was mad. I could not help thinking that there was not quite so much gratitude in the world as my father thought, and I told him so. His answer was, 'my dear boy we do not expect gratitude from animals, although in general dogs are very grateful. But recollect that the animal was excessively enraged, and anger is a more powerful passion than gratitude.' I agreed with my father in this last remark. In due course of time my nose got well, my sceptism was cured, at the same time, and I followed my father in his path of benevolence.

It was not till I was fourteen that I had another severe lesson. I was riding in the green lanes with a groom behind me, when I saw a gipsey unmercifully beating a white pony harnessed to a small cart laden with peat. I remonstrated, but it was useless. The man continued to belabour the poor beast over the head, till in its struggles, it put its foot in a deep rut and fell. As the man stood by, cursing the animal, I asked him if he would sell it, and then offered five pounds, which was certainly more than its value in its condition. The man consented; we assisted him in releasing the pony, and my groom led it home. I told my father what I had done and he commended me for the act.

'We will let the poor animal have the run of the park,' said he 'it has suffered much, but it now shall end its days in peace.'

We then descanted on the great merits of the horse, and afterwards I went to the stable to see that my new *protege* was properly looked after.

'He's a good shaped 'un, master James,' said the coachman, 'remarkably good shaped. Put a little flesh on his bones, and he will be uncommonly handsome, for he is only rising five.'

'Is he quiet and good tempered, do you think?'

'He's quiet enough now, sir, but what he will be I can't say; but one thing is certain, that a pony so well shaped as he is, did not get into a gipsey's cart for nothing.'

In a few weeks my pony was quite another animal. He turned out as the coachman had predicted, a very handsome beast. I fed him with carrots and sugar to make him fond of me, and he would neigh when he saw me approach. One day I came into his stable, and had no carrots with me, but I went up to the manger and caressed him as usual; as I went away the animal put down his ears, and flung out his hind legs with such force, that I was felled to the ground. They carried me into the house, and, when a surgeon arrived, he told me my leg was broken. This was but a poor return for all my kindness; but it was afterwards found out that the vice of the animal was such that nobody would keep it, and that in consequence it had fallen into the hands of the gipsey.

My father, as usual, wanted to extenuate the conduct of the animal. He declared that it was frightened by my approaching its hind quarters, and that was the reason why it had kicked me. 'Fear my dear boy, is a stronger passion than gratitude.' I did not agree with my father that the animal had been actuated by fear; but my leg got well and I forgot this, my second lesson from dumb animals.

Had my father allowed me to go to a public school, I should have gained a little more knowledge of the world; but the curate of the parish was my preceptor, and he was a good, kindly old man, and the dispenser of my father's charity. Nevertheless as I grew up to man's estate I did occasionally perceive that my father did not use that discrimination in his kind offices, which he should have done, and that the house-keeper who introduced the constant claimant on his bounty, appeared of a most unusually charitable disposition, putting her apron to her eyes and shedding tears, when she came in to narrate the tale of woe of some unfortunate person who waited below in the kitchen for relief, and she generally received orders to give the supplicant a sum of money, and put it down in her book, and from the blessings which she invariably called down upon my father's head, it would almost appear that she was the relieved party. 'This good woman—this excellent woman—she can feel for others,' my father would say as she closed the door; 'I shall not forget her in my will.' I think the house-keeper must have overheard him say this more than once. She was engaged to be married to the butler, and it appeared that the butler put off his marriage till my father's death (for he was very old and infirm, and was not expected to live long) I presume the butler wished to ascertain first what my father left her in his will, for one day I overheard her say to him, 'I wish the old gentleman would make haste and walk off, if he lives much longer we shall be too old to marry, he has got a shocking cough, however, that's some comfort.' When I heard this I was very much shocked. I would not tell my father, as it would make him very unhappy, especially as he was very ill at the time, but I considered it a most ungrateful wish; but I thought on reflection I have read of love, although I have never felt it, and I presume it is a stronger passion than gratitude. The house-keeper, however, had her wish—my father's malady increased and he died, and I found myself in possession of a *fine* property. I remained shut up for several days previous to the funeral, for I grieved truly at his loss. After the funeral, the will was opened: legacies were bequeathed to all the servants, and the house-keeper was left £200. I observed disappointment in her face when the sum was mentioned, and I was afterwards told that she abused my father for his stinginess in not leaving her more. That very day she and the butler gave warning, and I afterwards discovered that they had carried away a large portion of the linen, and the wines in the cellar, during the time that I was shut up before my father's funeral, and had since set up a tavern a few miles from town. This was a lamentable exception to the general rule of gratitude. I had a mind to prosecute them, but the kindly feeling towards my fellow-creatures, which had been so deeply impressed upon me in my bringing up, prevented me from punishing them as they deserved.

I was now a young man of twenty-two years of age with a splendid fortune. Although my ideas of the world's gratitude were not so enthusiastic as those of my kind parent, I still did consider gratitude as the general rule, and that ingratitude was but an occasional exception to it. I therefore followed the bent of my philantrophy, and tried at least to deserve the good will of my fellow creatures. My first object was to benefit those more immediately around me, my tenants, and those who resided contiguous to my extensive property.

National education had just been taken up in a very earnest maner, and I resolved to found schools in two or three parishes; building them, and paying the expenses of the teachers. As soon as every thing was ready for their reception, notice was sent to the poor parishioners that their children might receive their education gratis; but to my astonishment the children did not come. I inquired the reason, and found that some would not allow their children to come because they could not make twopence a day by their work; others, and the major portion, refused because it was charity, and refused to send their children to a school where they paid a penny per week to a school mistress. I reasoned with them, and after some little time a few were sent to my school, but those who did send their children took care to let me feel that they considered that it was a favor conferred on me and not on them. So I received very little gratitude for this attempt to benefit the community. I reduced the rents of all my tenants, and invariably allowed them to remain in arrears when they complained of bad times or misfortune; but I found that I received little thanks for my forbearance. One tenant having excused himself for two years, it was pointed out to me by my bailiff that the ground was left untilled, and the man was a bed half the day. I therefore declared it was necessary to act, and desired him to pay his rent. He stated his inabilities at the time, and I asked when he would be able. He replied, certainly not that year, and perhaps not the year following. Convinced that he was incorrigible and lazy, I desired him to leave my farm, wishing to put in another tenant, but he refused, and upon some absurd pretence, because I gave notice of ejectment, he employed a pettifogging lawyer to bring an action against me. After a time he sent me word that he would leave the farm if I would give him £500, and, being refused, he came down to £200, then £100, and then £50. At last, finding that I had brought actions, not only for ejectment, but also for rent, he thought proper to evacuate. There was not much gratitude in this affair at all events, and I determined to leave my bailiff to settle with my tenants, for the future.

About a year after my father's death a distant relative died, and his wife called on me stating her distress, and I thought as she had a boy of fifteen unprovided for, that it would be a kindness to educate him and provide for his future welfare. The widow was relieved and the boy sent to school. Before the year was over, another cousin on my mother's side was left a little girl quite destitute, and I thought it my duty to protect her. The child was sent to me; a raw boned gawney creature of twelve years old, with an awful squint in the left eye, which was drawn down into the corner. She was immediately sent to one of the best schools near the metropolis.

Possessed as I was of large property, it may easily be concluded that I was considered a great prize in the matrimonial lottery, and I was, I may say, almost beseiged to take unto myself a wife out of my numerous relatives and acquaintances Every body called to see my house and grounds, and every body brought their daughters, and I was asked everywhere, and had to give dinners in return but, whether it was I had acquired bachelor habits from the quiet and secluded way in which I had so long been with my father after my mother's death, or that I was frightened by the many traps and springs laid in my path by anxious mothers, certain it is that I never felt the least inclination to change my condition; and at the age of thirty, I was still unmarried, and set down by those around me as a confirmed bachelor. In the mean time my two *protges* had grown up The boy, whose name was Edward, had been sent to college, and had decided upon entering the church, as I had a valuable living which I could give him as soon as the old incumbent died. In the meantime he had taken orders, and was residing with me. The girl Angelina had now arrived at the age of nineteen, and it was not possible for her to remain any longer at school. This perplexed me; however, as it was necessary that she should be removed, I decided upon sending for an elderly relation to remain as chaperon in the house. The offer was accepted, and as soon as the old lady was established, the young lady was sent for, and came home. She was no longer the awkward, scraggy child, but grown up into a very fine young woman; but although her figure was fine, and her features regular, the squint of the eye was so fatal to good looks, that it was unpleasant to look at her. I found her accomplished, humble and affectionate; and very soon this addition to my establishment which I had so much dreaded, became a source of comfort. The house was more cheerful, and all parties being good tempered, the time passed merrily away.

Before six months were over, I thought I perceived an attachment growing up between my two *proteges*. That there was a little on her side, I felt convinced; and thought that uniting them would be a very good idea. I sounded Edward on the subject; his reply was any thing but satisfactory. He said, that although he considered it his duty to pay every attention to any inmate in my house, he did not consider it at all likely that he should ever consent to be united to a young person who had such an unfortunate defect as Angelina had in her eye. There the subject dropped. Edward was a remarkably handsome young man, and as I thought that the girl was smitten, I was not sorry to be informed that the living had become vacant. Edward was immediately installed; and with many expressions of gratitude he quitted us to take possession. For a year after he left, every thing went on quietly. Angelina appeared to think no more of him, and devoted herself entirely to me. By degrees I became more interested in her; and her defect from habit was not so perceptible; in fact I gradually became attached to her, and she returned my affection with every mark of reciprocal feeling. After a time I made her an offer, and was accepted. It was arranged that our union should take place in six weeks. Angelina received the congratulations of all her friends, and I thought that I had every prospect of happiness.

About this time a German doctor came over, who performed some considerable operations on the eye, and had been very successful in cases of obliquity of vision. As I thought it would be very advantageous if this defect in Angelina could be cured, I went to town, found the surgeon out, and took him down with me to my country-seat. He saw Angelina and promised an effectual cure if she would submit to the operation. She consented; it was skilfully done, and for several weeks she remained in a darkened chamber until her eye could receive its strength. At last the light was gradually admitted, and it was so und that the cure was perfect. I brought the glass to Angelina, and she beheld herself; and certainly now that the defect was removed it was hardly possible to select a young woman more beautiful than she was.

'Oh!' said she as she firmly put her hand upon my shoulder, 'what a creature I am of your bounty! You found me ignorant, friendless—You have sheltered me and protected me, honoured me with your love, and now you have added the gift of beauty,—how can I be sufficiently grateful?'

I folded her in my arms and replied,—

'You can prove your affection and regard by consenting to be mine as soon as possible.'

It was arranged that the ceremony should take place in three weeks, and I wrote to Edward to come and officiate upon the happy occasion. Ten days before the day appointed, Edward made his appearance, congratulating me upon my choice and congratulating Angelina upon her improved charms. For myself, I can only say that, like those who had loved but once, I became devotedly and ardently attached, as I counted the moments almost, until she was mine. I was obliged to go up to town on legal business, and the lawyars, being dilatory, I went up every day to hurry their movements. At last, by dint of continual pressing, I contrived that the papers which I waited for, were ready on the day before the wedding, and I took them down with me.

'Angelina,' said I, 'you told me you were a portionless bride, and I felt hurt that you should say so. This is no longer the case. Here is a deed by which you have unreserved power to do just as you please with £15,000 which I have transferred in the stock to your name. Accept it as a proof of my love and confidence.'

Angelina colored as she took the paper, and shed a few tears; I kissed them off with rapture. I wished her good night and retired to bed but not to sleep—I was too happy. I was up early the next morning and dressed myself with the greatest nicety. I kissed the wedding ring which laid upon my dressing table. As soon as I was dressed I went down stairs, but I was up before any body else and I walked out on the terrace. When the time approached for breakfast, I returned to the house, but neither Edward nor Angelina were yet down. I rang the bell, and the butler came in.

'Why, what's the matter, James?' said I, 'you don't look very cheerful this morning.'

'Why, sir,' replied the man, 'to tell the truth, Mary says that Miss Angelina is not in her room, and Mr. Edward, I know is not to be found any where.'

'What do you mean!' exclaimed I.

At this moment the lady's maid came into the room, with a note she had found upon her mistress's table. I tore it open—it was as follows:

'I have no excuse to offer for my conduct except that love is more powerful than gratitude. Before you read this I shall be united to Edward.

'ANGELINA.'

I dropped down on the floor in a fit, and was taken to my room. Medical advice was sent for, and I was recovered by profuse bleeding; but for weeks I did not leave my chamber so great had been the shock. I raved at the baseness of the world and the folly of my father's creed,—I became a misanthrope and a miser.

I am now an old man, and, hardly need say, have remained a bachelor. I have somewhat recovered from disappointment, and have, perhaps, a somewhat better opinion of the world than I have had. I will not say that there is no gratitude in it, but I do say that its the exception and not the rule; and when it is found, it must like the diamond, be weighed only in the carat scale, and like the diamond, it is the more valuable from its extreme scarcity.

THE LOST DAYS'—Bradley, astronomer royal, had a considerable share in the assimilation of the British calender to that of other nations. Lord Chesterfield was the original promoter of this measure, which was earried in 1757. The following curious anecdote happilly illustrates the presumption and ignorance of the mob of those days;—Lord Chesterfield took pains in the periodical journals of the day, to prepare the minds of the people for the change, but he found it much easier to prevail with the legislature than to reconcile the mass of the people to the abandoment of their inveterate habits. When Lord Macclesfield's son stood the great contested election for Oxfordshire in 1754, one of the most vehement cries raised by the mob against him was 'Give us back the eleven days we have been robbed of'; and several years after, when Bradley worn down by his labours, in the cause of science, was sinking under the disease which closed his mortal career, many of the common people attributed his sufferings to a judgement from heaven for his having been instrumental in so impious an undertaking.

LETTERS FROM AN OFFICER OF THE SHIP "BLUNDELL," CHINESE ROADS.

Island of Hong Kong, June 26, 1841.

I received your April mail, which, perhaps, has come from England to China in less time than anything ever did before. Two months and sixteen days from the time you, my dear father, dated it, 2d of April, it was delivered to me in this uttermost part of the earth, on the 17th of June, which, taking into consideration the number of stoppages, is almost incredible—putting on one side the time which it may have been detained between England and Egypt, of which I know nothing. There would be some time lost at Bombay, after which it was carried near two thousand miles, by men on foot, across the peninsula of India to Calcutta, where it would have to wait some days; but from thence to China it came by steam, an advantage never experienced by any of its brotherhood before. It went first to Macao where it lay two days, and then came here, but could not be delivered, because General Mountain was not here to open the mail. They were all over at Macao burying Sir Fleming Senhouse, and a shipload of letters for the fleet had to wait three days because the big-wigs were not here.—Well, in spite of all these stoppages, I opened the letter two months and fifteen days after it was in your hands.

Quick as it has come, and much as I wish to keep up the new system I have got into, the heat of this place is such that writing is totally out of the question. I have come down now from the poop some seven or eight times after the sun had set, in a sort of calm determination to commence, but long before I could get a sheet of paper on the stretch, and my pen under weigh, I was obliged to run. Oh if you only felt it! In the sun the thermometer is about 140 deg.; on the quarter deck, under double awnings, from 85 deg. to 100 deg.; on the gun-deck, 110 deg.; and in the holds, 150 deg. I only wonder we are able to live at all. If we had not been wasted before, by way of an introduction, in various parts of the world, I really think Hong Kong would have finished us off to a man. As it is, they are going at a very respectable rate; not a day passes without the flags being half mast for some poor fellow. The soldiers suffered principally in Chusan, but here the aquatic department are coming in for a share—there are 680 sick in the ships alone. Their gundecks are regular hospitals. My old friend the *Conway* has 80 men, half her ship's company, hanging in cots and hammocks, wherever they can get the most air. No only child was ever better attended to in sickness than are the seamen of the men-of-war; the best medical attendance, and every comfort in the way of little luxuries, are lavished upon them; it is only amongst those who have been up at Canton that the cases have been fatal. They seem to have imbibed some horrid disease from the low, marshy rice-plains near which they were lying, that they cannot shake off. Several officers have gone; and the men go on shore two and three at a time in the same boat. The leader of the Cameronian band complains bitterly: he says six clarionets, two bassoons, and one big fiddle are dead, which has played the mischief with his music; but even yet they manage to give us a treat every day after dinner, and from eight to nine in the evening. We muster six bands now in the fleet; and when one ceases another takes it up from a different ship, which, in the cool of the evening, after the tremendous heat, has a most beautiful effect. They have been pretty hard-worked of late playing the "Dead March;" but since funerals have