

has been to make him like them best at home; and no doubt most of them will agree with him that "to be condemned to live as the average European family lives would make life a pretty heavy burden to the average American family." This is the sober conclusion which he reaches at last, and it is unquestionable, like the vastly greater part of the conclusions at which he arrives throughout. His opinions are no longer the opinions of the Western American newly amused and disgusted at the European difference, but the Western American's impressions on being a second time confronted with things he has had time to think over. This is the serious undercurrent of the book, to which we find ourselves reverting from its obvious comicality. We have, indeed, so great an interest in Mr. Clemens's likes and dis-

likes, and so great respect for his preferences generally, that we are loath to let the book go to our readers without again wishing them to share these feelings. There is no danger that they will not laugh enough over it; that is an affair which will take care of itself; but there is a possibility that they may not think enough over it. Every account of European travel, or European life, by a writer who is worth reading for any reason, is something for our reflection and possible instruction; and in this delightful work of a man of most original and characteristic genius "the average American" will find much to enlighten as well as amuse him, much to comfort and stay him in such Americanism as is worth having, and nothing to flatter him in a mistaken national vanity or a stupid national prejudice.

---

### FARRAGUT.<sup>1</sup>

WITH dutiful modesty and with admirable taste the biographer of our great admiral has intruded neither himself nor any attempt at fine writing between the public and his distinguished father. He has depended as far as possible for his narrative upon Farragut's journal and letters and official reports, and upon sketches of toils and battles made by actors and eye-witnesses. The result is a volume which is not so much history as materials for history. So much the better. One could not wish it otherwise with the first life of such a man. The simplicity of the monument is suited to the massive and noble simplicity of the hero.

The life of Farragut may be roughly divided into a brief childhood, fifty years of preparation for the emergencies of

destiny, less than three years of glorious action, and seven years of tranquil honor. He was a midshipman at nine, acted as prize-master at twelve, fought his first battle in the same year, served as acting lieutenant at eighteen, and obtained his first ship at twenty-two. He always considered it a great advantage to his character that he had obtained command young, "having observed, as a general thing, that persons who come into authority late in life shrink from responsibility, and often break down under its weight." But (so slow is promotion in peace) he was forty before he became commander, fifty-four before he became captain, and sixty-one when he received charge of a fleet and began his career of triumphs. At the age of sixty-nine he died, the first admiral of the United

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of David Glasgow Farragut, First Admiral of the United States Navy, embodying*

*his Journal and Letters.* By his Son, LOYALL FARRAGUT. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1879.

States, and so distinctly the greatest sailor in the world that he absolutely had no competitor. No other such man has plowed the sea since Nelson; perhaps one may also say, no other such man before Nelson; they are, almost without doubt, the two mightiest vikings of all time.

His successes were not the result of accident; the germs of his victories lay in his character. There never was a braver man physically or morally; there never was a combatant who more thoroughly meant to win. The child, covered with blood, who wept with humiliation and grief over the surrender of the Essex was a sure premonition of the commander who sailed into black and flaming mouths of hell on the Mississippi and in Mobile Bay. He uttered no more than his life-long conviction and principle when he wrote, "A man *must* do his work, particularly when that work is *fighting*." To alarming rumors of the hostile power he responded, "I mean to be whipped, or to whip my enemy, and not to be scared to death." In the same magnificent spirit he wrote to his wife, "As to being prepared for defeat, I certainly am not. Any man who is prepared for defeat would be half defeated before he commenced. I hope for success, shall do all in my power to secure it, and trust to God for the rest." To appreciate fully his enterprise and audacity it must be remembered that in his conflicts he had to face not only personal perils and immense responsibilities, but also formidable novelties. To take a fleet of sea-going ships up a swift and narrow river, covered by booms and fire-rafts, and fight there against forts of masonry and earth-works, supported by gun-boats, rams, iron-clads, and boarding transports, was something new in naval warfare. There had been no previous experience of the kind to guide him; he sailed not only into battle, but into the unknown. The rush up the dim Mississippi, swarming with every

form of careering death, reminds one of the fabulous charges of Orlando or Rinaldo into the domains of magicians, where every danger was a surprise and every foe a prodigy. At the best and simplest, it was a challenge of wood against stone, earth, water, iron, and fire. But there is no sign in Farragut's reports or letters that he looked forward to the unimaginable struggle with any doubt of success, or any emotion but impatience. One is half inclined to believe that he must have been descended from the enchanted Ferraguto of Berni and Ariosto, whom no weapon could pierce and no adversary could daunt.

Fully equal to his courage was his zeal of preparation. All his life he both toiled conscientiously in his profession and studied it enthusiastically, seeking not only to do perfectly the duty of the moment, but also to fit himself for every supposable emergency. A witness of the French bombardment of San Juan d'Ulloa (1838), he observed and recorded the improvements in the French navy and the effect of its guns on the ramparts, even to measuring the penetration of every shell. "I made it a rule of my life," he writes, "to note these things, with a view to the possible future." His general orders for battle surveyed all contingencies, suggested extraordinary safeguards for his ships and men, and laid out the plan of attack with a lucid minuteness which overlooked no chance. Before pushing on to attack Fort Jackson he awaited a cessation of the northerly wind, in order to secure a diminution of the current. For sailing into Mobile Bay he chose a day of westerly wind, so that the smoke of the enemy's cannon might be driven in upon the gunners and blind their aim. Even in the rage of action his oversight was as prompt and adroit as it was intrepid. Finding shot of no avail against the iron-bound Tennessee, he resorted to the audacious expedient of ramming her mailed sides with his wooden ships, and

dashed at her in a vessel which was already cut down to the water's edge. Once fairly in battle, indeed, his chief stratagem was fierce battling. "The surest way to prevent injury from an enemy," he declared, "is to strike hard yourself." Heroes never had a more inspiring example than the heroes who fought under this sublime commander. "You know my creed," he wrote to his wife, after the passage of Port Hudson. "I never send others in advance when there is a doubt; and, being one on whom the country has bestowed its greatest honors, I thought I ought to take the risks which belong to them; so I took the lead." Another germ of success in the man was his passionate eagerness to be doing. His letters are full of plans and longings for action, and of grief over failure or enforced quiescence. How little inaction he had, and how zealously he kept to the post of danger, appears in the fact that the Hartford received two hundred and forty shot in nineteen months of service.

He had no jealousy. He wanted the best men around him, and wanted rivals in glory honored. "The triumph of the Kearsarge was grand," he exults; "I go for Winslow's promotion." On the other hand, he would not spare short-comings, especially in the matter of zeal and daring. "Some are bitter against me, no doubt," he writes, "because I tell them when I think they don't do their duty." There was no greed in him for anything but honor and the welfare of his country. "As for prize money, I never count upon it. If any comes, well and good. But I am not so anxious to make money as I am to put an end to this horrid war." When a business company offered him a directorship, coupled with a gift of stock representing one hundred thousand dollars, he replied, "I have come to the conclusion that no pecuniary reward should be an inducement for the risk of reputation. . . . I have therefore determined to decline entering into

any business which I have neither the time nor perhaps ability to attend to." Equally chivalrous was his indifference to every prize or place outside of his profession. When a nomination to the highest office in the republic was suggested to him, he answered, "I have never for one moment entertained the idea of entering political life, even were I *certain* of receiving the election to the presidency. . . . I am *fixed* in my determination not to serve, under any conditions or circumstances." Again, referring to other urgencies of the sort, he wrote, "I am greatly obliged to my friends, but am thankful that I have no ambition for anything but what I am, an admiral. Of course, I desire a good name as such. I have worked hard for three years; have been in eleven fights, and am willing to fight eleven more, if necessary; but when I go home I desire peace and comfort."

Home and the company of his wife and child were what Farragut wanted when he was not battling for his country. His private life seems to have been as beautiful as his public life was noble. Of the seventeen years of his first marriage sixteen were passed, as far as possible, in caring for a suffering invalid with such assiduity and tenderness as to draw from a lady of Norfolk the exclamation that he ought to have a monument made by every wife in the city contributing a stone to it. The short and hurried but earnest letters which came from his vigils under the enemy's guns are those of a most affectionate husband and father. "With such a mother you could not fail to have proper sentiments of religion and virtue," he writes to his son. "Take care of your mother if I should go, and may God bless and preserve you both." On the eve of the battle of Mobile Bay he concludes a letter to his wife with this touching farewell: "God bless and preserve you, my darling, and my dear boy, if anything should happen to me; and may

his blessing also rest upon your dear mother, and all your sisters, and their children. Your devoted and affectionate husband, who never for one moment forgot his love, duty, or fidelity to you, his devoted and best of wives." His strong religious feeling appears in the same letter: "I am going into Mobile Bay in the morning, if God is my leader, as I hope he is, and in him I place my trust. If he thinks it is the proper place for me to die, I am ready to submit to his will, in that as in other things." All this earnestness of soul did not prevent him from being one of the most genial of men. His conversation sparkled with animal spirits and with cordiality, and his manners were singularly frank, kindly, courteous, and winning. Neither in

his letters as to his victories, nor in the journal of his almost triumphal tour around Europe, is there any revelation of arrogance or vanity. His lack of egotism and his republican simplicity of feeling appear incidentally in the indifference with which he treated the subject of his descent from the historic Ferraguts of Aragon. "I am not under particular obligations," he humorously observed, "to any of my ancestors for my good fortune." Take him all in all, no man ever better deserved the eulogium upon Sir Lancelot, the flower of Christian chivalry: "Thou wert the meekest man that ever sat in hall amongst ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put lance in rest."

---

### METTERNICH.

FOR many years no historical work has been heralded with half the noise that has preceded the publication of the first installment of the Metternich memoirs. Of the four great statesmen of the century, Bismarck is our contemporary; Cavour is personally uninteresting; Talleyrand, though his memoirs are still unpublished, has had so much light thrown upon him from other sources that we feel thoroughly acquainted with his history and his opinions. But with Metternich it is different. Partly because of our vague notions of the empire which he so long ruled, partly on account of the peculiar nature of his political influence, the mention of his name excites a high degree of curiosity and interest, — feelings shared by thousands of readers, whose knowledge of him is limited to the fact that he was the all-powerful minister of Austria for

more than a generation, and that he used his power to stifle every form of intellectual and political liberty. When, therefore, the reading portion of three great nations read, months before the event, that the memoirs of Metternich were to appear, simultaneously, in their respective languages, they prepared themselves to receive a detailed and carefully-prepared account of what took place in the thirty years of peace preceding 1848, — a narration of all that he saw and did, by the astute and dignified spider who surveyed from the centre every line and curve of the intricate web of European diplomacy.

But the Metternich of the work<sup>1</sup> before us by no means corresponds to the common conception of his character and labors. We have reason to be grateful for the fragment of autobiography in which he describes his career down to

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Prince Metternich, 1773-1815.*  
 Edited by PRINCE RICHARD METTERNICH.

Translated by MRS. ALEXANDER NAPIER. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1880.