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November Eight!

No day of all the years gone by
Since South Carolina was a State,
Has borne such record to the sky
As this, made up November eight!

The record of a thousand names,
Inscribed on freedom's master-roll;
As if the long-contested claims
Of man to life, and light, and soul.

The ownership of self complete,
Had been conceded, and a race
With hands fast-bound, and fettered feet,
Had found at last its hour of grace.

All hail! thou day! when whips and stocks
And such grim relics of the past
Are hidden by the ballot-box,
Where Freedom's unbought votes are cast.

Freed day! and meet auspicious act!
It seals that other glorious deed,
The proclamation of a fact,
Through which a multitude are freed.

Grand era! when the bells of time,
Fell out such mighty symphonies,
And with an energy sublime
The people's sovereign voice replies.

H. G. J.

CONTRASTED.

If time has yet long years in store for me, I shall crush the flowers of many springs beneath my feet, before the impressions made by two grand spectacles which I have witnessed, shall be erased from memory.

It is a story of two pictures I have looked on that I am about to tell, and they both appear so plainly before me as I write that I alternately thrill with awe, and tremble with excitement, gazing first on the one, then on the other.

Five years, and as many months ago, I looked on the first—years which seem to have glided away as swift as a passing shadow. Years in which are blended the glad, wild notes of the march of joy, and the sad, sad strains of sorrow's dirge; years which memory loves, and yet oft-times dreads to linger over—adown whose vista I can look and see troop past the ghosts of days which have been, when happiness and mirth and I linked arms together, and tripped along the fields of pleasure—and here and there I catch glimpses of gardens of roses, dotted with marble fawns and fairies, shadowy in cool grots—and then I listen—and catch—the soft tinkling notes of a merry girl's laughter, clear and bright as the silvery gush of a crystal fountain! How sweet is the dream! Anon, my steps beat time to the weary march of sorrow, and with a sad heart I wander in the avenues of the Past, and count the marble monuments of friends flecking the green hills—and fragments of songs that nobody sings float by me, and parts of a mother's prayer.

The echoes of voices hushed long ago, coming back to me from the shadow-land shore, cause me to feel like a wearied child to-night, and I could sit me down and weep, and with the tears I would shed the hand of the Recording Angel could, methinks, blot some sins from the

page reserved for me! Ah! memory, what poignant pangs thou canst inflict—what sunny hours thou canst recall!

But I must to my story.

A little over five years ago I found myself at the Island of St. Helena. It was a beautiful night in May. Our ship had touched here to procure water, and its worthy, but unromantic skipper, decided that it was advisable to remain but two or three hours for the purpose of filling our tanks.

There was no conveyance to take me to Napoleon's old grave, and as the distance thither was six miles or more from our landing point, it was an impossibility to walk it and return in season to leave with my ship. So, in despair and sullen grief, I abandoned my long contemplated visit to the spot where they laid him, and where now the willow bends weeping, and the Acacia keeps lonely vigil. We wandered through the principal street of the island town, and left the shore just as the setting sun threw his last rays on island and ocean—beautiful and changing as are the hues of the dying dolphin in his last agonies—or like the last lingering notes of the swan, the sweetest in death. The water was like the neck of a dove, changing with purple and gold. The ship was lying lazily at anchor some distance off, and it gave us a long pull to reach her. The evening was sultry, but soon the stars came out, and we forgot the oppressive heat in contemplating the charms nature had woven around us. I sat watching that grand old rock, which had been made so famous—wrapped up in the gloom of its own solitude, and in whose long shadows we were lying, with mingled feelings of admiration and awe, it looked so black and threatening—a dense, dark mass.

Deep silence reigned over all. The murmuring lips of Old Ocean were sealed by the hand of sleep, and scarce a sound issued from the fleet that had nestled under the island's lee. At long intervals we could catch the drip of the suspended ear of some water loiterer, or the complaining murmur of the surf would appeal to our sympathies as it told its story to the smooth pebbles on the beach, or dashed against the rocks adown whose maimed and patient faces tears trickle forever. How beautiful the water looked, with the stars lingering like floating jewels on its bosom, mirrored as clear as in a glass. Soon great heavy clouds came out and hung over the brow of the island, as if they had some dark sorrow to release there, or were about to pour thereon a dreadful vengeance—and then, I thought, the charm was to be dispelled, and instead of being gladdened by a spectacle of grandeur and beauty, we were to be fretted by a storm. But lo! a change! The moon, the welcome moon, came out, and won her slow way with wan, sweet smile, up to the very edge of those black clouds, and then the picture she painted was beautiful beyond description! She tipped them with a silver edge, she tipped the top of the rock island too with her silver wand, and as she gathered her radiance about her, and marched in triumph higher, still higher, on the dappled vault, like a queen followed by her glittering train—she chased away those clustering clouds which seemed like a black sorrow brooding there, and bathed island, and sea and ships with such a sweet and gentle light, and so soothing was the influence, that it seemed as if some Bright Being of a Better World were folding her dazzling wings around us. And now, how changed was the scene! The lone island, that had looked so grim and fierce, seemed graven

in silver, and the silent sea and the slumbering fleet were alike lit up by the tremulous glow. How grand, how sublime the spectacle!

I could fancy anything that night. My mind seemed a sea of music, whereon floated golden imaginings, brilliant and beautiful. Distant voices took love's tones, and a song borne away on the night breeze, seemed the strains of a lover's lute beneath his lady's balcony, as she leaned out beauteous and bright—as Juliet to Romeo—making night day, and threw him the rose!

Wrapped in admiration, I feared to breathe lest I should break the spell! And ther' fancy took wing, and the music of a thought swept over me. There arose before me visions of the splendor of the Conqueror who once pined away his life on that bleak rock, and who, like the fettered eagle, beat against the bars of his prison house until nature exhausted itself, and wearied with taunts and tyrants, he sought his chamber to lie down and die. And the tramp of armies, the surge and crash of battle—the fatal charge of the old-guard, the hand to hand encounter, the stirring strains of martial music, the waving aloft of battered eagles and tattered pennons, the shriek of the wounded, and then the grand shout of victory—*overwhelmingly grand*, all these I saw, and heard and pondered at!—And then methought I wandered away over the sea till I came and stood at the bedside of the dying Emperor on this barren isle. The same flash was in his eye that had kindled there on so many fields of battle—and I saw his lips move, and I listened, and caught the words, "*te d'armee!*" the last he ever uttered, and with them the soul of earth's greatest went out into the night!—A strain of mournful music swept past. I saw the long fountain drip of funeral plumes, and the sad procession move on its winding way among the hills to the lonely grave where they laid him. I saw it all. I witnessed the end of the tragedy! Fancy had woven a spell about me I dreaded to sever. I was chained to the spot by a species of fascination I could not cast off, and lingered long, drinking in the beauty of the scene—and when at last a fair wind sprang up, and we spread our wings for another flight, and steered away from the island, the silver tints of the bright May-moon glistening on our white sails as they were flung out to the breeze, making us look like a phantom thing, I heaved a deep, deep sigh, and wondered should I ever look on a spectacle so grand, so peculiarly impressive, so sublime again! It was a spectacle sublime in Peace—in grandeur—in suggestions! It gave birth to lofty imaginings!

Since then I have witnessed another—how different it was, and yet it was grand, impressive, fearfully sublime! But *here* the Genius of Strife spread his wings, and the skeleton hand was busy beckoning souls into the dread, dark Night. *There* the Angel of Peace hovered silently! How eloquent the contrast!

It was the spectacle of moral grandeur and physical majesty on which the sun rose on the memorable 24th of April, 1862—the passage of the naval fleet under the command of the intrepid Farragut beyond Forts "Jackson" and "St. Philip," those "lions in the way," which guarded the entrance to the Crescent City.

There was nothing lacking to give picturesque effect and dramatic interest to the sight of the floating guardians of our country's honor in the weird hour of dawn, sailing majestically into the very

jaws of death. How awful the quiet which reigned before the signal lights were hung out by ship after ship, which was to be the moment for the start. And like unhooded falcons, we sprang at the quarry! And then the murderous contents of two hundred iron throats belched forth at us, and the iron rams of the enemy waited behind sunken obstructions for our onset—watching like hungry wolves for the approach of prey! And in column on, onward we dashed into the midst of them, tearing and crashing, overwhelming and crushing! And many a brave heart was then stilled forever,—fighting for the old flag they had never deserted—fear was unknown to them—nobly they fell!

And the whistling shell with its hideous screech, and the solid conical shot, swept over and around us as thick as the hail the heavens hurl earthwards—telling tales of homes made desolate, and the weepings and wailings of broken hearts. There was no soothing melody to attune the senses. Here devildom was dominant; only harsh, discordant noises fell upon the ear, and men who stood shoulder to shoulder were compelled to scream to make themselves heard! The hand of God had shut the eyes of stars, and veiled the vision from the face of the moon!

It was a fierce and sanguinary spectacle. Its grandeur was towering high—it was overwhelming! Those who witnessed it, will never, I am sure, forget it, e'en should the Reaper suffer them to pass the allotted three score years and ten. The fight was over and the victory won! *After the battle!*—the Demon of Destruction rested from his labors, and the maimed and the dying were thought of. Shot and shell right well had done their hideous work. And not only on the decks of the war ships, but in the houses and homes where mothers and sisters dwelt. By the hearthstone where the wearied wife watches day after day for the return of the loved one! When he fell by the side of his gun, the shaft winged its way to a fond mother's heart, as she waited and prayed for the boy who will never come back again!

I looked that day on scenes which made me shudder, and I shudder now when I revert to them, and others which I have witnessed the Destroyer paint on battle-fields, surrounded by not half the grandeur—but bathed in thrice the flow of blood! Ah! there are wounds of the spirit and the heart that we reck not of! Mother-love—wife-love—sister love! Think ye what wounds are theirs? Those gentle mothers who were pictorial bibles to the childhood of their sons, think ye their hearts shed no tears for the slain? And yet sorrow's urn is filling—filling—still filling with the tears of these broken hearts! The picture is repulsive and sad. Draw the veil over such harrowing sorrow. Their grief is holy now! Side by side, place the two pictures I have drawn. On the one, smiles the Angel of Peace, and the land and the sea are wondrously beautiful! Over the other, broods the Death-dealing demon of Civil War, and the frowns of God darken the waters! And scenes fiercer than this I have looked on—when the yells of the blood-stained combatants—father arrayed against son, brother in league against brother—were akin to the shrieks of madmen—when I wondered if the *serried ranks of devils as they troop through Hell*, made horrors more hideous in their blackest nights!

Contrast the pictures! Do they bear a comparison?

And yet this civil strife with all its re-