Stopped Here 4/16/2021

A new chord of life and emotion had been touched and awakened in my soul. I looked at the dark, disdainful, swirling waters of the great Columbia. I gazed upon the stern and rocky headlands, which in places looked as if they were about to close upon the proud waters, and challenge their right of way. The whole scene was symbolic of great power. {1899 PTM, PRUS 190.3}

From the river and the headland to the tracings on the scroll my mind wandered to and fro, and forth and back again. Over and over, like the ever-heaving, swelling billows of old ocean, those words kept rising to the surface of my soul, "A fleet in being." And as I pondered, my heart gave answer to my thought: yes, there is a "fleet in being;" in being not only true, but in being the truth. There is a host of power in being, a power immeasurably superior to that of soldiers and sailors, of parapet on frowning fort, or turret on ship of steel. Blessed an hundredfold is the man who is great for what he is above the man who is great only for what he does. There have been legions of the latter, but the numbers of the former are few. There is wonderful power in being-in being pure, in being holy, in being firm as adamant, loyal as lead in the rock, to convictions inspired and guided from above. {1899 PTM, PRUS 190.4}

Luther was the all-powerful figure at the Diet of Worms. He was all-powerful in the irresistible might of his weakness. All that was great and grand on earth was arrayed against him. There he stands, garbed in the humble robe of an Augustine monk. Around him in that marble hall was a galaxy of princes. They were bedecked in gorgeous gowns and resplendent uniforms, and bejeweled with countless orders of royalty. But the lowly habit of the friar concealed a breast burning with the power of God,-the power of eternal truth. That poor, lone priest had the power of being. Those princes had naught but the power of position. This latter, though to human vision it may appear great, is so feeble that its light is to the power of being like the little flickerings of the glowworm to the effulgence of the sun in the meridian. {1899 PTM, PRUS 191.1}

On his way to the hall, Luther had passed the old general, George of Freundsberg, who touched his shoulder, and shaking his head, blanched in many a battle, kindly said, "Poor monk, poor monk, thou art going to make a nobler stand than I or any other captain have ever made in the bloodiest of our battles. But if thy cause is just, and thou art sure of it, go forward in God's name, and fear nothing; God will not forsake thee." {1899 PTM, PRUS 191.2}

And Luther did go forward in God's name. Spellbound sat the princes through his speech. It's close resembled the grand finale of a sacred oratorio. His very form and figure grew majestic. His bosom heaved with conscious power; his eye flashed fire more deadly to those who opposed him than the thunderbolts of artillery; while his voice swelled in resonant, stentorian tones like the music of the great pipe organ in the cathedral at Friberg, and that immortal sentence was hurled forth as by creative energy, and sent rolling and reverberating through that hall of princes: "Here I stand; I can do no other; may God help me; amen." {1899 PTM, PRUS 191.3}

Ah, there was a power of being in the monk; a power which a few brief years later changed the map of Europe, hurled the emperor from his throne, and caused the crowns to topple from the heads of tottering princes. Before the power of truth, the power of position became "as the waters that pass away." {1899 PTM, PRUS 191.4}

And it is the power of being, the power begotten by the possession and living out of truth, wonderful truth, that has caused the name of the Republic of the United States to be reverenced and revered through all the earth. Hitherto the United States has stood like a rock for the truth, and her very being has been the truth. Her very being has been impregnated with the thoughts of liberty and equal rights to all mankind. Hitherto she has set to herself the bounds and metes of right. And when vaunting ambition in the breasts of her sons would strive to break beyond these natural barriers, her voice has been heard in the words of a Greater One, saying to their ambition, "Hitherto [as far as the line of right] shalt thou come but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." {1899 PTM, PRUS 191.5}

The ember hours of the nineteenth century are here. The gloaming time of this cycle of a hundred years is upon us. Shall the ship of state be held upon the course which God through the Fathers set for her, or shall the brilliant star of her peace and power be allowed to be diverted, be made to grow dim, and to lose its heavenly luster? {1899 PTM, PRUS 192.1}

That a dark time of trouble is before this land and before the world, and is swiftly closing in upon the sons and daughters of men, is evident to many of different faiths both spiritual and secular. We hear the mutterings of the storm, the distant roar of the angry billows of strife in things religious and civil. The tempest will surely break, but let it be our holy glory, our sacred joy, that, although we may be broken by it, we shall never bend before it. Infinitely happier is the man who is defeated in a good cause than the man who is victorious in a bad one. {1899 PTM, PRUS 192.2}

But the tempest produced by transgression in things individual and things national will not last forever; it can not last for long. Sin and transgression are terrible things; but they carry in their breasts a poison which not only destroys all that it touches, but ultimately breeds destruction to themselves. In sin and wickedness Providence has fixed an evolution unto death. {1899 PTM, PRUS 192.3}

After the night there will come the glorious dawning of the better morn. It will be for the good and the pure. We may differ as to how it will come, but that it will come, we all believe. Soon will be heard great voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." {1899 PTM, PRUS 192.4}

The citizens of that blest kingdom will be those who have known the power of being,-of being true as steel to priceless principle of right in things national as well as in things personal. For the kingdom of God itself is founded upon the principle of right, founded upon the consent of the governed, and the voices of the redeemed will whisper gently among the amaranthine flowers, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power." {1899 PTM, PRUS 192.5}

Therefore let us work for right principles while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work. Let us gird up the loins of our minds, and be sober, and hope to the end for the grace which is to be brought unto us at the coming of Jesus Christ. {1899 PTM, PRUS 193.1}