THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON: REFORMER AND MAN OF LETTERS

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Sister Thomas Catherine Brennan, O. P.

1958



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REFORMER AND MAN OF LETTERS

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Claude M. Newlin
Major professor

Date November 19, 1958

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THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON:

REFORMER AND MAN OF LETTERS

By

SISTER THOMAS CATHERINE BRENNAN, O. P.

A THESIS

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan State University of Agriculture and Applied Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1958

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Vita		iii
Preface		iv
CHAPTER I	INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER II	THE MINISTER AND THE SLAVES	
	A. Political Views and Anti-Slavery Activities.	12
	B. Biographies and Essays	70
CHAPTER III	THE SOLDIER AND HIS REGIMENT	
	A. Civil War and Army Life in a Black Regiment.	104
	B. Writings Related to the Civil War.	119
CHAPTER IV	THE COLONEL AND THE LADIES	
	A. Woman Suffrage Activities.	128
	B. Social Theory.	139
	C. Advice to Young Contributors	174
	D. Biographies, Essays, and Fiction	182
CHAPTER V	CONCLUSION	257
Bibliography		263

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Major Subject:

Minor Subject:

Biographical Items:

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REFORMER AND MAN OF LETTERS

By

Sister Thomas Catherine Brennan, O. P.

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

Year 1958

Approved Ruth M. Newton

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THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON: REFORMER AND MAN OF LETTERS

This thesis is limited to Thomas Wentworth Higginson's career as a man of letters and as a reformer in the anti-slavery and woman suffrage movements. Divided into five chapters with a preface and bibliography, the study includes Higginson's political views, his anti-slavery activities, his service in the Civil War, his woman suffrage activities, and his writings on these subjects.

Chapter I, the "Introduction" indicates the approach used in this study by stressing the integral relationship which existed between Higginson's life as a reformer and his life as a man of letters.

Chapter II, "The Minister and the Slaves," discusses Higginson's political views as a Republican and as an ardent abolitionist, his anti-slavery activities connected with the fugitive slave rescues, the Kansas emigration, the John Brown affair, and his liberal views as expressed in speeches and sermons published in the Liberator. The chapter concludes with Higginson's change of heart toward disunion after the secession of the south and the attack on Fort Sumter.

Chapter III, "The Soldier and His Regiment," recounts Higginson's military career as colonel of a regiment of Negro freed men in South Carolina. His Civil War memoir, Army Life in a Black Regiment depicts his impressions of the Negroes and his opinion of the status of the freed slaves. This book and his work as State historian of Massachusetts, together with several essays related to this period are the subject of this chapter.

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Chapter IV, "The Colonel and the Ladies," describes Higginson's activities at woman suffrage conventions, his social theory of American democracy as expressed in the women's magazines, Woman's Journal and Harper's Bazar, his literary criticism of the new school of local color writers among whom were several women, his assistance as literary advisor of Harriet Prescott, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Emily Dickinson, his biographies of Lydia Maria Child, Una Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, and Julia Ward Howe. His fiction, Malbone and a few short stories, portray feminine types, and his essays for the Atlantic Monthly set up an ideal of womanhood and suggestions for reform in dress and the health habits of women.

Investigation of these phases of Higginson's career has borne out the reputation he holds as a writer of high literary quality and as a reformer of high romantic idealism.

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PREFACE

My first acknowledgment is to Mother Mary Gerald Barry, O.P., Prioress General of the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, Adrian, Michigan. Because of Mother Gerald I have had this opportunity of pursuing graduate study at Michigan State University and of investigating this dissertation topic.

Next, I would like to express my special indebtedness to Dr. Claude M. Newlin, the head of my committee and my major professor. Dr. Newlin suggested this topic and has directed it with his characteristic kindness, personal consideration, and constructive criticism. It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to have studied under Dr. Newlin and to have shared in the breadth and depth of his scholarship.

I am also grateful to Dr. David C. Mead for his valuable criticisms of my manuscript and for his kindly interest in this subject. I wish also to thank Dr. Lawrence Babb and Dr. William Heist, the other members of my committee, and Dr. Russel B. Nye, Head of the English Department.

I am very grateful to Dr. Benjamin B. Hickok, of the Communication Skills Department at Michigan State University, for so generously permitting me to use his microfilm of the correspondence concerning John Brown in the Higginson Collection in the Boston Public Library.

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A particular and large measure of my gratitude belongs to Sister Matthew Ann and the Sisters at Resurrection Convent for their encouragement and countless acts of kindness which have assisted me in bringing this work to completion.

Finally, I would like to thank the library staff at Michigan State University for placing materials at my disposal.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Wentworth Higginson was born of Puritan stock in Cambridge, Massachusetts, December 22, 1823. He graduated from Harvard in 1841, was schoolmaster for two years, then decided to enter the ministry. He attended Harvard Divinity School and was strongly inclined toward the most liberal wing of Unitarianism. He accepted the pastorate of the First Religious Society (Unitarian) of Newburyport, Massachusetts, and immediately devoted himself to reform measures in an ultra-conservative parish. His ardent abolitionist views cost him his pulpit in 1848. With his wife, Mary Channing Higginson, he moved to Worcester, Massachusetts, to take charge of a secularized Free Church. Here he found himself in the midst of seething reform activities. In the meantime, he wrote poetry, essays, and biographical sketches of such literary quality that he achieved, early in life, the reputation of a man of letters. The attraction of reform and literature were so strong that in 1861, after fifteen years of service as a minister, he resigned to devote himself to a profession of writing and lecturing.

Circumstances, however, and his own active temperament forced him to take part in the Civil War. He was offered and accepted the colonelcy of a regiment of Negro freed men in 1862 which he commanded for two years until an injury caused him to retire from military service in 1864.

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He returned to civilian life and lived at Newport, Rhode Island, where his wife, an arthritic invalid, had moved during his absence. His literary life at Newport was stimulated by his contact with literary figures and reform leaders with whom he associated.

His wife died in 1877 and he went abroad for a few months. In 1878 he returned to Cambridge and in 1879 married Mary Thacher. They had two children, one of whom died in infancy. For the remainder of his life, Higginson earned his living by writing and lecturing. He died in 1911.

This brief factual biography of Higginson tells very little of the spirit of the man who wrote in 1846,

> A pure earnest aim is not enough. Intellectual as well as moral armor must be bright for I know I shall have to sustain a warfare. . . . An aesthetic life--how beautiful--but the life of a Reformer, a People's Guide, 'battling for right'--glorious, but Oh, how hard![1]

Although such idealism may be unquestionably attributed to youth, nevertheless, the strong attraction of the life of a reformer and of a littérateur set a high goal which demanded much by way of idealism, optimism, and courage.

As a reformer, Higginson played a minor role in the great issues pressing upon the turbulent nineteenth century. Always a liberal in his convictions, he followed the inaugurators of reforms and assisted them materially by assuming local leadership in the cities where he lived. His influence, however, should not be underestimated, for in many instances, especially in the woman suffrage movement, he was a pioneer whose signature and presence gave the weight of respectability

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[1]Mary Thacher Higginson, Thomas Wentworth Higginson: The Story of His Life (Boston, 1914), p. 71.

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As a reformer it was impossible for Higginson to limit himself to one or two movements. A whole network of social problems, which seemed to hinge upon one another, opened before him, and as he interested himself in one he found himself enmeshed in the others. As a result he became involved in most of the issues. He supported Horace Mann's public school system and was, most of his life, on one or another board of education. His lyceum lectures, as part of adult education, were popular and stimulating. He advocated public libraries and was instrumental in setting up local libraries where he lived, even contributing a collection of almost a thousand books to the Boston Public Library. He was among the early supporters of physical education and gymnasiums for both young men and women. He often attributed his long and healthy life to the fact that he took regular physical exercise when a young man. He advocated labor unions and improved working conditions for men and women. He was one of the leaders in the temperance movement, frequently holding office and lecturing at conventions. He insisted that his return to health after his injury in the Civil War was due to the fact that he never indulged in strong drink.

He was also averse to tobacco. He was an early apostle of prison reform and a helper of the social outcast, the discharged prisoner. He was among the strongest supporters of the Free Church movement--one of the radical outgrowths of Unitarianism, and he became interested in spiritualism through his membership in the Radical Club. These many interests indicate a very full life and one can readily understand Higginson's remark that he never knew a moment of boredom.

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The two reforms, however, which occupied the largest portion of his life were abolition and woman suffrage. The appeal of the former which smote his conscience and his heart very early in life was simple. As he said many times, once grant that one man cannot hold another man as property and the argument is won. The appeal went far deeper however. Higginson came to know personally and to revere several Negro leaders, among whom were fugitives from the South and freed men from the North, such as Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. His position as a colonel of a Negro regiment of freed slaves was one of the greatest joys of his life. His enthusiasm and pride in these men was genuine and in many respects almost paternal. This is evident in his best work, Army Life in a Black Regiment.

The women's rights movement he accepted as a challenge to American democracy. For sixty years he spent himself, gallantly fighting on the lecture platform and in his writings for "the other half of the population." His advocacy of women's rights, however, was not limited to woman suffrage only. He expected that with the right to vote, woman's sphere would be broadened socially, educationally, industrially, and politically. Although he did not live to see the fulfillment of the woman suffrage movement in the passage of the nineteenth amendment, he frequently prophesied its coming for he recognized that the status of women in American society had long passed its "chrysalis" stage. For this reason he encouraged the rising group of authoresses, and brought before the public the achievements of women, however great or small. And, as a man of letters, he found at hand ample source material both propagandistic and artistic in these two movements.

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[2]Howard W. Hin
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[3]Edgar Lindsle
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Two phases of Higginson's literary career have been thoroughly investigated in earlier dissertations. One by Howard Hintz[2] is a general survey of Higginson's life and work in the light of Emersonian idealism. Hintz points out that Higginson's optimism and noble aims were largely inspired in his youth by the older transcendentalists, especially Emerson, and that Higginson represented these qualities, although in somewhat diluted form with the passing of years, well into the twentieth century. Higginson's position as a literary critic has also been discussed in a more recent study.[3]

It is the purpose of this thesis, however, to examine the relationship between Higginson's reform activities in the anti-slavery and woman suffrage movements and his literary career. Although much of his writing is necessarily of a propagandistic nature, a considerable amount of it is of real literary value. The study has been eminently revealing and rewarding, for behind the façade of Higginson's graceful and genteel style is a man of action. The mildness of his manner and of his writing is deceiving. Even Cheerful Yesterdays, his autobiography, is so self-effacing that it does not bring to the fore emphatically enough the natural vigor and vitality of the man. It is hoped the following discussion will rectify this impression, for Higginson's life was stimulating in its courage, fearlessness, and nobility of purpose.

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[2]Howard W. Hintz, Thomas Wentworth Higginson: Disciple of the Newness (Unpublished doctoral dissertation: New York University, 1937).

[3]Edgar Lindsley McCormick, Thomas Wentworth Higginson as a Literary Critic (Unpublished doctoral dissertation: University of Michigan, 1950).

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It must also be kept in mind, while examining his writings, that Higginson did not regard a literary career as the highest aim in life. His passionate fondness for literature and for writing was second to his humanitarianism. It is with this idea that he concluded his autobiography.

> The high-water mark of earthly endeavor is not to be found in the pure love of science or art or literature, since these do not, at their utmost, include all the interests of man, . . . but it lies in aims so far-reaching that they exclude all petty personalities--in aims such as are expressed in George Eliot's 'choir invisible,' or in the sublime prayer of the French iconoclast, Proudhon, 'Let my memory perish, if only humanity may be free.'[4]

As a man of letters, therefore, Higginson's life was inextricably bound up with his times. The ephemeral content of his work is perhaps one reason for the sudden decline of his reputation immediately after his death in 1911. Another reason is that, like most overly-active men, Higginson scattered his energies. He spoke of this as a fault in Theodore Parker and quoted from Goethe, "Strive constantly to concentrate thyself, never dissipate your powers; incessant activity, of whatever kind, leads to bankruptcy."[5] Although neither Parker nor Higginson could be accused of bankruptcy, nevertheless Higginson today is considered second rate as a writer. Perhaps concentration in one or two fields might have given him a lasting name. Higginson himself realized this, for he says of his activities in his autobiography, "Such versatility makes life very enjoyable, but perhaps not so really useful or successful as a career like that of my

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[4]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Cheerful Yesterdays, I, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson (Boston, 1900), p. 361.

[5]"Theodore Parker," Contemporaries, II, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson (Boston, 1900), p. 41.

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[6]Cheerful Yes

[7]Ibid.

[8]Bliss Perry,
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contemporary, Francis Parkman, "--a specialist before the days of specialism.[6] He did not, however, regret his course.

> To adopt a different method, as I did, is to put one's self too much in the position of a celebrated horse once owned by a friend of mine,--a horse which had never won a race, but which was prized as having gained a second place in more races than any other horse in America.[7]

Neither did Higginson have the happy faculty, as Bliss Perry points out, "like Julia Ward Howe, to win fame by one ecstatic lyric, or, like Wasson and Ellery Channing to be remembered by one famous line."[8] Yet he achieved a high excellence in his prose and constantly maintained it at a level which neither improved nor declined with the passage of years. His style was graceful and flowing, and he possessed the ability to touch delicately and lightly the finest aspects of life. Charles F. Thwing states that Higginson's style possessed two qualities--fineness and fire.

> These two elements are characteristic. It is, however, rather fineness than fire that dominates. . . . Fineness of thinking, fineness of feeling, fineness of appreciation ever seem to me to belong to him, and therefore to form, or to give at least atmosphere to his writing. . . . Fire belongs more to his understanding of movements.[9]

Both these elements are obvious in his contributions to the Atlantic Monthly. It will be noticed in the course of this study that much of his best work was published in the Atlantic Monthly during the first ten years of its existence, although his bibliography reveals that he wrote for nearly seventy journals during his prolific career. It will also be noticed that many of his early contributions

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[6] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 183.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Bliss Perry, "The Colonel's Quality," The Praise of Folly and Other Papers (Boston, 1923), p. 75.

[9] Charles Franklin Thwing, "Thomas Wentworth Higginson," Friends of Men (New York, 1933), p. 123.

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to the Atlantic Monthly are reformatory in content. A glance at the background of the magazine will perhaps explain Higginson's policy.

Higginson began publishing poetry, sermons and lectures as early as 1843. These, together with his personal acquaintanceship with the literary figures of Boston and Concord, gave him, by 1852, an assured literary prestige. When Francis H. Underwood, in 1853, looked for superior writers as contributors to his new literary project, a "literary and anti-slavery" magazine, Higginson was invited to contribute articles. Underwood had succeeded in persuading J. P. Jewett & Co. to stand behind him in establishing the new magazine which would unite "the strongest forces of expression in the joined causes of letters and reform."[10] J. P. Jewett & Co. had proved that they were unafraid of alienating their Southern customers by publishing Uncle Tom's Cabin and they agreed to cooperate in Underwood's project. After having obtained an immediate and cordial response from the outstanding New England writers, Underwood was disappointed in the sudden financial failure of the Jewett firm in the fall of 1853.

As literary adviser for Phillips, Sampson & Co., Underwood interested them in his project and with his former correspondents (Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Cabot, and Motley) as his counsel, he began, in 1857, the Atlantic Monthly with Lowell as editor-in-chief.

The relation of the Atlantic Monthly to the reform movements of the day would be an interesting study in itself. Louis J. Budd states:

> The contents of the early Atlantic were, of course, chiefly literary. Still, from its birth, aligned with

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[10] M. A. DeWolfe Howe, The Atlantic Monthly and its Makers (Boston, 1919), p. 16.

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> the rising Republican party through both editors and owners, it devoted substantial attention to contemporary affairs; James Russell Lowell, the first editor, penned political polemics for this new organ of 'Literature, Art, and Politics.' During the 1860's James T. Fields, moving with the main trend, further widened the periodical's coverage, and after the Civil War had enshrined the Republican party in the hearts of the New England intelligentsia. The Atlantic favored openly the triumphant antislavery legions of Lincoln, Grant, and Charles Sumner.[11]

Higginson's part in the early policies of the magazine could also be the subject for a separate study, for Higginson was intimate with both Lowell and Fields. Lowell himself has been described as "so true and spirited a patriot that no fear of consequences withheld him from open identification with the heterodox cause of anti-slavery,"[12] although Higginson found him reticent about publishing his "Ought Women to Learn the Alphabet?" because of his conservative attitude toward woman suffrage. Within Lowell's editorship, (1857-1861), however, Higginson published his essays on physical education: "Saints and their Bodies," (March, 1858); "Gymnastics," (March, 1861); on slavery: "Maroons of Jamaica," (February, 1860); "Maroons of Surinam" (May, 1860); "Denmark Vesey," (June, 1861); "Nat Turner's Insurrection," (August, 1861); on education: "Murder of the Innocents," (September, 1859). During Field's editorship (1861-1871), he published essays on physical education: "Health of Our Girls," (June, 1862); on smoking: "A New Counterblast," (December, 1861), and his Civil War papers discussed below.

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[11]Louis J. Budd, "Howells, the Atlantic Monthly, and Republicanism," American Literature, XXIV (May, 1952), p. 138.

[12]Howe, op. cit., p. 28.

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Fields was editor of the Atlantic throughout the Civil War, and in accepting and publishing Higginson's war essays, he carried on the definite anti-slavery character of the magazine. Higginson says of his friendship with Fields, "I happened to be one of his favorites, . . . and [he] was the only editor I have ever encountered whose judgment I could move for an instant by any cajoling; editors being, as a rule, a race made of adamant, as they should be."[13] James Austin says of Higginson's contributions during Fields's management:

> Higginson's part in the Atlantic is not to be passed over lightly. Though he is often overshadowed by the illustrious poets and essayists who were his colleagues, he had more to do with the serious prose style that was a chief characteristic of the magazine than any other writer between the resignation of Lowell and the appointment of Howells. This included the war period, wherein Higginson's matter as well as manner was authoritative Atlantic Monthly policy.[14]

The literary prestige of the journal from its beginnings and the fact that Higginson could boast that he "wrote more largely for the first twenty volumes of the magazine than any other contributor except Lowell and Holmes,"[15] indicates the stature of his reputation at this time. The fact that most of his contributions dealt with timely subjects shows that the reform element played a large part in his literary career. This is not to imply, however, that his work for the Atlantic Monthly was limited to reform topics or that his articles on reform were not sent to other leading journals. A glance at the bibliography

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[13] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 186.

[14] James C. Austin, Fields of the Atlantic Monthly, (San Marino, 1953), p. 248.

[15] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 186.

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Higginson's exact and methodical habits have made this study easier than was at first anticipated. He collected all his signed articles into book form, sometimes reprinting the same article in two or three volumes. Frequently articles by him appeared in different magazines within a year or two of one another, saying substantially the same thing, for he had the public speaker's habit of repeating himself without apparently diminishing the interest of his audience in the manner or matter of his topics. He also preserved carefully all letters which he received from great or minor figures of his day with an uncanny foresight as to their historical and antiquarian value. And he took a certain amount of well-deserved satisfaction in reprinting in facsimile some of these letters in his volumes and in displaying his knowledge of the personal habits and eccentricities of notables by writing interesting and amusing reminiscences of them. It has been interesting to meet these men and women through the eyes of a contemporary, for Higginson is said to have known "everyone."

Among these contemporaries were his friends, Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow, and Lowell, who exerted a strong influence on him and whose finest essence his own life emphasized. He drew from them an idealism and optimism which pervades his writings and is evident in such titles as Cheerful Yesterdays and "The Sunny Side of the Transcendental Period." But for this optimism, Hellman asserts,

> this American faith in moulding the living material of his own day into the finer forms inherent in his country's institutions, Emerson, the most influential of our essayists would have had a lesser hold on the minds of his fellow citizens; and the value of Higginson comes from a similar happy endowment.[16]

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[16] George S. Hellman, "Later Essayists," Cambridge History of American Literature (New York, 1931), III, Part II, p. 118.

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[2]Ibid., p. 61.

[3]Ibid., p. 68.

[4]Ibid., p. 78.

CHAPTER II

THE MINISTER AND THE SLAVES

A. Political Views and Anti-Slavery Activities (1843-1861)

As a young man of twenty in 1843, Thomas Wentworth Higginson "had got the excitement of the great Abolition conventions"[1] which he attended several times. Shortly after, he understood "the run of slavery argumentation" and could "talk abolitionism pretty well."[2] Within the year, Higginson decided that he was destined to live an earnest, independent life, and wrote to his fiancée, Mary Channing, of his decision to be a reformer. "Setting out, as I do, with an entire resolution never to be intimidated into shutting either my eyes or my mouth, it is proper to consider the chance of my falling out with the world."[3] He knew that reformers such as Emerson, Alcott, and Mrs. Lydia Maria Child were considered fanatics and branded as unsafe by conservatives. By 1846, he recorded that he had enrolled himself in the ranks of the American Non-Jurors or Disunion Abolitionists. He was determined "not only not to vote for any officer who must take the oath to support the U. S. Constitution, but also to use whatever means may lie in my power to promote the Dissolution of the Union."[4]

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[1] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 60.

[2] Ibid., p. 61.

[3] Ibid., p. 68.

[4] Ibid., p. 78.

Significantly, the title of his graduation oration from Harvard Divinity School in 1847 was "Relation of the Clergy to Reform."[5] At his ordination in Newburyport, James Freeman Clarke "exhorted his young brother to speak scathing words of rebuke against the sin of slavery,"[6] advice which he readily followed. At Newburyport, however, he found himself in one of the most conservative and anti-abolitionist of parishes. By profession, Higginson says, he found himself associated with all that was most reputable in the town; but, by temperament, he was inclined toward that which was most radical--toward the "Come-Outers" and those who belonged to the "Sisterhood of Reforms."[7] He spoke at anti-slavery and temperance meetings and, in 1848, accepted the nomination of the Free Soil Party for Congress. He was defeated and lost his parish because of his anti-slavery views.

For two years Higginson remained in Newburyport without a parish and entered into politics. One of his attempts, as he wrote to his friend, Samuel Longfellow, was "to bring back the Free-Soil party to self-control and consistency from the more fascinating paths of coalition and conquest"--at which he failed. The other was "to induce Massachusetts to follow the example of Maine and either have laws that can do something, or none at all, in the way of checking liquor traffic."[8] Woman suffrage also came in for an early share of his activities. But his growing interest was the slavery reform. During his stay at Newburyport, he began to meet the older abolitionists, Charles Sumner, Lucy Stone,

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., p. 85.

[7] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 119.

[8] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 90-91.

Whittier, Thoreau, and Emerson.

When the Fugitive Slave Law broke upon the nation in 1850, Higginson indignantly took up arms in earnest and entered into the slavery reform as a moral crusader. He had to wait, however, for an opportunity to act and followed approvingly the newspaper account of the dramatic rescue of the fugitive, "Shadrach," who was literally whisked away from the court by a group of negroes and rushed to Canada and freedom by white sympathizers.

To enter more fully into such activities, Higginson joined Theodore Parker's Vigilance Committee in Boston. The opportunity for excitement came in April, 1851, when he received word to report to the office of the Liberator for a meeting regarding the kidnapping of the Negro youth, Thomas Sims. The members of the Vigilance Committee, Higginson says, though personally admirable, were, on the whole, "unfit to undertake any positive action in the direction of forcible resistance to authorities."[9] Half of them were non-resistants like their leader Garrison; the other half were "political Abolitionists," or Free-Soilers who were opposed to any violation of the law. The only ones to be relied upon were a few, like himself, "whose temperament prevailed over the restrictions of non-resistance on the one side, and of politics on the other."[10]

Thomas Sims was held in the court House in Boston under trumped-up charges and a heavy guard. Higginson tried to assist him by consulting Ellis Gray Loring, an abolitionist lawyer, about the wild scheme of filching the official record of the Southern court which was lying invitingly among the lawyers' papers. He also wrote to an old classmate,

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[9] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 139.

[10] Ibid., p. 140.

Charles Devens, then United States marshall, imploring him to resign rather then to be the instrument of sending a man into bondage. An excerpt from his letter illustrates his sincerity.

> For myself there is something in the thought of assisting to return to slavery a man guilty of no crime but a colored skin /at which/ every thought of my nature rebels in . . . horror. I think not now of the escaped slave, though he has all sympathies, but of the free men and women who are destined to suffer for this act. And I almost feel as if the nation of which we have boasted were sunk in dust forever, now that justice and humanity are gone; and as if the nineteenth century were the darkest of all ages.[11]

Devens, however, replied courteously that he reserved his decision.

Higginson also made a vigorous speech in Tremont Temple urging instant action which excited the crowd "to the verge of revolution,"[12] but was effectively opposed by a lawyer, Charles Mayo Ellis, who protested against its tone.[13]

Finally, Higginson, with about four or five others, formed a desperate plan of rescue. Sims was confined in the Court House in a third floor room without grating at the window. A Negro clergyman of Boston, Mr. Grimes, agreed to visit Sims and arrange to have him jump from a window to mattresses placed below and thence to escape in a carriage waiting for him. As Higginson and a friend walked through the Court Square the evening of the proposed rescue, they were dismayed to find men busily fitting iron bars across the window. Their plan was frustrated.

A hurried meeting was held in Theodore Parker's study, where plans were discussed for pirating the boat on which Sims was to be placed.

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[11] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 111-112.

[12] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 142.

[13] Ibid., p. 143.

The uncertainty of the project, however, caused the would-be rescuers to abandon the idea. Thomas Sims was returned to Savannah and publicly whipped.

The abolitionists, especially Higginson, were left with the strong impression of the great want of preparation, on their part, for this revolutionary work.[14] By their defiance of the law in their attempt to rescue Sims they were also left with the strange feeling of being outside the pale of established institutions. In formulating plans, Higginson said of those days, one was "obliged to lower one's voice and conceal one's purposes; to see law and order, police and military, on the wrong side, and find good citizenship a sin and bad citizenship a duty."[15]

Higginson's part in the Sims incident gave him enough publicity to bring him to the notice of the Abolition element in Worcester, Massachusetts. He was invited to take charge of the Worcester Free Church, an organization which had sprung up under the influence of Theodore Parker's Boston Society--its prototype. This organization suited Higginson because of its secular nature, with no church membership or communion service. It resembled, he says, "the ethical societies of the present day, with a shade more of specifically religious aspect."[16] He wrote to a friend that his motives in accepting the Worcester parish were that the radicalism was like that of Lynn, a strongly abolitionist town, but "more varied, more cultivated, and more balanced by an opposing

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[14] Ibid., p. 144.

[15] Ibid., p. 145.

[16] Ibid., p. 131.

force." Furthermore, the free church movement was very strong there, and Higginson felt a duty toward it because, he says, he saw the need and possibility "of infusing more reverence and piety into the Come-outerism of New England, to which I belong by nature."[17] Worcester, therefore, offered an opportunity for complete dedication to the slavery reform, for it was at that time a "seething centre of all reforms, and I found myself almost in fashion, at least with the unfashionable."[18]

Higginson and his Free Church became an important factor in strengthening the Underground Railroad in Worcester. He was stockholder of a yacht the Flirt which cruised the coast to assist fugitives or harass boats carrying slaves. Higginson himself took fugitives by night to the suburban home of Stephen Foster, one of the stops of the Underground Railroad. As a member of the Boston Anti-Slavery Society he received fugitives into his home and at one time was even moved with the desire to adopt the white child of a fugitive slave to supply the want of children in his home.

During this period (1853-1858) Higginson had a number of speeches and sermons printed in the Liberator. In these he expressed his Disunion views boldly and had the courage of his convictions to follow them through. Slavery was a moral issue with him because it involved transgression upon the rights of men and was completely antagonistic to the natural law. In the early days of 1853, he believed Massachusetts to be too lethargic in its attitude toward the slavery question. It was his ambition to be an agitator and to arouse his fellow men to the injustices and atrocities

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[17] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 115.

[18] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 131.

of the slavery system. With the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law and the failure of the abolitionists of Boston to keep Thomas Sims in the North, more agitation was necessary than ever before.

> Daniel Webster said at Salem, in that memorable trial, 'There is no escape from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.' So I say now, that in this anti-slavery cause or in any moral cause, there is no refuge from agitation by chains and dungeons, and chains and dungeons are agitation.[19]

Slavery, he pointed out, was brought to the doorstep of Massachusetts by escaped Negroes, such as Thomas Sims. Northerners must now be made to realize its moral and political implications. The enemy "now sits enthroned in State Street, and we have it at arm's length."[20] It must be fought first by battling "with the money powers of the city, and the conservative power of the State."[21] Political parties, however, were not the answer to the problem. "What difference is it to the anti-slavery movement whether the Whig and Democratic parties take this or that position on the subject? What idle folly for the Slave Power to hope anything by going there! It should have gone West, to a different National Convention."[22]

Within the year, Higginson saw the Thomas Sims incident repeated on a larger scale in the case of Anthony Burns, for this time the city authorities had to call out the militia to preserve their authority. On Thursday, May 25, 1854, Rev. Samuel May, secretary of the Boston Anti-Slavery Society, sent word to Higginson that a slave, Anthony

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[19] "Speech at the Anti-Slavery Convention," The Liberator, February 11, 1853.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

Burns, had been arrested. The case was to be heard on Saturday morning. Higginson sent word to Martin Stowell (a friend who had experienced a slave rescue in Syracuse, New York) and went to meet the Vigilance Committee in Boston. The committee was "not essentially different from those which had proved so disappointing three years before."[23] Samuel Gridley Howe gave some good and spirited advice, and two things were resolved upon--to list the names of those willing to act, and to have a definite leader. One leader could not be agreed upon, so an executive committee of six was formed: Wendell Phillips, Theodore Parker, Samuel G. Howe, Kemp (an energetic Irishman), Captain Bearse (Captain of the Flirt), and Higginson.[24] Stowall was added at Higginson's request and arrived that evening. At Stowall's suggestion a plan for the rescue of Anthony Burns was adopted. A meeting was to be held at Faneuil Hall Saturday night. At the height of the program a loud voice from the gallery was to announce that a mob of Negroes were attacking the Court House where Burns was imprisoned. One of the speakers was to be warned of the signal in advance--Wendell Phillips, if possible--and he, in turn, was to send the mob running to the Court House to support the committee of six who were to act as leaders to bring the slave out of the prison. Higginson heartily endorsed the scheme and prepared for action. A box of axes was bought and the committee agreed to meet before the general assembly in the Hall on Saturday.

The crowd in Faneuil Hall was larger than any one anticipated. The committee found it impossible to get together for a meeting, so

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[23] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 147

[24] Ibid. p. 148.

word was sent haphazardly to each member. Samuel G. Howe and Theodore Parker, the speakers, only half comprehended the message, as it afterwards proved. Wendell Phillips could not be reached at all. It was believed, however, that enough information had been given about the scheme to have it run smoothly. Stowall, Kemp, and Higginson were each to provide five men to head the attack on the court house, and Lewis Hayden, a Negro leader, agreed to supply ten Negroes.

The audience at Faneuil Hall, however, was too large; the platform could not be reached by a private entrence, and John L. Swift, who was chosen to give the signal, was not believed when he called out the message until too late.

Higginson met his group at the Court House and waited for the crowd at the Hall to come to ther support. After the signal was given, a few idlers came running by, but the real leaders of the meeting, Howe, Parker, Phillips, and William Francis Channing, were clogged in the Hall and could not get out quickly enough to be of any use. In the meantime, a few of Higginson's group came up with a wooden beam. Higginson found himself at the head of it, with a stalwart Negro opposite him. They battered down the southwest door to the Court House and ran in, the Negro leading and Higginson right behind him, to find themselves faced with policemen who forced them back. Higginson received a cut on the chin which later left a permanent scar. A man, Batchelder, inside the Court House, was shot and killed. Of this incident, Higginson wrote: "There had been other fugitive slave rescues in different parts of the country, but this was the first drop of blood actually shed. . . . The killing of Batchelder was the first act of violence."[25] The source of the shot was never finally determined.

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[25] Ibid., p. 155.

Newspaper items give conflicting stories.[26] Martin Stowall and several others were arrested. Higginson remained outside hoping that reinforcements would appear. Instead, two companies of artillery came from Fort Warren and two companies of marines from the Charlestown Navy Yard to put down the insurrection and to guard the Court House. Higginson retired to have his chin tended to.

Within a few weeks, on June 10, 1854, Higginson was arrested. He reported to Boston for examination, but was never required to appear at the trial about which Theodore Parker later wrote his elaborate defense. Of this Higginson said, "The indictment was ultimately quashed as imperfect, and we all got out of the affair, as it were, by the side-door."[27]

Anthony Burns was returned to his master on what was later known as "Bad Friday." The following Sunday, Higginson preached a sermon, "Massachusetts in Mourning," in which he said,

> The strokes on the door of that Court-House that night . . . went echoing from town to town . . . and each reverberating throb was a blow upon the door of every slave prison of this guilty republic.[28]

Later that year he referred to Anthony Burns and pointed out that America was no longer free.

> We claim to be free; and yet, while Massachusetts still retains, and has multiplied a hundred-fold its old prosperity, the only step that is claimed in the direction of freedom is, that whereas it once cost twenty-five dollars to send a slave

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[26] Boston Slave Riot and Trial of Anthony Burns (Boston, 1854). This volume contains reprints of the newspaper articles which appeared at the time. Several accounts assert that Batchelder was stabbed, not shot.

[27] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 162.

[28] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 146.

> into bondage, it costs thousands of dollars now. But remember, it is only because Massachusetts is rich and luxurious now, and she can afford to pay for the costly luxury of still obeying the Constitution, as she construes it, by sending a man into slavery.[29]

The Fugitive Slave Law, he said, passed under the Constitution, presented the best of arguments for civil disobedience. It denied habeas corpus and trial by jury; it invested subordinate officers with judicial power who could be bribed with five dollars to decide cases unjustly. The evil, however, was not that certain points of the Fugitive Slave Law were unconstitutional, "but because it is infernal! . . . The evil is the object itself."[30] A man's conscience must force him to choose sides. Higginson, for one, signed the first petition of the Legislature asking that Massachusetts take steps for the peaceable dissolution of the Union. He was voting again, he said, Free-Soiler that he was, for the same measure. At this time he felt that political action could remedy the situation.

> Nothing is clearer than that political action must tend to the building up of a Northern Union, a Northern Democracy--a Democracy that no longer apologizes and cringes when the Constitution and the Union are mentioned, but which says clearly to the South--'We have justice and right, the truth of God, and the sympathies of all good men on our side; you have only a Constitution and a Union.' Let this issue be tried between them.[31]

The Constitution does not require that Congress should pass laws regarding slavery, he said. It should be the responsibility of the States to make a Fugitive Slave Law. With the Federal Government out of the picture, nullification could take place as a sectional issue,

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[29]"Speech at the Celebration of the West India Emancipation at Abington," The Liberator (August 11, 1854).

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

and Higginson for one would be in favor of dissolving the Union.

The necessity for disunion was made more urgent by the dangers of the pending Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854. In February he preached a rousing sermon against its principles. Giving a brief history of the compromises, he pointed out that the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, proposed by Stephen Douglas was the direct result of Douglas's recent visit to Russia; that Russia's policy was to have the United States so absorbed in internal conflict that it could not take part in the coming death-struggle of despotism in Europe. "When this administration suddenly suffers a contest to be reopened, which it had solemnly pledged itself to keep closed forever, we must look further for the explanation than the politics of one continent only."[32]

Higginson believed that the Nebraska Bill would pass, but he did not believe that slavery would necessarily be extended. His reasons were, first, that slavery was economically unsound; second, that emigrants hated it; third, that the rising agitation against slavery predicted freedom even without the action of law. He was caustic in his outline of the consistent weaknesses of politicians in making the compromises which led from one to another, so that even the great Webster, after sincerely pledging in 1848 that he would never consent to the admission of another slave State into the Union was supporting the Nebraska Law. Politicians could no longer command respect. "In what has Whig Anti-Slavery principle shown itself better than Democratic Anti-Slavery principle, that it should claim our greater confidence now?"[33]

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[32]"The Nebraska Bill: A Sermon," The Liberator (February 17, 1854).

[33]Ibid.

Higginson proposed the remedy of curing agitation by agitation--so as "to hasten the time when agitation will be unnecessary." Senator Douglas, through this bill, Higginson maintained, was unconsciously starting an impulse toward agitation "that may help the whole nation to a healthy state again."[34] It did no good to try to dismiss the topic of slavery from the Senate hall, for slavery was its own worst enemy. Anti-slavery discussion proceeded from principles deep in the human soul which would endure. "There are but two powerful things upon this continent, Slavery and Anti-Slavery:--politics and religion and conscience are the submissive servants of one or the other of these."[35] The Nebraska Bill, he added in a fiery peroration, was "not a new Compromise to save the Union; it was the repeal of an old one, which was made to save it before." Higginson had no respect for compromises and asked acridly, "But if this nation attaches no more importance to its compromises than it does to its principles, what have we left to trust to?"

Higginson urged further anti-slavery agitation. Even though the Wilmot Proviso failed, he said, the agitation it called forth did not fail, for it prevented slavery from going into California. God wanted Nebraska for freedom, and it behooved men to give to liberty what thousands give to slavery--"our lives and our fortunes;--and to add, what slavery is just now in danger of forgetting, 'our sacred honor.'"[36]

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[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

Higginson's republican sympathies were never more strongly expressed than in his series of articles for the New York Tribune which he wrote as a correspondent for Horace Greeley on his trip into Kansas territory in 1856. The articles ran serially from September 12, 1856, to October 20, and, like those written for similar Republican newspapers (St. Louis Democrat and the Chicago Tribune) they capitalized on real or imaginary atrocities and injustices of the pro-slavery element in the territory, and pointed up the pro-slavery bias of the government. A brief review of the situation in Kansas will clarify Higginson's attitude toward the government as seen in this series and his activities in the Emigrant Aid Society.

With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of May, 1854, which repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1850, Kansas territory was opened to settlers from the north and the south who were told that they should decide by vote whether to exclude or countenance slavery. Rivalry immediately broke out in an effort to decide which group would be stronger. Missouri settlers along the border naturally moved into Kansas to preempt land, and it was generally assumed that Missourians would make Kansas a slave territory.

Northern anti-slavery men, however, set themselves the task of preventing the extension of slavery into Kansas. Eli Thayer of Worcester, Massachusetts, saw in the Kansas-Nebraska Bill a chance to make money and at the same time extend human freedom. With Amos A. Lawrence, his treasurer, he formed the New England Emigrant Aid Society which sent groups to Kansas to form the anti-slavery town of Lawrence and to plot new villages such as Osawatomie, Manhattan, and Topeka.[37]

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[37] Jay Monaghan, Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865 (Boston, 1955), p. 1.

In an effort to defend their stakes against the sudden influx of northerners, the Missourians held a series of meetings during the summer of 1854 which denounced the Emigrant Aid Company and called upon the people of Missouri to rally to the support of their institutions.[38]

In the meantime, Senator David R. Atchison of Missouri saw an opportunity ready-made for him to displace Thomas Hart Benton as Democratic boss of Missouri. He played upon the fears of the slaveholding counties, and roused them to defend their interests against the incoming Easterners. By doing so, Atchison expected to bring the slaveholding portion of the Whigs to his side and win the coming election in January. With his lieutenants, the Stringfellow brothers, Atchison cloaked his political ambitions behind his pretended zeal for slavery. When, however, in January, the Missouri legislature was unable to make a choice of senator, Atchison redoubled his efforts on the Kansas border by rousing further animosity toward Northern settlers as each group arrived.

Governor Reeder, sent by President Pierce, spent the winter of 1854-1855 studying the situation. He ordered an election for a territorial legislature on March 30, 1855. In an effort to prevent fraud, he had a census taken to estimate the approximate number of legitimate voters. By March, Atchison had exhorted enough Missourians and Southerners to migrate for the election to succeed in stuffing the ballot boxes with approximately eighty percent spurious votes of the 6207 cast.[39] One free-state man was elected; the others, of course, were pro-slavery

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[38]Samuel A. Johnson, "The Emigrant Aid Company in the Kansas Conflict," Kansas Historical Quarterly, VI (February, 1937), p. 23.

[39]Monaghan, op. cit., p. 20.

candidates. A legislature was set up and reluctantly supported by Governor Reeder.

The Free-State settlers, were, naturally embittered by the election and began to denounce the Missourians as "Border Ruffians." The results of the election, however, served as a unifying factor to the Free-Soil group. Under the leadership of Dr. Charles A. Robinson, one of the Emigrant Aid Company agents, the Free-State men joined in gathering arms and forces for a revolution.

In August, 1855, Wilson Shannon of Ohio replaced Reeder as governor. He immediately accepted the pro-slavery group as "the people of Kansas." His work in the territory, therefore, can be summarized in the resolutions of the "Law and Order Party" or "States' Rights Party" which he assembled at Leavenworth. Shannon's year of governorship was one of growing bitterness between the pro-slavery and free-soil camps. His position, however, was a difficult one. He had to face the hostility of the free-soil men and the frictions within the pro-slavery groups. During his term as governor, petty marauding, murders, and miscellaneous acts of depredation on both sides occurred throughout the Territory. On May 24, 1856, the notorious Pottowatomie massacre by John Brown took place. Within the same week, Captain Henry Clay Pate and his territorial militia surrendered to John Brown at the "Battle of Black Jack." Shannon was able to avert open warfare on Bull Creek in June only through the issuance of a proclamation ordering all armed bands to disperse.

In the meantime, the Free-State leaders sent to Eli Thayer asking for Sharps' rifles and urged the formation of a Free-State constitution. At Lawrence, now the stronghold of the Free-State group, Robinson began

a series of seven conventions out of which, in February, 1856, was finally drawn up the Topeka Constitution. Free-Soil officials were installed under the constitution and Kansas was now split into two rival governments.

Feeling grew tense and skirmishes continued between pro-slavery and Free-Soil settlers. The climax came on May 21, 1856, when Lawrence, the center of the Free-Soil settlers, was sacked by Atchison and pro-slavery fighters. For the next three months Kansas was plunged into civil war.

During the war the settlers of both parties suffered severe hardships and poverty. The Emigrant Aid Company began to combine with its pleas for stock subscriptions an appeal for funds to relieve destitute Free-State settlers. Thousands of dollars were raised and sent to Kansas to supply food and clothing to men who had abandoned their claims to take up arms in the Free-State cause. During June, Kansas aid committees sprang up in nearly all the free states and in July a National Kansas Committee was formed. These new organizations now took up much of the burden, so far borne by the Emigrant Aid Company, of arousing moral and political support for the Free-State cause, recruiting settlers, furnishing arms, and relieving the needy. By this time "Bleeding Kansas" had become a national issue.

During the first six months of 1856, parties were organized under the auspices of these aid companies and assisted by the Emigrant Aid Company which supplied tickets at a reduced rate in several instances.

Higginson, distressed at the lassitude of the North at this time of crisis in a letter to his mother wrote,

> Two thousand dollars, with our remittance, and our two parties of emigrants (which would not have gone by this time

> if I had not gone to work on it the first night I came) are absolutely ALL that has yet been done by New England for Kansas, in this time of imminent need. This I say to show you how ill-prepared we are for such emergencies. The busy give no time and the leisurely no energy, and there is no organization. I should except the Committee here, which has done admirably, and that in Concord, Massachusetts, and Dr. Howe, Sam Cabot, Charles Higginson, and a few others in Boston.[40]

Higginson became an officer of one of the county committees and urged Worcester citizens and any others he could contact to join the emigrant trains to fight, if necessary, for freedom in Kansas. He was successful in sending off two parties, one led by Martin Stowall and a second by Dr. Calvin Cutter.[41]

When Dr. Cutter's party was turned back from the Missouri river by the border ruffians, Higginson went to St. Louis to meet it, carrying "funds to provide for the necessities of this body." He was also "to report on the practicability of either breaking the river blockade or flanking it."[42] The party was re-routed through Iowa and Nebraska. Stowall's party had made its "rendezvous" in Worcester and set out on June 25.

On the same day, the delegates from Kansas leagues and local Kansas committees in various Massachusetts towns met in convention in Boston and formed the Massachusetts State Kansas Committee, with George L. Stearns as chairman and Patrick T. Jackson as treasurer.[43] Higginson became an agent of this State committee "which," he wrote to his

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[40]Mary Thacher Higginson (ed.), Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, 1846-1906 (Boston, 1921), p. 138.

[41]Ibid., p. 137.

[42]Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 197.

[43]Samuel A. Johnson, The Battle Cry of Freedom: The New England Emigrant Aid Company in the Kansas Crusade (Lawrence, 1954), p. 203.

mother on June 26, "was appointed . . . chiefly on my urging."[44]

On August 29, he wrote again to his mother that "our men are nicely settled in the northern part of Kansas, which is more peaceful. Colonel Topliff, who has just come from Lawrence, speaks quite encouragingly and thinks they can resist invasion."[45] In the same letter he hinted that he might have to go West, "to the Nebraska border, and perhaps some way inside."

Two days later matters were decided and he sent word home that he would leave for Chicago the next day, go to Nebraska City and probably into the Territory. "I allow six weeks, but it may be only a month, and hope to write a good deal to you and Mary and the 'Tribune,' though letters may be intercepted. Letters for me to be directed to James L. Armstrong, Topeka, Kansas."[46]

While Higginson and his party were on their way to Kansas, events were occurring in the Territory which it has taken later historians to interpret. On August 21, Governor Shannon resigned and left the territory. That same day, notice of his removal was received from Washington. With Shannon's departure, bedlam broke loose. On August 25, Acting Governor Woodson issued a proclamation declaring "the said Territory to be in a state of open insurrection and rebellion."[47]

On September 2, 1856, John W. Geary was appointed Governor of the Kansas Territory. When Geary entered Kansas, he had orders from President Pierce to secure peace at any price.

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[44] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 137.

[45] Ibid., p. 139.

[46] Ibid., p. 140.

[47] Johnson, The Battle Cry of Freedom, p. 203.

Geary arrived at Lecompton on September 12. The next morning he issued two proclamations: "one ordering all armed forces, including the existing territorial militia, to disband, and the other ordering all adult male citizens to enroll themselves for military duty."[48] He went to Lawrence to assure the people that they would be protected. He captured James Lane's and Colonel Harvey's free-state force (although Lane escaped) after their attacks at Ozawkee and Hickory Point. He dispersed Atchison's "Grand Army," numbering 2700, who were camped at Franklin planning another major assault on Lawrence.

Higginson arrived at Nebraska City, Iowa, September 12, the same day Geary took office at Lecompton. His first article for the Tribune under the name, "Worcester," (later reprinted as A Ride Through Kansas) gives a picture of a frontier town. Nebraska City he describes as a handful of one-story cabins set on a bluff overlooking the muddy Missouri River. The village was comprised of three or four land offices and a tavern. The principal occupation of the inhabitants seemed to be to sit on the doorsteps and wait for real estate to rise. The emigrants had to come in through Iowa because the river had been closed by the border ruffians. "Emigrants," Higginson says, "must toil week after week, beneath a burning sun, over a parched and endless prairie sometimes seeing no house in a day or two together, camping often without wood, and sometimes without water, and obliged to carry with them every eatable they use." It was no wonder that many fell sick on the way, for, he adds, "I can only wonder at the patience and fortitude which the present emigrants have shown. . . . There is plenty of genuine

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[48] Ibid., p. 231.

tragedy. . . . I converse daily with men who have sacrificed all their property in the service, and are ready to add their lives."[49] The last remark he made to rebuke Eastern millionaires who thought themselves generous to give fifty dollars to the Kansas cause.

Reports, he said, from Topeka and Lawrence were vague and confused. Lawrence was holding its own, however, even though its people were entirely out of flour and lead. The Missourians between Nebraska City and Lawrence were so few that emigrant trains were unmolested. There was reason to believe, however, that General Richardson (United States military leader) had been drawn off for a time, to re-enter at a time agreed upon--"probably when their spies report that our emigrant train is ready to set forth."[50]

Higginson constantly drew attention to the good conduct of the emigrant trains, of the Massachusetts and Maine men on their way to Little Nemaha, and of his own group of about one-hundred-forty who were resting at Nebraska City and purchasing supplies.

The first article of this series is made up of rumored reports or hearsay, none of which had any foundation or authority. They were asserted with an assurance that was probably meant to create uneasiness among readers. The article is interesting as a reflection of the Kansas atmosphere rather than of any actual happening. Some of the rumors were that the Missourians expected to rule Iowa and Nebraska as well as Kansas, that the new steam ferry intended for emigrants was threatened, that Tabor, Iowa, an anti-slavery town, was expecting an attack.

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[49] A Ride Through Kansas (Anti-Slavery Tract, No. 20, 1856), p. 2.

[50] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

With these dangers on their minds, the party moved through Plymouth and Lexington prepared for an attack by pro-slavery groups. Higginson was a little disappointed that no danger arose and that he had no opportunity to point his gun at anything more formidable than a hawk which he brought down. Pro-slavery spies, Higginson said, mingled with the emigrant train, but, because the group was well-armed and determined, outbreaks or attacks were prevented.[51]

Higginson's unfavorable opinion of Governor Geary was formed on his way into Kansas. He met James H. Lane who had recently escaped after his attack on Hickory Point and brought news of Geary's disarmament proclamation. Lane had retreated northward to open up the road where General Richardson was preventing immigrants from coming along the "Lane Trail" which Higginson and his party were following. Several discouraged returning parties also met Higginson's group with stories of gross injustices, tyrannies, and arrests by pro-slavery men.

> The bravest young men of Lawrence were put under arrest, charged with treason, murder, arsen, robbery, and what not; while not a Pro-Slavery man was seized. This was the penalty they had to pay for defending themselves vigorously at last, and clearing their own soil from the invading Missourians. 'The worst enemy Kansas has ever had' they pronounced Governor Geary to be; and they were going to Iowa to wait for better times. 'Will you give up Kansas?' I asked. 'Never!' was the reply from bronzed and bearded lips, stern and terrible as the weapons that hung to the saddle-bow. 'We are scattered, starved, hunted, half-naked, but we are not conquered yet.'[52]

The report falls into the general pattern of Tribune propaganda which Greeley probably considered good copy.

Higginson's personal encounter with Governor Geary, which he wrote about on September 28, confirmed his pre-conceived opinion of the man.

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[51] Ibid., p. 6.

[52] Ibid.

Geary had been warned of a large armed force entering Kansas by way of Nebraska. He sent Colonel Walker and Colonel Preston with soldiers to prevent any such group from entering the Territory. Higginson's party was stopped for investigation, Colonel Preston placing Higginson, Redpath, and "Governor" Robinson under arrest to be brought before Governor Geary. The mistake was recognized immediately and the group was dismissed.[53] Higginson's description of Geary is caustic in the extreme and shows his complete lack of understanding of Geary's troublesome position. The governor's eyes, he says, look at you "with a very intensified nothing in them. . . . He appears to have energy of will, without real energy of character; can do single acts of decision . . . but has neither the mental ability to understand the condition of Kansas, nor the moral power to carry out any systematic plan for its benefit." He plays on the fears and hatreds of both pro-slavery and free-soil parties and pits these forces against one another. He acts without law or precedent. He is disliked by both groups. Higginson concludes his tirade with: "I give this description of the new Governor of Kansas, because there is no public man in the United States whose blunders or errors may be more destructive. . . . He has undertaken a position so inconsistent and difficult that the wisest man would not fill it; and he is a great way from being the wisest."[54]

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[53]Colonel P. St. George Cook reported on September 28, 1856, from a camp near Lecompton:

> I have received no report from Colonel Johnston, but the Deputy Marshall has returned with Redpath, and reports that the large party met near Topeka are real immigrants. No definite information has been received of the approach of the large armed body, but the Colonel will probably be instructed to remain near the northern boundary until after the election on the 6th proximo.

Transactions of the Kansas Historical Society, 1886-1888, F. G. Adams (ed.), IV (Topeka, 1890), p. 512.

[54]A Ride Through Kansas, p. 9.

To his credit, Higginson wrote of Governor Geary many years later:

> I formed that day a very unfavorable impression of Governor Geary, and a favorable one of Governor Robinson, and lived to modify both opinions. The former, though vacillating in Kansas, did himself great credit afterwards in the Civil War; while the latter did himself very little credit in Kansas politics, whose bitter hostilities and narrow vindictiveness he was the first to foster.[55]

He also stated that "in view of the fact that certain rifles which we had brought, and which had been left at Tabor, Iowa, for future emergencies, were the same weapons which ultimately armed John Brown and his men at Harper's Ferry, it is plain that neither Governor Geary's solicitude nor the military expedition of Colonel Preston was at all misplaced."[56]

In sharp contrast, however, to his dislike for Governor Geary is Higginson's high opinion of the enigmatic James H. Lane. His feeling about Lane is understandable, however, when considered in the light of Higginson's own temperament and his strong abolitionist sentiments. Lane, to him, was the "Marion" of Kansas. He was Higginson's concept of the man of action who saw wrongs to be righted and was willing to correct them at his own risk. Higginson either did not know of Lane's unjust incursions on pro-slavery groups or believed that in such cases Lane was in the right. It is true that Lane had taken Kansas and its Free-State people to his heart. He had appeared in Congress with the Topeka Constitution which was rejected on grounds of illegality. He had stumped the Northern states, and with his natural gift of flamboyant oratory had aroused the North to the necessity of settling Kansas as a Free-Soil state. As the wagons of his

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[55] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 207.

[56] Ibid., p. 206.

emigrants moved westward, the Missourians were terrified at rumors of the purported numbers of "Lane's Army from the North." When he foresaw the closing of the Missouri River, he is said to have made the so-called "Lane's Trail" through Iowa and Nebraska by erecting heaps of stones to mark out the way, known as "Lane's Chimneys"[57] In September, he left Kansas temporarily, after Governor Geary's proclamation, to assist emigrant groups to enter the Territory. While Higginson and his party were resting in Nebraska City, Lane and his men rode into town.

> The leader was a thin man of middle age, in a gray woolen shirt, with keen eyes, smooth tongue, and a suggestion of courteous and even fascinating manners; a sort of Prince Rupert of humbler grade. This was the then celebrated Jim Lane, afterwards Senator James H. Lane, of the United States Congress; at this time calling himself only 'Major-General commanding the Free State Forces of Kansas.'[58]

Lane remained in Nebraska City two days and Higginson "did something towards renewing the clothing of his band." He spoke to the citizens of the town with his usual fiery eloquence, impressing Higginson to such an extent that he sent a report of the speech to "some Boston paper." Lane gave "capital suggestions" to Higginson as to their march through the Territory, and "ended by handing me a bit of crumpled paper, appointing me a member of his staff and the rank of brigadier-general."[59] As Higginson rode out of Nebraska City with Samuel F.

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[57]Wendell Holmes Stephensen, Political Career of General James H. Lane, III, Publication of the Kansas State Historical Society (Topeka, 1930), p. 72.

[58]Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 203.

[59]Ibid., p. 204.

Tappan the correspondent for the New York Times and Boston Journal, he learned that Tappan also had a similar bit of paper in his possession. Amused, he wrote:

> We thus found out that the Kansas guerilla leader carried out the habit of partisan chiefs in all history, who have usually made up in titles and honors what they could not bestow in actual emoluments. After this discovery Tappan and I rode on in conscious inward importance, a sort of dignity a deux, yet not knowing but that at any moment some third brigadier-general might cross our path.[60]

After the battle at Hickory Point from which Lane had escaped, a group of 105 prisoners were held at Lecompton, the pro-slavery headquarters. Higginson went to visit them and found they were kept on charges of murder while pro-slavery prisoners under the same charge had been released. Higginson emphasized the wretched conditions under which they were kept. They had no heat or bedding, and very little food. In fact, he made an itemized list of the rations for a week which had been given the prisoners. This he followed by a few remarks regarding the government.

> All these arrests have been made by the United States troops, whom it is the present policy of the people not to resist. But this patience cannot last forever; and I only repeat, what I have every day asserted, when I say that the election of Fremont is the only thing that can avert a bloodier conflict than has ever yet stained this soil. For myself, I do not believe that even that will do it. When not a single Pro-Slavery man is arrested, how can men help seeing that the power of the Union is sustaining Missouri.[61]

At Lawrence, the first week of October, Higginson learned of the recent preparations for defense of the Free-Soil men against Atchison's intended attack. Somewhat overwhelmed by the idea of two hundred courageous free-state defenders facing 2800 agressors of the pro-

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[60] Ibid., pp. 204-205.

[61] A Ride Through Kansas, p. 12.

slavery party, Higginson extolled their efforts.

> I was assured by Governor Robinson and a dozen others that among this devoted handful the highest spirits prevailed; they were laughing and joking as usual, and only intent on selling their lives as dearly as possible.
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> They had no regular commander, any more than at Bunker Hill; but the famous 'Old Captain Brown' moved among them, saying, 'Fire, low, boys; be sure to bring your eye to the hinder sight of your rifle, and aim at the feet rather than at the head.'[62]

Although Geary was called upon, Higginson says, he did not come until evening, "thus allowing time for the destruction of everything." In reality, there had been no attack. Geary had prevented it in a parley with Atchison.

Higginson's estimate of Lawrence, the Free-State town, was highly favorable. Food shortage and lack of ammunition were causing great hardship, but were bringing out the best qualities of the people. Ever since the Anthony Burns affai Higginson wrote:

> I have been looking for men. I have found them in Kansas. The virtue of courage, . . . has not died out of the Anglo-American race. . . . It needs only circumstances to bring it out. A single day in Kansas makes the American Revolution more intelligible than all Sparks or Hildreth can do.[63]

To these frontier heroes, Higginson preached on Sunday, choosing as his text the one employed by Rev. John Martin the Sunday after he fought at Bunker Hill, "Be not ye afraid of them; remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses."[64]

On October 5, he left for Leavenworth, the pro-slavery town, to observe a Border Ruffian election which turned out to be a quiet

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[62] Ibid., p. 15.

[63] Ibid., p. 14.

[64] Ibid., p. 17.

affair. He described the election:

> As for the voting, nothing can be more free and easy. Strangers are pressed to take a share in it, as if it were something to drink. Nothing seems necessary except to hand in a ticket at a small office window and announce one's name; no questions appeared to be asked. I was urged to do this by bystanders, in spite of any assurances that I was merely a traveller, not a resident; they assured me it made no difference.[65]

As an added element of personal interest, Higginson said some of the Missouri men were looking for a preacher who "has his text and preaches religion; then he drops that and pitches into politics, and then he drops that too, and begins about the sufferin' niggers."[66] Since Higginson left town that night and headed for St. Louis by ferry, he was not discovered, but the thrill of being important enough to be searched for by the enemy delighted him.

On the "Cataract" bound for St. Louis, Higginson observed with displeasure some of the Southerners whom Atchison had recruited to enter Kansas to vote. Most of them were without money and grumbled at the fact that they had not been supported for a year, not given the fifty dollars bonus promised them by Atchison. Most of them spoke openly of selling their slaves for board and liquor, while Higginson lost himself in Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel, Dred.

Upon his return to Worcester, Higginson sent to the Tribune the last of his articles which sounded an alarm to the country. He entitled it "An Attempt at Prophecy," and itemized nine opinions he had formed from his experiences in Kansas.

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[65] Ibid., p. 19.

[66] Ibid.

1. The real question at issue is, not the invasions of Missourians nor the blockading of the river, but the enforcing of the bogus laws. The laws will exist, the Courts are still controlled by Missouri, and this is the real root of the difficulty, over which neither Governor Geary nor any one else (except Congress) has any legitimate control. . . .
2. There is not the slightest increase of harmony between the parties, but the contrary. Both sides expect to see the contest renewed. . . .
3. Both sides are making actual preparations for a renewal. The settlers are collecting arms, ammunition and fresh men. The Missourians are doing the same. . . .
4. Neither party desires peace, under the present auspices.
5. /The Missourians are/ better armed and better drilled than any previous invading force; and all agreed that at the battle of Hickory Point the Missourians showed more courage than ever before.
6. The whole tendency of Governor Geary's policy is to exasperate both sides, and, indeed, actually to strengthen them. . . .
7. The reason why the strife is postponed, by tacit agreement, is easily told. The Missourians are waiting, in stronger and stronger hopes of Geary. The Free-State men submit to his aggressions, only because the election is coming. That, and that only, gives them patience; . . . Take away the dream of Fremont, and no power could make these injured men endure a week longer the combined oppression of the Administration and of Missouri. . . .
8. The trial of the Lecompton prisoners will furnish fuel to the flames and perhaps the final explosion. Most of them will, no doubt, be acquitted. But the Pro-Slavery men will not submit to the liberation of all, nor the Anti-Slavery men to the execution of any.
9. Look out, therefore, for trouble in Kansas, in November. Elect Fremont, and there will be a last desperate effort of Missouri to obtain possession of Kansas. In this they will rely on the aid of the United States Courts and troops, and will have it, whatever Governor Geary says. The policy of the Administration will be unchanged.

In case of Buchanan's election, the whole power of Missouri, backed by the whole power of the Administration, will be directed upon Kansas. The two forces will be identified. They will be brought to bear as one; and thank God, resisted as one. . . .

Kansas may be crushed, but not without a final struggle, more fearful than that of Hungary; a struggle which will convulse a continent before it is ended, and separate forever those two nations of North and South, which neither Union nor Constitution has yet welded into one.[67]

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[67] Ibid., p. 24.

Higginson correctly put his finger on the source of the trouble affecting Kansas and the nation. As a Free-State sympathizer he supported Fremont but felt that war was inevitable and that a split in the country was imminent. Higginson saw Geary's "Peace" to be only the quiet before the storm. Buchanan was elected over Fremont in November, 1856, and secession was postponed another four years.

Upon his return home, Higginson spoke on Kansas matters by request before the Massachusetts and Vermont legislatures and was nominated by the Worcester Republicans for the state legislature on the Kansas issue. He refused the latter offer, however, feeling that his Free Church required his attention.[68]

In January, 1857, a "State Disunion Convention" was called to consider the separation between free and slave states. Higginson was active in organizing and carrying it through successfully. The Convention met at Worcester, Massachusetts, on January 15, to consider the expediency of dissolving the Union of the Free and Slave States. The grounds of the Call were:

> The result, &c, of the recent Presidential Election to involve four years more of Pro-Slavery Government, and a rapid increase in the hostility to be the offspring, not of party excitement, but of fundamental differences in education, habits and laws; believe the existing Union to be a failure, as being a hopeless attempt to unite under one Government two antagonistic systems of society, which diverge more widely with every year; and believe it to be the duty of intelligent and conscientious men to meet these facts with wisdom and firmness.[69]

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[68] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 215.

[69] New York Weekly Tribune (January 24, 1857). Officers were: President, Francis W. Bird; Vice-Presidents: Thomas Earle, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Gen. E. M. Hosmer, Wm. Ashby, W. Boyston, Dr. C. C. Field, Adam Ward, Daniel Mann; Secretaries: Alvin Ward, Charles Bingham, J. M. Yerrington, S. D. Tourtellote; Business Committee: General Higginson, Charles K. Whipple, E. Boyden, Wendell Phillips, Joel Smith.

Higginson read a letter from Senator Henry Wilson who disagreed with some of the aims of the Convention. Wilson hoped that the Northerners would leave threats against the Union to the South and "proclaim their readiness to follow in the conflict of the future, the banner of Liberty and Union," which would eventually, under the authority of Congress, "overthrow the Slave Power in the National Government and prepare the way for the peaceful emancipation of the bondmen by the consent of the Slaveholding States."[70]

The platform laid before the Convention and adopted was based upon the American principle of Liberty as opposed "to the present prominent fact--Slavery." The conflict between these principles, which had been the history of the nation for fifty years, only served to strengthen both parties and prepare the way for a desperate struggle. Nothing could be expected from the South, from the President, from the Senate or House of Representatives, nor from any political action. The election of Fremont had been the last hope of freedom, but now, "even could the North cast a united vote in 1860, the South has before it four years of annexation previous to that time." The Disunion Convention did not seek merely disunion, "but the more perfect union of the Free States by the expulsion of the Slave States from the Confederation, in which they have ever been an element of discord, danger and disgrace." Lastly, the realization of the existence of the Union is the chief guaranty of Slavery, the slaves of the whole world have everything to hope from its destruction. The "sooner the separation takes place, the more peaceful it will be; but that peace or war is a secondary

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[70] Ibid.

consideration, in view of our present perils. Slavery must be conquered, 'peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must.'"[71]

Higginson was satisfied with the Convention as he wrote to his mother.

> The Disunion Convention was very successful and commanded general respect, whatever the newspapers may say. I am sorry, dearest mother, you differ from me about it, but I never was more sure of being right. It is written in the laws of nature that two antagonistic nations cannot remain together; every year is dividing us more and more, and the sooner we see it, the better we can prepare for a peaceful and dignified policy.[72]

In July, a National Convention was called by Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, Higginson and 6400 others.[73] This convention, however, was never held.

Early in the same year, he spoke before the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society more openly than ever before against the partisanship and corruption of the Democratic government. The Dred Scott Decision was "the consummation of wickedness." The evils of Franklin Pierce's administration and the election of Buchanan were due to Democratic machinery. The Democrats identified themselves deliberately with the Pro-Slavery side because at the moment the South had the power in the nation. They were not interested in keeping the Northern States in the Union, because they expected the North to steal back into the Democratic Party again when it saw that the South was the true power.[74] Higginson looked forward to a Republican victory in 1860, because he believed

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[71] Ibid.

[72] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 77.

[73] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 181.

[74] "Speech at the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society," The Liberator (January 16, 1857).

with Senator Wilson "that if the Republican party failed in the Presidential election, . . . it would fail forever."[75] The only hope for this "dark and troubled night" was Disunion. The conflict over slavery in Kansas should take place in the streets of Massachusetts, he said. Men from Massachusetts were being lulled into a sense of temporary security by the Personal Liberty Bill. The bill, Higginson insisted, was not strong enough to prevent a slave from being returned to his master. And Massachusetts must protect the slave, "not because he was a slave, but because he was a MAN!" With rousing eloquence, he added, "But, powerless as we may be to save, we have at least the power for this: we will make the streets of Boston bristle with her own bayonets, before you touch a hair of his head." His final plea again was Disunion. "If we want to meet the demands of the age, and pass on to the next age as worth remembering, we have got to be more than politicians, more than Republicans. We have got to come to the actual facts of our nation's existence, and look Disunion in the face."[76]

In 1858, he saw signs of war. Although a new attitude seemed to have grown up in the North and the South, he said, in favor of the Negro, and a current of opinion was in progress to perhaps settle the question of slavery on the soil where it existed, nevertheless, Higginson asked, "Is it destined, as it began in blood, so to end? Seriously and solemnly, I say, it seems as if it were."[77] Within the next year the Harper's Ferry incident brought the question of slavery to its

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] "Speech at the Fifth Anniversary of the New York Anti-Slavery Society," The Liberator (May 28, 1858).

highest point by the fanatic, John Brown. Higginson had heard of Brown in Kansas and mentioned him in one of his articles for the Tribune. After meeting him at Boston, Higginson and several other abolitionists were completely won over to his side.

As an abolitionist's stand against the United States government, Higginson's part in the John Brown episode, though minor, was the logical outgrowth of his disunion policy and a kind of climax to his abolition activities.

In Cheerful Yesterdays Higginson wrote that he was not certain when he first met John Brown. It may have been on his trip through Iowa toward Kansas, for he remembered seeing a fugitive slave freed by Brown at that time. If, by chance, the two men had met before 1857, the event was not an outstanding one to Higginson.

Early in 1857, John Brown travelled through the East in order to raise funds to further the Abolitionist cause in Kansas. Villard[78] points out that there was at this time no communication by Brown to his Eastern friends of the Harper's Ferry attack. His aim, apparently, was to defend Kansas by raiding Missouri or by attacking slavery from some other vulnerable spot. On January 5, 1857, shortly after Brown's arrival in Boston, Higginson received an invitation from Frank Sanborn to meet Brown in Boston. There is no evidence that Higginson attended this meeting. At Sanborn's urging, however, he did raise money for Brown, thinking of him perhaps as a new force

[78]Oswald Garrison Villard, John Brown: A Biography Fifty Years After (Boston, 1910), p. 274.

in the anti-slavery movement.

During his stay in the East, Brown was successful in obtaining money, ammunition, and supplies from the Massachusetts State Emigrant Committee, then under the chairmanship of George L. Stearns. Stearns, Frank Sanborn of Concord, Gerrit Smith of Peterboro, New York, Theodore Parker, Samuel Gridley Howe of Boston, and Higginson, as members of the Massachusetts State Committee, took a special interest in Brown, keeping him in supplies and money. The National Kansas Committee, however, refused him money and ammunition, but sent him supplies for his men. He also received financial help personally from the wealthy philanthropist, Gerrit Smith, mentioned above. Higginson, however, was unable to give much assistance at this time, and the Worcester meeting held for Brown on the 23rd and 25th of March produced very slim financial returns. Brown's impatience to begin his work in Kansas, the lack of sufficient funds to begin operations in spite of his own efforts and that of his friends, disheartened him. He complained to Higginson, "My anxiety to secure a mere outfit: and to go off at once, is becoming extremely oppressive, and my heart grows sad in the fear of a failure of the enterprise."[79]

Late in March, Brown had met and enlisted the services of Hugh Forbes, a suave adventurer who had served in Italy under Garibaldi in the unsuccessful revolution of 1848-49. Forbes was hired to train groups of "voluntary-regulars" to operate first in Kansas and later in Virginia. Unfortunately, Brown confided his Harper's Ferry

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[79]Springfield, Massachusetts, April 1, 1857 (Higginson Collection in the Boston Public Library). I am indebted to Dr. Benjamin B. Hickok for the use of his microfilmed reproduction of this valuable collection.

plans to Forbes long before any of Brown's benefactors in the East were aware of such a project. The next year, the threats of Forbes to reveal Brown's plans publicly were alarming enough to cause a postponement of activities for a whole year.

Brown finally set out for Kansas after many delays, and reached Tabor, Iowa, with his supplies and ammunition on August 7. His alleged purpose for this trip and his subsequent entrance into Kansas was to defend the Free Soil interests in Kansas against subversive attack from pro-slavery parties. However, by this time (1857), Kansas Territory had passed through its "bleeding" phase and was now comparatively peaceful. A Free State election held on August 9, two days after Brown's arrival at Tabor, indicated the growing strength of Free State power over the pro-slavery party. Kansans were settling their differences at the polls rather than on the battlefield. To all appearances, Brown and his "volunteer-regulars" were unnecessary.

For unknown reasons, Brown delayed at Tabor much longer than his Eastern friends thought necessary. Higginson, impatient with waiting for action, wrote to Sanborn about it, and received a letter defending Brown and asking for more funds. As an added incentive to Higginson, Sanborn wrote, "I believe he is the best Disunion champion you can find, and with his hundred men, when he is put where he can raise them, and drill them (for he has an expert drill officer with him) will do more to split the Union than a list of 50,000 names for your Convention, good as that is."[80]

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[80]Quoted by Villard, op. cit., p. 303, from The Thomas Wentworth Higginson Papers of the Kansas Historical Society.

It was not, however, until November that John Brown entered Kansas. He was in Lawrence on November 5,[81] remaining there but a short time. Suddenly, whatever the cause, Brown lost interest in the Kansas situation and turned his efforts to his Virginia plan, the wild scheme which during the following year absorbed much of the time, energy, and money of his Eastern friends. The most important result of this visit to Kansas, Villard states, was his recruiting his first men for the Harper's Ferry raid.[82]

During December, Brown moved his group of men to Springdale, Iowa, during which time the details of the Virginia venture were discussed. They reached the home of the friendly Quaker, John H. Painter, on the 29th, then moved to the farmhouse of William Maxson, where they remained to train for the Virginia raid.[83] On January 15, 1858, Brown left for another visit to the East, reaching the home of Frederick Douglass at Rochester, New York, on the 28th. It was from here that Brown wrote to Higginson that he was in hiding and desired Higginson to operate at Worcester for funds. He hoped to talk things over with him confidentially at a later date.[84] Higginson's reply was cordial but not enthusiastic. He was "always ready to invest money in treason but at present have none to invest."[85] He had other fugitives to look

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[81] Villard, op. cit., p. 304.

[82] Ibid., p. 308. His party at this time consisted of Owen Brown, A. B. Stevens, Charles Moffett, C. P. Tidd, Richard Richardson, Richard Realf, L. F. Parsons, W. M. Leeman, John E. Cook, and John H. Kagi.

[83] Ibid., p. 312.

[84] February 2, 1858 (Higginson Collection). Also in Cheerful Yesterdays, pp. 216-217.

[85] Worcester, February 8, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

after, and had just undertaken to raise funds for the Underground Railroad in Kansas. He promised, however, to try to do something.

Brown was anxious to hold a meeting at the home of Gerrit Smith in Peterboro, New York, and wrote to Higginson to join him. Higginson did not attend the meeting even though Sanborn urged him to do so.[86] Nor did George L. Stearns. Villard points out that Brown's letters at this time failed to interest them because of their indefiniteness.[87] At the meeting in an upper room of the Smith mansion (according to Frank Sanborn)[88] Brown laid his plan for a campaign somewhere in slave territory east of the Alleghanies.

Almost a month later, Higginson received another invitation from Brown to meet him, this time at the American House, Hanover Street, Boston.[89] He accepted the invitation, as did Theodore Parker, S. G. Howe, F. B. Sanborn, and G. L. Stearns. The magnetic personality of Brown, his apparent forthrightness and sincerity attracted Higginson to such an extent that from the time of this meeting to the end of his life, Higginson was one of Brown's most ardent supporters and defenders.

At the meeting it was decided that $1000 would be the sum raised for Brown's project and that each of those present would be assessed $100. Immediately after the meeting, Brown left for Philadelphia under the alias of Nelson Hawkins "to prepare agencies for

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[86]Concord, February 19, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

[87]Villard, op. cit., p. 320.

[88]F. B. Sanborn, Recollections of Seventy Years (Boston, 1909), I, p. 145.

[89]Boston, March 4, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

his business near where he will begin operations."[90]

Another meeting was held at Dr. Howe's home on the 20th to which Higginson was invited. Because Higginson was unable to attend, Sanborn sent him an account by letter, telling him of the financial status of the group and concluding, "The enterprise still looks very hopeful to speculative people--and I hope continues to please you."[91]

George Stearns reported to Higginson on April 1, that $375 had been collected thus far. By April 20, Higginson had his assessment, but was urged by Sanborn to do more if he could because "Hawkins" had left Canada for the West on business with his enterprise. "He has found in Canada several good men for shepherds, and if not embarressed by want of means expects to turn his flock loose about the 15th of May."[92]

Sanborn kept Higginson informed of Brown's movements, telling him on May 1st, that "H/awkins/ will be at Chatham, Canada West, some day next week with a company of 12 to 20 shepherds and would like to meet some friends from this quarter. Can you make it convenient to see him there?"[93]

None of the Boston group attended the meetings held in Canada by Brown, which he called "Conventions." It was at these meetings that a plan of organization entitled, "Provisional Constitution and Ordinances for the People of the United States" was drawn up and adopted.

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[90]Sanborn to Higginson, Concord, March 8, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

[91]March 21, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

[92]Concord, April 20, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

[93]May 1, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

The Preamble, worded by Brown, defined slavery as "war of one portion of its citizens upon another portion." The word "war" Villard points out, was the keynote to Brown's philosophy, "and explains better than anything else why it was consistent with his devout religious character for him to kill, and to plunder supplies in Kansas, and to take up arms against slavery itself."[94]

Before the Conventions met in Canada, Hugh Forbes, like the villain in a plot, began to write to the New England group and to Senator Wilson in Washington, threatening to expose Brown's plans publicly. Sanborn, in the same letter quoted above, wrote to Higginson concerning Forbes's actions: ". . . the other day I got a letter from Hugh Forbes which looked equally interesting that our friends speculation should not go on. Whether Forbes knows where H. is or what he is doing I can't say, but it would be a bad thing to have the N. Y. Herald giving statistics, quoting prices, etc., while we are hoping to steal a march on buyers and sellers."[95] On May 5, Sanborn's letter to Higginson suggested that with the new aspect of affairs presented by Forbes's letter the project might have to be postponed for the present, for Forbes knew the details of the place and the names of those helping Brown.[96]

Sanborn's letter alarmed Higginson, and his indignation at the idea of delay is felt in this note to John Brown.

Brattleboro, Vt.
May 7, 1858

Dear Friend
Sanborn writes an alarming letter of a certain H. F. who wishes to veto our veteran friend's project entirely.

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[94]Villard, op. cit., p. 334.

[95]May 1, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

[96]Concord, May 5, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

> Who the man is I hv. no conception--but I--protest against any postponement. If the thing is postponed, it is postponed forever--for H. F. can do as much harm next year as this. His malice must be in some way put down or outwitted--and after the move is once begun, his plots will be of little importance. I believe that we have gone too far to go back without certain failure, and I believe our friend the veteran will think so too.
>
> Cordially
> T. W. Higginson[97]

The problem presented by Forbes's threats was a source of consternation to the others of the New England group. By May 11, they had agreed (except Higginson and Howe) that Brown's project should be deferred for a year, during which time Forbes could be sent to Europe where he would be far from Brown's affairs. Concerning Higginson's attitude, Sanborn wrote, "I am glad you stand so strong for the other side--for the matter will thus be fairly argued--but I think when H. comes to see F's letters and knows how minute his information--he will attach more importance to his opposition than he did on the 5th of May when he wrote me--saying that he would go on if supplies did not fail him."[98] Higginson remained firm in his decision.

Brown returned to Boston on May 31 and held a meeting. Higginson was absent. The decision of a year's postponement of plans was announced to Brown who later held a conversation with Higginson concerning it. Higginson recorded the conversation in a carefully preserved memorandum. He found that Brown agreed with him and "considered delay very discouraging to his 13 men and to those in Canada." Brown believed that the others of the Boston group were not men of

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[97](Higginson Collection). Also quoted by Villard, op. cit., p. 338.

[98]Concord, May 11, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

action, but were intimidated by Senator Wilson's letter and overrated the obstacles.[99]

Since Higginson had no voice at the meeting but had protested sufficiently to the other members of the group for them to understand his views, nothing further could be done by him about the decision. Neither did he have the financial means to help Brown. Therefore, he had to yield to the others as Brown had yielded.

The postponement was not the only precautionary measure insisted upon by the "secret six" (as the group was later known). Brown was to return to Kansas principally to deceive Forbes. But after his arrival in Kansas, his future plans were to remain unknown to the New England group. They would assist him with money and supplies, but did not wish to assume the responsibility which knowledge would give them and which might later incriminate them. Higginson's attitude on this point is not clear, but it can be ascertained to a certain degree from his later writings and from his correspondence that he was totally ignorant of Brown's plans for the attack at Harper's Ferry. He wrote in Cheerful Yesterdays:

> Brown's plan was simply to penetrate Virginia with a few comrades, to keep utterly clear of all attempts to create slave insurrection, but to get together bands and families of fugitive slaves, and then be guided by events. If he could establish them permanently in those fastnesses, like the Maroons of Jamaica and Surinam, so much the better; if not, he could make a break from time to time, and take parties to Canada, by paths already familiar to him. All this he explained to me and others, plainly and calmly, and there was nothing in it that we considered either objectionable or impracticable.[100]

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[99]June 1, 1858 (Higginson Collection).

[100]Cheerful Yesterdays, pp. 220-221.

In his biography of John Brown, Higginson wrote, "Most of his friends in the Eastern states knew nothing more of his movement until it was announced that he had taken possession of the United States arsenal at Harper's Ferry."[101]

The Harper's Ferry attack began during the night of October 16, 1859. At dawn on October 18, Brown, A. D. Stevens, two Negroes, and Edwin Coppoc were captured. Seven men escaped to Canada and the remainder of the party of twenty-two were killed in the skirmish.

Higginson described his reaction to the news in his Cheerful Yesterdays:

> I went into a newspaper shop in Worcester one morning, and heard some one remark casually, 'Old Osawatomie Brown has got himself into a tight place at last.' I grasped eagerly at the morning paper, and read the whole story. Naturally, my first feeling was one of remorse, that the men who had given him money and arms should not actually have been by his side. In my own case, however, the justification was perfectly clear. Repeated postponements had taken the edge off from expectation, and the whole enterprise had grown rather vague and dubious in my mind. I certainly had not that degree of faith in it which would have led me to abandon all else, and wait nearly a year and a half for the opportunity of fulfillment; and indeed it became obvious at last that this longer postponement had somewhat disturbed the delicate balance of the zealot's mind, and had made him, at the very outset, defy the whole power of the United States government, and that within easy reach of Washington. Nothing of this kind was included in his original plans.[102]

Higginson's comment on Brown's state of mind as being "somewhat disturbed" (written in 1900) is different from that of his biography of Brown (written in 1888). Here he quotes Governor Wise of Virginia as saying:

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[101]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "John Brown," Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, I (1888).

[102]Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 223.

> 'They are mistaken who take Brown to be a madman. He is a bundle of the best nerves I ever saw; cut and thrust and bleeding and in bonds. He is a man of clear head, of courage, fortitude, and simple ingenuousness. He is cool, collected, indomitable; and it is but just to him to say that he was humane to his prisoners, and he inspired me with great trust in his integrity as a man of truth.' This opinion, /Higginson adds/ coming from the man whose immediate duty it was to see him tried and executed as a felon, may be regarded as a final and trustworthy estimate.[103]

Perhaps it is safe to say that his remarks in Cheerful Yesterdays is actually his final estimate.

The other five men of the Boston group reacted variously to the news and to the trial and investigation. Frank Sanborn, who had so strongly urged Higginson to aid John Brown, suddenly decided to "try change of air for my old complaint,"[104] and disappeared into Canada. When the Mason Investigating Committee spread a dragnet over the North for Brown's accomplices, Sanborn declared several times in letters to Higginson that he was determined not to appear before the Committee in Washington, even though he was promised protection from bodily harm by Mason. If he had to appear, he would appeal for a hearing in Massachusetts.[105]

George Stearns and Samuel Gridley Howe also went to Canada. It was from there that Howe published a "card" in the New York Tribune, November 16, 1859, which implied that he was innocent of any complicity with John Brown. Higginson was indignant at Howe's evasiveness.

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[103] "John Brown," Appleton's Cyclopaedia, I, p. 407.

[104] Portland, October 21, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[105] For a complete narrative of Sanborn's actions, see Benjamin B. Hickok's The Political and Literary Careers of F. B. Sanborn (Unpublished doctoral dissertation: Michigan State University, 1953), pp. 126-266.

He wrote to Howe,

> I know how skilfully that letter is written. Since language was first invented to conceal thought there has been no more skilful combination of words. But the universal interpretation of all intelligent readers, not previously enlightened, must be--that you disclaim all knowledge not merely of the precise time and place . . . of John Brown's great drama--but of the enterprise itself.[106]

Howe replied three months later that he had not intended to create a false impression by his words. Villard states that when Dr. Howe appeared before the Mason Committee he made every effort to baffle his enquirers,[107] whose questions were so unskilfully framed, Sanborn said, that witnesses could, "without literal falsehood, answer as they did."[108] Sanborn's defense of Howe brought forth the taunt from Higginson, "Is there no such thing as honor among confederates?"[109] As Villard points out, "Making all due allowances for the heat of the moment as expressed in Colonel Higginson's letter, it does not seem even at this date that his reasoning was far wrong."[110]

Gerrit Smith's reaction to the Harper's Ferry raid was even more lamentable than Howe's. On November 10, Higginson learned that Gerrit Smith was consigned to the Utica Asylum for the Insane under the care of Dr. Gray.[111] On the 15th of November, he received a

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[106] Worcester, November 15, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[107] Villard, op. cit., p. 532.

[108] Recollections of Seventy Years, p. 230.

[109] Worcester, November 17, 1859, a first draft (Higginson Collection).

[110] Villard, op. cit., p. 533.

[111] H. B. Clarke to Higginson, New Bedford, Massachusetts, "I see by the morning's paper that Gerrit Smith is insane." (Higginson Collection).

letter from Charles D. Miller, Smith's son-in-law, to the same effect.

The correspondence preserved by Higginson contains only a few references to Gerrit Smith after Brown's sentence. Among them is Higginson's remark to Howe in the letter quoted above, "but Gerrit Smith's insanity--and your letter--are to me the only two bad results of the whole affair."[112] Smith's fear for his social prestige and political position caused him to break down. He remained in the Utica Asylum only until December 29, long enough to escape questioning by the Mason Investigating Committee. When he returned to his home, he destroyed all papers connected with his part in the affair and denied openly any complicity with John Brown, a stand he maintained until his death.

Stearns returned from Canada to testify before the Mason Committee in Washington, February 24, 1860. Unafraid, he defended Brown as the "representative man of the century, as Washington was of the last."[113]

Theodore Parker had been in Europe before the Harper's Ferry raid, in a vain effort to recover his health. Parker with Higginson were the only two of the Boston group willing to take the consequences of their actions.

Higginson remained in Worcester "laying out a new bed of crocuses and tulips for the spring," he wrote to his mother.[114] He believed

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[112]First draft of a letter to Howe, November 17, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[113]Quoted by Villard from the Mason Report, p. 242.

[114]Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 85.

that he would not be molested if he stood his ground.

> Mason does not wish to have John Brown heartily defended before the committee & the country--nor does he wish to cause an emeute, either in Massachusetts or Washington. He wishes simply to say that he tried for evidence & it was refused him. If his witnesses go to Canada or Europe, he is freed from all responsibility.[115]

He further reasoned, "It rather looked as if, having befriended Brown's plans so far as we understood them, it was our duty to stand our ground and give him our moral support, at least on the witness stand."[116] For his praiseworthy attitude Higginson has since been celebrated by Stephen Vincent Benet in his John Brown's Body.[117]

Higginson's "moral support" of Brown took several forms. Judging by a letter to him from Charles W. Elliott[118] of New Haven, Higginson tried to find a competent lawyer to defend Brown during his trial. The man recommended to him by his correspondent was William Curtis Noyes who was willing to undertake the task. Higginson, however, was not the only one who sought counsel for Brown. John W. LeBarnes, of Boston, engaged, at his own expense, the young lawyer, George H. Hoyt, both as a lawyer for Brown and a spy for Brown's Boston friends. To this

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[115] Higginson to Sanborn, Worcester, February 3, 1860 (Higginson Collection). Villard says this letter was never sent.

[116] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 224.

[117]
> In the anxious North,
> The anxious Dr. Howe most anxiously
> Denied all godly connection with the raid,
> And Gerrit Smith conveniently went mad
> For long enough to sponge his mind of all
> Memory of such an unsuccessful deed.
> Only the tough, swart-minded Higginson
> Kept a grim decency, would not deny.

Stephen Vincent Benet, John Brown's Body (New York, 1941), p. 56, ll. 19-25.

[118] October 25, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

effect, Higginson wrote to his mother, October 27.

> We have done what we could for him by sending counsel and in other ways that must be nameless. By we I mean Dr. Howe, W. Phillips, J. A. Andrew, and myself. If the trial lasts into next week, it is possible to make some further arrangements for his legal protection. But beyond this no way seems open for anything; there is (as far as one can say such a thing) no chance for forcible assistance, and next to none for stratagem. . . . Had I been a lawyer, however, I should probably have gone on at once, to act at least temporarily as his counsel. A young man from Boston named Hoyt has gone on for this, and probably Montgomery Blair, of Washington, will be there to-day, to conduct the case.[119]

Hoyt, on his arrival in Maryland, was at first looked upon with suspicion, but he succeeded in acquainting Brown with the primary purpose of his arrival--a plan of "forcible assistance," as Higginson put it, to rescue Brown from prison. Brown immediately and vehemently opposed the idea. His Northern friends[120] vainly hoped that he would change his mind, and even a second and more emphatic warning failed to deter them. Higginson believed that bringing Mrs. Brown down from the North would be the strongest inducement that could be used to secure Brown's consent to their plans. He went to North Elba, New York, and personally escorted Mrs. Brown as far as Boston where she was received with open-hearted sympathy and kindness. This trip he described in an essay, "A Visit to John Brown's Household," which first appeared in Redpath's Life of Captain John Brown.[121]

From Boston, Mrs. Brown was taken to Baltimore by J. Miller McKim, a leading Philadelphia abolitionist. On November 5, Higginson

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[119] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 85-86.

[120] J. W. LeBarnes, F. B. Sanborn, James Redpath, R. J. Hinton, and Higginson, ibid., p. 85.

[121] "A Visit to John Brown's Household," Contemporaries, II, pp. 219-243.

received a telegram from Brown telling him not to send Mrs. Brown to him. Mrs. Brown received the telegram on November 8, just as she was boarding the train for Harper's Ferry. Higginson was disappointed and wrote to Hoyt who replied from Boston, "I know nothing about Mr. Brown's motives for refusing to see Mrs. B. I think yr. conjectures are probably correct."[122] Higginson later believed that Brown refused to see his wife "possibly distrusting his own firmness, or wishing to put it above all possibility of peril."[123]

In the meantime, Higginson had distributed a circular to raise money for Brown's defense, which was signed by himself, S. E. Sewall, S. G. Howe, and R. W. Emerson. The circular together with notices in the newspaper, brought in sums of money from various sources. They also excited southern readers who sent him insulting letters which probably added fuel to Higginson's zeal for Brown's welfare.

By November 14, Higginson, in another effort to save Brown's life, had joined a group headed by Lysander Spooner who formed the audacious plan of capturing Governor Wise and holding him as a hostage. J. W. LeBarnes, writing to Higginson on November 14, assured him that the deed could be done.[124] By November 20, LeBarnes had found a man to act as pilot of a boat for the Richmond expedition, "if necessary money can be had."[125] He believed his agent could bring a tug into Richmond under the pretense of selling it without exciting remark since vessels were being sold there. The

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[122]November 7, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[123]Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 228.

[124]Exchange Street, Boston (Higginson Collection).

[125]Higginson Collection.

expedition, however, would cost $10,000 or $15,000--$10,000 to start with. By this time, LeBarnes did not think well enough of the scheme to go himself, and would not wish any of their men to be led into it. The others in the scheme were in favor of it, but not too enthusiastic. After a second thought, it was decided, that since the judge, not the Governor, had passed sentence on John Brown, what good would come of the kidnapping? LeBarnes did not see that Brown could be saved through such action. He was willing to continue as originally planned, if Higginson could supply the money. The plan was short-lived, since the money was not forthcoming.

The plan was dropped, however, in favor of one no less daring--to attack the prison and rescue Brown forcibly. Some German revolutionists in New York, known to LeBarnes, were willing to make the attack. In a short time, LeBarnes said, a hundred or more men could be ready to go as a reinforcement to a group of men in Ohio, who, led by John Brown, Jr., were supposedly planning to move on to Charlestown for the same purpose. If the Ohioans were not prepared, LeBarnes knew of from fifteen to twenty or twenty-five men who would follow him, Richard J. Hinton, and other Kansas leaders.[126]

Frank Sanborn also had a part in the scheme. On November 24, he left a note for Higginson urging him to include Redpath in the Ohio group.[127]

Within another three days, the plans of the attackers were roughly formulated. "Their plan of escape would probably be to seize the horses of the cavalry companies. The attack to be made after either

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[126]LeBarnes to Higginson, New York, November 27, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[127]Worcester, 4 p.m., (no signature). (Higginson Collection).

Wednesday night, or Friday--at the hour" [i.e., the day of Brown's execution]. The men were confident of success but demanded a hundred dollars each and assurance that survivors would be provided a place of refuge and the families of the others would be taken care of. The weight of responsibility fell upon the shoulders of Higginson, Sanborn, and the other Boston men. "It is from you in Boston to say 'go' or 'stay'," wrote LeBarnes in the same letter. Fifteen hundred or a thousand dollars was the sum needed by Tuesday, the 29th, and five hundred or a thousand dollars the day after. LeBarnes wanted a definite answer on the following day.[128]

Redpath, who had been requested to go to Ohio to see how matters stood with the party of John Brown, Jr., delayed leaving the East until too late. George H. Hoyt, returning from the Western Reserve brought word to Sanborn that "nothing is doing in Ohio."[129] Sanborn then gave up the enterprise, telegraphed LeBarnes to return, because "nothing could be done." LeBarnes, in turn, telegraphed to Higginson, "Object abandoned."[130]

The desperate efforts of these men to assist John Brown were sincerely appreciated by Brown and his family. Higginson's own personal interest in the family dates from his first visit to North Elba, after which he kept them informed of events by letter, newspapers and clippings. The gratitude of the family was expressed by Annie Brown when she wrote:

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[128]New York, November 27, 1895 (Higginson Collection).

[129]Boston, November 28, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[130]November 28, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

> Before you came, all looked dark and dreary to us, we had not received one word of comfort from any source. I had hardly seen a smile on the faces of any of our family for more than a week, but you could not have failed to notice how happy we all seemed, and it was real heartfelt happiness. How much sunshine you brought into our desolate home is left only for us to tell.[131]

John Brown also felt the sympathy extended by Higginson toward himself and his family, and wrote to him two weeks before his death thanking him for being "a friend in need."[132]

John Brown was executed on December 2, 1859, in spite of Northern sentiment which regarded him as a martyr and symbol of freedom. Of his last moments on the scaffold, his admirable calmness and courage, Higginson wrote later:

> His career is remarkable for its dramatic quality, for the important part he played in events preliminary to the great civil war, and for the strong and heroic traits shown in his life and death. He belongs to a class of men whose permanent fame is out of all proportion to their importance or contemporary following; and indeed he represents a type more akin to that seen among the Scottish coventers of two centuries ago than to anything familiar in our day.[133]

Brown's execution did not close this episode of activities. Two of Brown's men, A.D. Stevens and A. Hazlett, were still imprisoned awaiting sentence which was passed on February 14, 1860, in spite of Northern sentiment, which ran high in their favor. Higginson readily agreed to a plan to rescue the prisoners by force. He began (with Mrs. Brown's permission)[134] by giving three hundred dollars to

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[131]North Elba, Essex Co., New York, November 14, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[132]Charlestown, Jefferson Co., Virginia, November 22, 1859 (Higginson Collection).

[133]Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, p. 406.

[134]Annie Brown to T. W. Higginson, North Elba, January 11, 1860 (Higginson Collection).

R. J. Hinton to pay Hinton's expenses to Kansas where he was to enlist the personal services of Captain James Montgomery of Kansas. Montgomery hesitated to leave Kansas at the time, believing that his services were needed there.[135] He finally decided to join the rescuers in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where all were to meet, and by February 10, was able to telegraph Higginson that he had "eight machines /men/" and that he was intending to leave St. Joseph on the 13th.[136] To this news Higginson replied, strangely enough, "Too late--send back machines and come here yourself."[137] The message must not have reached Montgomery, for five days later, a telegram from R. J. Hinton /alias J. H. Reed/ in Pittsburg announced the arrival there of eight "machines" awaiting transfer.[138] The men reached Harrisburg in the guise of cattle men looking for bargains.

On February 19th, Higginson wrote to his wife from Harrisburg (where he had assumed the name of Charles P. Carter) that if the ground continued to be covered with snow, or if another snowfall occurred, "the whole must be abandoned even were all else favorable."[139] Captain Montgomery was to spend part of the week reconnoitering.

Montgomery and Soulé went to Charleston to examine the region. Soulé, playing the role of an intoxicated Irishman, was locked in the

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[135]Mound City, Sim Co., Kansas Territory, February 1, 1860 (Higginson Collection.)

[136]Leavenworth, February 10, 1860 (Higginson Collection).

[137]Worcester, January 13, 1860 (Higginson Collection).

[138]January 18, 1860 (Higginson Collection).

[139]Higginson Collection.

same jail with Stevens and Hazlett. He informed the men of the plan for their rescue which they thought impossible because of the heavy guard and the regard they had for the life of their kind jailer, Captain Avis.[140] After his discharge, Soulé returned to Harrisburg to relay the messages given him by Stevens and Hazlett. Montgomery, in the meantime, had found the countryside on the alert and the continued heavy snows became an impassable barrier to the success of the venture. The obstacles to be overcome, Higginson listed on a sheet of paper which he preserved and later printed in part in Cheerful Yesterdays.

> This is what involved--
> 1. Traverse mountainous country miles at 10 miles a night, carrying arms ammunition & blankets & provisions for a week--with certain necessity of turning round and retreating the instant of discovery, & of such discovery causing death to our friends: and this in a country daily traversed by hunters. Also the certainty of retreat or detection in case of a tracking snow wh. may come any time. Being out 5 nights at mildest, possibly 10. Includ'g crossing Potomac, a rapid stream where there may be no ford or boats.
> 2. Charge on a build'g defended by 2 sentinels outside & 25 men inside a wall 14 ft. high. Several men inside prison besides, & a determined jailer. Certainty of rousing town and impossiblity of having more than 15 men.
> 3. Retreat with prisoners & wounded probably after daylight--& No. 1. repeated.[141]

With these considerations in mind, Montgomery advised the abandonment of the project. With great reluctance on the part of all who had come to help, Stevens and Hazlett were left to their fate. Higginson wrote later, "I was not at the time quite satisfied with this opinion, but it was impossible to overrule our leader; and on visiting that region

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[140] Cheerful Yesterdays, pp. 233-234.

[141] Higginson Collection. Reprinted in full by Villard op. cit., pp. 576-577. Also in Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 232.

and the jail itself, many years later, I was forced to believe him wholly right."[142]

Within the next two years, anti-slavery agitation in New England produced a rash of mob scenes incited by Northerners whose economic security was affected by the secession of the southern states. Wendell Phillips, the then acknowledged leader of the abolitionists, who gave Sunday lectures at the Boston Music Hall during 1860, was the target of much abuse. The abolitionists found that they had to band together to save Phillips from being bodily attacked and their meetings disbanded. Higginson assumed the task of supervising a group of Germans and Americans to guard the hall while the meetings were in order. He found this an exasperating work, for the undisciplined Americans, while on duty, would seat themselves comfortably in the back of the hall to applaud the speaker, while the irascible Germans would inevitably be led away by the police for disturbing the peace over political arguments.

Just what Higginson's attitude toward Lincoln was in the days that immediately preceded and followed the election is not clear. He omits comment in his autobiography, saying evasively, "It was doubtless well that the march of events proved too strong for us, and that the union feeling itself was finally aroused to do a work which the anti-slavery purpose alone could not have accomplished; yet we acted at the time according to our light."[143] Because of his close contact with Wendell Phillips during the years 1860 and 1861, however, one may be led to believe that he probably shared Phillips's sentiments.

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[142] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 234.

[143] Ibid., p. 239.

In his Sunday lectures Phillips had expressed a decided distrust of Lincoln, whose Unionist views were opposed to the growing disunion sentiment of the North fostered by the agitation of the abolitionists and the compromise bills. When the South took matters into its own hands, and one state after another seceded, Phillips at first rejoiced, bidding them good riddance. With a few months, however, he retracted his statements, and declared, with Lincoln, that the Southern states had no constitutional right to secede. Higginson, too, after his fiery Disunion speeches of the 1850's, changed rapidly to a belief in the preservation of the Union--with the abolition of slavery.

When the attack on Fort Sumter awakened the North to the precarious position of the Capitol at Washington, Higginson impetuously went to several leading men in Worcester who gave him a letter of recommendation to Governor Andrew to ask for an appropriation of money in order to send Captain Montgomery and his men from Kansas into the mountains of Virginia (a plan similar to John Brown's), and, Higginson with them, to "kindle a back fire of alarm and draw any rebel force away from Washington."[144] Governor Andrew approved of the project but had no money. Samuel Gridley Howe and S. G. Ward took Higginson to State Street where they raised two thousand dollars in pledges. Higginson then went in person to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to see Governor Curtin. A letter from Governor Andrew to Governor Curtin says of Higginson:

> He is a man capable of facing great perils, of gallant and ardent spirit, and one whose plans I would

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[144] Ibid., p. 246.

> not endorse in blank or in advance. You may find on enquiry that he proposes some scheme not only courageous, but wise.[145]

Governor Curtin considered the plan, but thought that Higginson's scheme would precipitate border warfare and that if Higginson should enter western Virginia with troops "it would not only destroy the loyal sentiment of that part of the State, but would influence the people of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri."[146] The project was therefore abandoned.

Higginson's valor, however, obtained for him a certain amount of prestige at Worcester, and upon his return, he was offered a position as major of the Fourth Battalion of Infantry. He refused the offer, he says, for three reasons:

> First, that I doubted my competency; secondly, that my wife, always an invalid, was just at that time especially dependent upon me; and lastly, that it was then wholly uncertain whether the government would take the anti-slavery attitude, without which a military commission would have been for me intolerable.[147]

Higginson's sense of duty to his country, however, grew stronger toward the end of 1861. He reflected: "It seems to me of the greatest importance that men of Anti-Slavery principle take their full share in this war, . . . A great many Anti-Slavery men, all over the state, are holding aloof, and can only be brought in by leaders, in whom they have confidence."[148] It was a great temptation to organize a troop of enlisted men from among his associates at the athletic

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[145] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 204.

[146] Ibid., p. 205.

[147] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 247.

[148] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 209.

and drill clubs who were telling him, for some time, that they would enlist under him and nobody else.[149]

In the autumn of 1861, Higginson resigned his pastorate at the Free Church to have more time for a literary career. He felt that he had now "come back to the one thing which I always thoroughly enjoyed, a quiet life with literature and nature. It has cost me all these years to dare to do this."[150]

These dreams of peace, however, were not to last. Within a few weeks, "when the anti-slavery position of the government became clearer,"[151] Higginson entered upon his army career, which became a wellspring of source material for the literary career he longed to begin. Recollections of anti-slavery days also provided much material for later essays and biographies. Higginson commemorated the lives of a few of the abolitionists in short biographical essays, (which will be considered below) saying that they were the men whose love of freedom made Lincoln at last turn the scale.[151]

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[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid., p. 210.

[151] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 239.

B. Biographies and Essays

For several years after the Civil War, as one by one the most famous of the abolitionists died, Higginson wrote their memorials, and in doing so, set these leaders against the America of the second half of the nineteenth century with its turbulent agitations and often violent unrest. Among these men were William Lloyd Garrison, John Greenleaf Whittier, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner, Theodore Parker, and Samuel Gridley Howe, whose lives were shaped by their times and whose time, in turn, were shaped by their activities. Higginson was a contemporary of these men, and in some cases intimately shared their anti-slavery experiences and abolition views. Although all of them did not see eye to eye on the means to achieve the end, they all shared "the root of the matter," as Garrison expressed it, and fought for immediate emancipation.

The biographies, on the whole, are candid and generous. Higginson maintains a just balance by discussing the obvious faults of his subjects together with their merits, and leaves the reader with pictures of men who were essentially human. In so doing, he achieved that with which he credited Wendell Phillips: "He moreover showed real literary power and an exquisite felicity in the delineation of character, through his memorial tributes to some of his friends."[1]

Higginson had always personally admired William Lloyd Garrison. In 1846 he had written a youthful poem to him. In 1857 he wrote

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[1] "Wendell Phillips," Contemporaries, p. 265.

of him in a letter: "Of all the heroes of ancient or modern days that man stands more firmly on his feet. If he knew that at his next word of truth, the whole solar system would be annihilated, his voice, in saying it, would not tremble."[2] And again within the same year he said, "Garrison is the only solid moral reality I have ever seen incarnate, the only man who would do to tie to, as they say out West."[3]

Garrison's influence on the younger abolitionists (such as Higginson) was strong. Higginson points this out when he wrote,

> The Garrisonians were generally non-resistants, but those who believed in the physical rescue of fugitive slaves were nevertheless their pupils. The Garrisonians eschewed voting, yet many who voted drew strength from them. The Garrisonians took little part in raising troops for war, but the tradition of their influence did much to impel the army.[4]

This mutual inspiration had not always existed, however, as Higginson points out in his discussion of the historic quarrel which split the abolitionists in 1840 into "Old Organization" and "New Organization." The principal issue was over Garrison's persistent support of a network of reforms in The Liberator which scattered his energies to such an extent that slavery, which had been the main work of the abolitionists, now seemed to rank with any and every reform. The quarrel ended in the creation of two rival camps, "with almost all the anti-slavery clergy and voting abolitionists on one side, while Garrison and his Spartan band held the other."[5] Garri-

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[2]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 202.

[3]Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 93.

[4]"William Lloyd Garrison," Contemporaries, pp. 246-247.

[5]Ibid., p. 248.

son was bitter toward his opposition and caustic toward the Liberty Party which came of it. In later years, Higginson says, he mellowed, and was even cooperative with the Free Soilers, saying that they "were going in the same direction."

Within his own ranks, Higginson asserts, Garrison was accused of being arrogant and domineering. Those outside his band criticised him for his excessive harshness of language, and his uncompromising rejection of slavery and slaveholders. Higginson agreed that this point of view in Garrison was narrow, and Garrison's statement that slaveholders were "without excuse" showed no understanding of the social and economic mesh that bound Southerners to the slavery system.

Nevertheless, in spite of his faults, Higginson maintained that Garrison "kept far higher laws than he broke. He did the work of a man of iron in an iron age, so that even those who recognized his faults might well join, as they did, in the chorus of affectionate congratulation that marked his closing days."[6]

This iron strength of character, Higginson says, was visible in Garrison's face. No other "could be compared to it in respect to moral strength and force; he seemed the visible embodiment of something deeper and more controlling than mere intellect."[7]

Describing Garrison's speeches, Higginson says:

> His reason marched like an army without banners, his invective was scathing, but as it were almost always mainly scriptural, it did not carry an impression of personal anger, but simply seemed like a new discovered chapter of Ezekial.[8]

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[6] Ibid., p. 256.

[7] Ibid., p. 245.

[8] Ibid., p. 246.

Garrison had the journalist's love for newspaper clippings, which he used unflinchingly upon his audience to entrench his arguments. Higginson, recalling some of those lectures says, "For one, I cannot honestly say that I ever positively enjoyed one of his speeches, or that I ever failed to listen with a sense of deference and of moral leadership."[9]

This short biography of Garrison is objective and to a large extent, impersonal. It places Garrison's personality in the perspective of his times and shows a strong man whose influence was commanding if not always appreciated. As a younger abolitionist, Higginson saw Garrison when his reputation was well established and recognized him as his leader, although he differed from his views in many respects. From the point of view of such a contemporary, the biography is valuable as source material (admittedly sketchy) for later historians. And it is interesting to note that Higginson's estimate of Garrison is not materially different from those of more recent biographers.[10]

Higginson linked together the names of John Greenleaf Whittier and William Lloyd Garrison in his biography of Whittier for the English Men of Letters Series[11] and in two short articles for the

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[9]Ibid.

[10]Ralph Korngold, Two Friends of Man: The Story of William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips and Their Relationship with Abraham Lincoln (Boston, 1950), and Russel B. Nye, William Lloyd Garrison and the Humanitarian Reformers (Boston, 1955).

[11]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, John Greenleaf Whittier (New York, 1902).

Independent which appeared in 1905 and 1907.[12] The articles were simply a rehash of the larger biography which appeared in 1902.

Of the thirteen chapters which comprise the book, Higginson allotted five chapters to Whittier's political reform career and two to his literary career. The proportion is perhaps justified by a statement which Whittier had printed in the New York Nation regarding the position which poetry and practical reform held in his life.

> The simple fact is, that I cannot be sufficiently thankful to the Divine Providence that so early called my attention to the great interests of humanity, saving me from the poor ambitions and miserable jealousies of a selfish pursuit of literary reputation.[13]

This is the viewpoint that Higginson assumes, which is not surprising, for Whittier had also been an influence on Higginson in his early days at Newburyport when Higginson was the young pastor of the Free Church there. In his autobiography, Higginson says, "Nothing did more to strengthen my anti-slavery zeal, about 1848, than the frequent intercourse with Whittier and his household, made possible by their nearness to Newburyport."[14]

It was also through Whittier's influence the same year that Higginson was nominated for Congress by the new Free Soil Party,

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[12]"Garrison and Whittier," Independent (December, 1905) and "John Greenleaf Whittier," Independent (December, 1907). Two other articles which appeared during these years were "Whittier as Combatant in the Days of the Abolitionists," Book News Monthly, XXVI (December, 1907), and "The Place of Whittier Among Poets," The Reader's Magazine (February, 1905). A summary of these is given in Higginson's Contemporaries under the title, "John Greenleaf Whittier."

[13]John Greenleaf Whittier, p. 82.

[14]Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 132.

and "'stumped the district' though in a hopeless minority."[15] Whittier had nominated Higginson partly to stave off his own nomination by the Free Soil Party. Higginson, as he expected, lost the election.

In the book-length biography, Higginson discusses Garrison's discovery of Whittier when the twenty-one-year-old Garrison had embarked on a weekly newspaper, The Free Press, at Newburyport. Whittier's sister had sent some of his youthful verses to Garrison, who, impressed by them, went to visit the shy and reticent author. It was Garrison who encourgged Whittier's gift for writing and urged Whittier's father to give him better educational advantages. It was Garrison also who assisted Whittier to obtain the position of editor of the Boston American Manufacturer. Later, Whittier edited the Haverhill Gazette, the New England Review, and the Pennsylvania Freeman.

In the early days of their friendship, Whittier's admiration for Garrison was very strong. At one of the first anti-slavery conventions he recorded the high-water mark of his feeling in a poem, "To W. L. G." Higginson also had burst into a poetic effusion in 1846 in what he later called "a crude verse" to William Lloyd Garrison.[16] This admiration was prompted not only by Garrison's personality, but also to a certain degree by the courageous manner with which he had faced the persecution of a mob in 1835. He was taken to jail for safety where Whittier visited him. Although

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[15] Ibid., p. 128

[16] "Sonnet to William Lloyd Garrison," Liberty Bell (1846).

Whittier himself escaped the violence of the mob scenes which took place frequently during the 1830's, Higginson says that his courage was tested on several occasions. In 1838 Whittier was editing the Pennsylvania Freeman in Philadelphia. He had written a long poem against slavery and requested that it be read at the anti-slavery meeting to be held in the hall where his printing office was located. The poem, among other things, aroused the wrath of the crowd to such an extent that the meeting ended in the complete demolition of the building, including newspaper office, anti-slavery bookstore, and hall.

During this period, Higginson maintains, there were striking parallels between Garrison and Whittier. Both had fine personal appearance; both were humbly born; both began literary life as editors; both supported "Henry Clay and the American System" and both were finally detached from Clay because they could not support a slaveholder for office.[17]

After the period of violence, however, Whittier and Garrison differed in opinion over Disunion and political parties. Garrison clung to his disunion and non-resistant views. Whittier joined the newly-formed Liberty Party, and later the Free-Soilers which grew out of it. The Liberty Party did not favor disunion and on this point was antipathetic to Garrison. Whittier, however, retained his non-resistant attitude, more as a Quaker, Higginson asserts, than as a Garrisonian. Whittier, Samuel E. Sewall, and other leaders of the Liberty Party, however, had no gift of platform eloquence, but were good organizers and conciliators. They were also often embarrassed

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[17]"Garrison and Whittier," p. 1312.

by entanglements with politicians such as Clay and Van Buren, who did not, strictly speaking, belong to their group. Garrison, on the other hand, possessed a strength, Higginson says, which was expressed in his fearless and clear-cut maxims ("I will not equivocate; I will not apologise; I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard.") Whittier's lay in his tact and skill of management.

Higginson points out that Whittier's desires in youth were almost equally divided between politics and poetry. He tried for the office of representative to Congress when he was twenty-four by means which, Higginson says, "were based on the very methods from which we have been trying of late years to get free--the appeal to mutual self-interest in securing posts of honor."[18] This stigma, however, his later impeccable life completely eradicated. He was also intensely interested in the downfall of the old Whig Party in Massachusetts and in the Coalition of the Free Soil and Democratic parties which put Charles Sumner in the United States Senate. Higginson himself had taken some part in this and spoke at Free Soil meetings which Whittier attended. Higginson says that Whittier once sent him an encouraging note to "go on and prosper."[19] In 1854 Whittier was invited by Ralph Waldo Emerson and others to attend a meeting of the friends of freedom in Boston, to form a new party organization which later became the Republican party. Whittier's politics, all this time, Higginson asserts, leaned toward the party which was in sympathy with abolition. This is seen in his reply to Emerson which Higginson quoted.

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[18] John Greenleaf Whittier, p. 43.

[19] Ibid., p. 44.

> I care nothing for names; I have no prejudices against Whig or Democrat; show me a party cutting itself loose from slavery, repudiating its treacherous professed allies of the South, and making the protection of man the paramount object, and I am ready to go with it, heart and soul.[20]

Although abolition was foremost among Whittier's reform activities, he was also interested in other movements. The elevation of the laboring classes was a matter dear to his heart, because he was--of all the poets of this period, Higginson says, closest to the laborer. He was also interested in the temperance and peace movements, and became an early advocate of woman suffrage.

After considering Whittier's reform activities, personal qualities and religious views, Higginson discusses Whittier as a poet. He emphasizes his place as the poet of familiar home life. "More than any other he reaches the actual existence of the people, up to the time of his death."[21] Longfellow, Holmes, and Lowell, compared with Whittier, seem the poets of a class; Whittier alone is near the people. Higginson compares his verse to that of Whittier's literary master, Robert Burns, of whom Whittier had written, "He lives, next to Shakespeare, in the heart of humanity."[22]

Higginson reverts again to Whittier's anti-slavery work by pointing out that he was the leading bard of the anti-slavery movement, and, in this type of poetry, he was always simple and free from excessive or elaborate metaphors. He did not equal Lowell, Higginson believed, in the ability to condense a vigorous thought

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[20] Ibid., p. 46.

[21] Ibid., p. 151.

[22] Ibid., p. 160.

into general maxims, and his other faults were obvious: his poems were too long and too laden with superfluous morals. But Whittier gained, Higginson believed, in many ways from the strong tonic of reform agitation.

> This gave a training in directness, simplicity, genuineness; it taught him to shorten his sword and to produce strong effects by common means. It made him permanently high-minded also, and placed him, as he himself always said above the perils and temptations of a merely literary career.[23]

Higginson's emphasis in this biography, as has been said, is on Whittier's anti-slavery career. Perhaps the close affinity of interests, and Higginson's personal acquaintance with Whittier accounts for this. Though not profound or deeply perceptive, the biography gives a picture of Whittier the man as Higginson, his contemporary, saw him. It also throws some light on Whittier the poet by illustrating his affection for the common man and for the oppressed. Higginson as a reformer and a man of letters could appreciate this combination, and its influence on his own life is commemorated in the following short poem.

To John Greenleaf Whittier

At dawn of manhood came a voice to me
  That said to startled conscience, "Sleep no more!"
  Like some loud cry that peals from door to door
  It roused a generation; and I see,
Now looking back through years of memory,
  That all of school or college, all the lore
  Of worldly maxims, all the statesman's store,
  Were naught beside that voice's mastery.
If any good to me or from me came
  Through life, and if no influence less divine
  Has quite usurped the place of duty's flame;
If aught rose worthy in this heart of mine,
  Aught that, viewed backward, wears no shade of shame,--
  Bless thee, old friend! for that high call was thine.
    Cambridge, Dec. 17, 1887[24]

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[23] Ibid., p. 160

[24] Outdoor Studies, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, VI (Boston, 1900), p. 359.

In contrast to Garrison's and Whittier's humble origins, Wendell Phillips, Garrison's co-partner in the anti-slavery crusade was a man of aristocratic birth and education. In a short biographical sketch Higginson pays him a tribute which is sincere and cordial. Higginson praises the singular personal qualities of the man--his wealthy Bostonian and Brahmin background, his attractive personal appearance, and his heroic renunciation of a promising legal or political career for a reformer's life. Higginson dwells at length upon Phillips's gifted eloquence, his conversational rather than "spread-eagle" style. Phillips had the ability, Higginson says, to turn the most hostile audience to his way of thinking, and began his anti-slavery career in 1837 by doing just that. Shortly after the death of Elija P. Lovejoy, who was murdered by a pro-slavery mob while defending his printing press, Phillips delivered a classic extemporaneous oration in protest. "From this time," Higginson maintains, "and while slavery remained, he was first and chiefly an abolitionist; all other reforms were subordinate to this, and this was his life."[25] Phillips was encouraged by his invalid wife, Ann T. Greene, who was also responsible for converting him to abolition. She regarded his lyceum lecture tours as important missions, "for even if he only spoke on 'The Lost Arts' or 'Street Life in Europe,' it gave him a personal hold upon each community he visited, and the next time, perhaps, an anti-slavery lecture would be demanded, or one on temperance or woman's rights."[26] In this respect, Phillips did more than any other lecturer, David Mead asserts, to change the

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[25]"Wendell Phillips," Contemporaries, p. 260.

[26]Ibid., p. 261.

lyceum from a place of cultural instruction to a place for agitation.[27]

Wendell Phillips, Higginson maintains, was, like Theodore Parker, a connecting link between the non-resistant Garrisonians and the younger school of abolitionists who believed in physical opposition to the slave power. Although he was not a member of associations for the rescue of fugitive slaves, "he was ready with sympathy and money."[28] And, as has already been seen, he would have been first in the rescue of Anthony Burns had he understood the arrangements. "It is doubtful whether he was, in his very fibre, a man of action," Higginson believed, "but he never discouraged those who were such, nor had he the slightest objection to violating law where human freedom was at stake."[29] In this respect he was unlike Garrison. Phillips, however, thoroughly accepted Garrison's non-voting view, and was ready to speak at any time in opposition to abolitionists who were trying to prove the United States Constitution an anti-slavery document. Like Garrison he was also a Disunionist and among the leaders who signed the Call issued for a "State Disunion Convention," in January and July of 1857.

When the South began to secede from the Union, the abolitionists were accused of fostering an evil which was destroying much of the trade of the North. Mob scenes led by merchants and business men again occurred, and, in 1860, Phillips had to have a heavy personal bodyguard to protect him at home and at abolition meetings. Higginson

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[27] Yankee Eloquence in the Middle West: The Ohio Lyceum, 1850-1870 (East Lansing, 1951), p. 112.

[28] "Wendell Phillips," Contemporaries, p. 262.

[29] Ibid., p. 263.

helped to organize this guard.[30] During this time of danger, Higginson says, there "was something peculiarly striking and characteristic in his demeanor. . . . He seemed like some English Jacobite nobleman on the scaffold, carelessly taking snuff, and kissing his hand to the crowd, before laying his head upon the block."[31]

Although an aristocrat by birth and by nature, Phillips was willing to identify himself with any social class, especially the Negro, for whom he continuously spoke, and the Irish for whom he often gave his lecture on Daniel O'Connell. Yet, Higginson asserts, "in these and all cases his democratic habit had the good-natured air of some kindly young prince; he never was quite the equal associate that he seemed."[32] His appearance justified this comment, for Wendell Phillips and Edmund Quincey were pointed out to George Tickner by an English visitor as being "the only men I have seen in your country who look like gentlemen."[33]

Having advocated Disunion for so long, Phillips, at first, welcomed the secession of the South. Early in the year of 1860, he had said: "We do not want the Border States. Let them go, be welcome to the forts, take the Capital with them." In April of the same year, however, he retracted that statement in a famous speech in which he

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[30]January, 1861, Higginson wrote: "We had sixty men armed and organized, under my direction, to protect the platform and Wendell Phillips." In February he said: "A thousand people or so waited on Winter Street to see him--friends, foes, and idlers--while we quietly walked him out by the Bumstead Place entrance." Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 203.

[31]Contemporaries, p. 271.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid.

said that the South had "no Constitutional right to secede. . . . Rather than surrender the Capital, cover every square foot of it with a living body; crowd it with a million men, and empty every bank vault at the North to pay the cost."[34] This was what probably sent Higginson on an impetuous wild-goose chase that month in an effort to save the Capitol when it was in danger.[35]

Phillips supported the North during the War and favored the reconstruction of the Union with the abolishment of slavery as its major factor. Higginson, however, did not sanction the war until it took on a genuinely anti-slavery character.

Phillips distrusted Lincoln before the War, a distrust which Higginson must have shared, for it was at the time of the mob scenes in 1860 that Higginson and others guarded Phillips who was at that time lashing out at Lincoln's deliberation concerning the slavery question.[36] Both of them rejoiced, however, when Lincoln remained steadfast to his party's platform.

After the War, Phillips went at other reforms with the same vehemence with which he had attacked slavery. The situation was very different, Higginson says. The slavery issue was so logically simple: "Once grant that man could not rightfully hold property in man, and the intellectual part of the debate was settled; only the moral appeal remained, and there Phillips was master, and could speak as one having authority."[37] The other reforms, Higginson points out, were complex

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[34]Korngold, op. cit., p. 290.

[35]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 203-204.

[36]Korngold, op. cit., pp. 269-270.

[37]Contemporaries, p. 276.

problems, and Phillips "went on, for the remainder of his life, preaching crusades on these difficult problems, which he gave no sign of ever having profoundly studied."[38] He later fraternized with General Benjamin F. Butler, and spent the last years of his life in close cooperation with one whose life and motives were totally unlike his own--"indeed, the most unscrupulous soldier of fortune who ever posed as a Friend of the People on this side of the Atlantic."[39]

This sketch of the life and work of Wendell Phillips is a sympathetic appraisal and tribute to a man with whom Higginson had worked side by side for the anti-slavery reform. He had often heard the "golden-mouthed" eloquence of Wendell Phillips and had supported his political views of disunion and immediate emancipation. As a contemporary source the biography is of value for future biographers of both Wendell Phillips and Thomas Wentworth Higginson.[40]

Besides the biographies of non-political abolitionists, like Garrison and Phillips, Higginson included a short character delineation of Senator Charles Sumner in his volume about his contemporaries. Higginson had known Sumner from the time of his junior year at college. He was first introduced to him by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow when the young Higginson stopped in Philadelphia on his way to Virginia for a vacation. After Higginson settled in Newburyport, as minister, he often entertained distinguished guests who lectured at the school for young men and

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[38] Ibid.,

[39] Ibid., p. 278.

[40] This sketch which first appeared in the Nation (February 7, 1884) and again in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1899, was used extensively by Korngold, op. cit.

and women of the town. Mrs. Higginson described Sumner in rather unflattering terms:

> Friday night [1848] that enormous Charles Sumner stretched his ponderous form of seven feet in length under our roof. He has not very good manners--he always sits in the rocking chair, gapes almost constantly without any attempt at concealment. . . . But he is a true moral reformer which is a good thing.[41]

Three years later, immediately after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, Charles Sumner was elected to the Senate by Free-Soilers and anti-slavery Democrats. His first move was for the repeal of the Bill. After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and the bloody fiasco in the territories, Sumner gave his famous "The Crime against Kansas" speech in the Senate, May 19 and 20, 1856--a masterly tirade against the slave power in Kansas and a vituperation against the aged Senator Butler of South Carolina. Two days after the offensive Kansas speech, Preston S. Brooks, representative from South Carolina and relative of Butler, caned Sumner with a gutta-percha walking stick as Sumner was sitting at his desk in the Senate chamber. How badly he was injured will never be known.

Higginson went to see Sumner at Boston in January, 1857. He said in a letter:

> He seemed at first very well, looked as usual, while seated, and spoke as easily and in as firm a voice as ever. But finally I proposed to him to go up and see Page's Venus in the upper hall, of which I had the key, and when he rose I saw the change. He rose slowly, . . . holding both hands upon his back, and walked with a cane and quite feebly, instead of his peculiarly vigorous stride. He thinks of going to Washington this month, but I suspect he will be persuaded not to do it till the end of the session, if at all. He is obviously unfit to deliver his future speech. . . . But I do not think he will ever be, physically speaking, what he was.[42]

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[41] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 97.

[42] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 78.

The assault, Higginson says, "was the legitimate result of the general spirit of violence then prevailing, North and South. Theodore Parker said that the acorn from which Brooks's bludgeon grew was none other than the Acorn, that brig owned in Boston and chartered by the United States government to take Sims into slavery."[43]

Higginson's biographical sketch, written after Sumner's death in 1874, pointed up the striking change in Boston's attitude to this man who twenty years before had been sent to Congress to work out his own course. He had no party and no firm following. Abolitionists, Higginsays, watched him with hope, but with distrust. "Boston did not hold him up; but Massachusetts so sustained him that he held up Boston, until it had learned to sustain him in return."[44]

Perhaps this lack of trust was due to Sumner's personality. He did not possess poetic imagination, philosophical discrimination, military or administrative genius; nor did he have statesmanlike genius--"that which solves the problem and gives the key." He was, in relation to Garrison, a learner, who never claimed to possess an original mind. However, he possessed the gift of throwing out catchphrases which were half battles--such as "Freedom national, slavery sectional;" "The Crime Against Kansas;" "The barbarism of slavery."[45] Sumner had, Higginson maintains, the very highest type of secondary mind which should be judged by the quantity of its intellectual activity rather than by its quality. In this respect Sumner was "unequaled

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[43]"Charles Sumner," Contemporaries, p. 283.

[44]Ibid., p. 281.

[45]Ibid., p. 286.

among the Americans of his generation."[46]

His life, like those of several other abolitionists whom Higginson respected, was one of moral courage and absolute rectitude of purpose. His moral standard, Higginson asserts, did not merely aim at ends, but extended to means also, unlike many anti-slavery men who had noble aims, but whose low choice of means identified them with corrupt and debased practices.

Sumner, however, lacked the personality and magnetism of other politicians, such as Henry Clay. "He convinced, persuaded, commanded, was respected and loved," but he did not have a sense of humor, and was given to exaggeration and egotism, all of which Higginson found excusable, but not commendable.

This essay was intended as a eulogy, as certain references to Sumner's death indicate. As such, allowances should be made for whatever might be considered excessive praise, for, as a politician and public figure, Sumner faced a barrage of criticisms both from his contemporaries and from later historians, neither of whom have been as kind to his reputation as this tribute of Higginson's.

Higginson's character sketch of Theodore Parker, written shortly after Parker's death in 1860 and published in the Atlantic Monthly, is, like his other biographies, a tribute to a man who was--more than any of the leaders, except Emerson, a personal influence on his life. As a young man, undecided as to his career, Higginson resolved on the liberal ministry through the potent influence of Theodore Parker and

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[46] Ibid.

James Freeman Clarke.[47] Higginson entered Harvard Divinity School in an atmosphere of liberal thought which, "under Emerson and Parker, was submerging old /religious/ landmarks."[48] Like Theodore Parker, Higginson insisted on being ordained by his congregation in his first parish at Newburyport. The Worcester Free Church which he took over four years later, was to his liking because it was the first of several such organizations that had sprung up under the influence of Parker's Boston Society.[49]

Besides speaking on the same platforms with Parker, Higginson belonged to the Boston Vigilance Committee, which, with Parker also as one of its members, took an active part in the Thomas Sims incident in 1851 and the Anthony Burns affair of 1854. As a member of the "secret six" (it will be remembered that the others were Samuel Gridley Howe, Frank Sanborn, George Stearns, and Gerrit Smith) Higginson and Parker aided John Brown. Both were unwilling to deny their complicity when the Harper's Ferry attack became a national scandal. Parker, however, died in Europe the following year, where he had been vainly trying to regain his health.

All of these associations with Theodore Parker place Higginson in a competent position to write a biographical sketch of his friend.

Higginson does not dwell on Parker's religious doctrines or his influence on liberal thought here. These he discussed in the preface to one of Parker's works and in an article for the Radical in 1871.[50]

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[47] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 98.

[48] Ibid., p. 100.

[49] Ibid., p. 131.

[50] Theodore Parker, Discourse of Matters Pertaining to Religion. Preface by Higginson, 1907, and "Unpublished Letters from Theodore Parker," Radical (May, 1871).

The biography, however, dwells on the personal character of the man. He speaks of Parker's Christian charity which prompted him to help those in need ("not a mere wholesale reformer, he wore out his life by retailing its great influences to the poorest comer.")[51] He mentions his willingness to forgive, should his enemy show the least sign of contrition. He discusses Parker's omniverous appetite for knowledge and his unusually retentive memory. Higginson believed that Parker's intense love for study, his work as a Sunday preacher, lyceum lecturer, radical leader, and practical philanthropist brought about his early death. His whole endeavor, Higginson says, was to multiply his channels of activity, and he exhausted his life in the effort to do all men's work. "He was a hard man to relieve, to help, or to cooperate with." Nothing could be named, "but he had been planning just that for years" and would eventually get around to it. This left very little for others to do, because, "not from any petty egotism, but simply from inordinate activity, he stood ready to take all the parts."[52] His unusual range of learning would lead one to believe that it must be superficial, but Higginson maintained that others besides himself had found that Parker's knowledge was deep as well as broad. Higginson had the experience of going to Parker, after futilely enquiring of professional lawyers, for a bit of information on the feudal codes of the Middle Ages, and of being directed by Parker to the exact shelf and volume of an old unused German treatise that Parker had read years before.

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[51] "Theodore Parker," Contemporaries, p. 36.

[52] Ibid., p. 41.

His learning, Higginson says, gave his speeches vigor, brilliance and copiousness. But the speeches themselves, were not graceful. Instead they were loose, diffuse, panoramic, without the finer touches or delicate gradations of the polished speaker. This was due probably to the fact that Parker was in a perpetual hurry. He had no time to select, discriminate, omit, or mature anything. When he should have concentrated himself, he was compelled by his nature and his position to lead a profuse and miscellaneous life.[53] This same lack of fine discrimination is seen, Higginson maintains, in Parker's delineations of public figures. His pictures were pure white or black, he seldom saw the shades of gray in between. This was also true of his interpretation of current events. He stated broad truths without fear, but many times passed over the finer aspects.

However, Parker was a strong influence on his times. This influence, Higginson believed, was due to the fact that Parker was a popularizer of new ideas. Not an original thinker, in the same sense that Emerson was, "he translated for tens of thousands that which Emerson spoke to hundreds only."[54] His influence was also due to his thorough American training and sympathy. He always remained at heart the Lexington farmer's boy whose "harvest was indigenous, not exotic."[55] His pulpit became one of the greatest forces of the nation because he "plunged into the current of hearty national life around him, loved it, trusted it, believed in it; and the combination of this vital faith with such tremendous criticism of public and private sins formed an

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[53] Ibid., p. 52.

[54] Ibid., p. 46.

[55] Ibid., p. 48.

irresistible power."[56] His force came from being able to condemn without crushing, and to denounce while saving from despair.

This essay is a finely drawn study of Parker's personality. Higginson shows a perceptive understanding of Parker's character and judiciously balances his faults against his merits. In Parker's case he found that many of his limitations were the very reasons for his immense popularity and strong influence. These limitations were understandable, Higginson adds, because Parker was Parker, not Emerson his colleague, and "a man must comprise a great deal before we complain of him for not comprising everything."[57]

"Dr Howe's Anti-Slavery Career" precisely indicates the contents of another short biographical sketch. Unlike the character analysis of Theodore Parker, it is simply a chronological outline of Dr. Howe's work as an abolitionist. As a famous teacher of the blind, and as a friend of Greek liberty, Samuel Gridley Howe assumed his work in the anti-slavery reform, Higginson says, about the time of the first fugitive slave case in 1846. He accepted his role in the spirit of "a natural crusader or paladin; a man in whom every call to duty took a certain chivalrous aspect."[58]

Howe was chairman of a meeting called in Faneuil Hall, in 1846, which proposed the formation of the Boston Vigilance Committee which Higginson later joined. Howe became (like Higginson

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[56] Ibid., p. 49.

[57] Ibid., p. 58.

[58] "Dr. Howe's Anti-Slavery Career," Contemporaries, p. 294.

an abolitionist who was willing to rescue escaped slaves by force if necessary. This was true of the Thomas Sims affair in which both were active. It was Howe who complimented Higginson after his fiery speech in Tremont Temple before the attempted rescue of Thomas Sims, saying, rather exaggeratedly, that after the speech "the country was at the verge of a revolution." Howe was also incidentally instrumental in the attempted Anthony Burns rescue.

As one of the original corporators of the Emigrant Aid Society, Howe did much to encourage Northerners to settle in Kansas. The State Kansas Committee, Higginson thought, was organized at the Blind Asylum Office on Bromfield Street, Howe's headquarters. No other Eastern man, except George Stearns, Higginson maintains, did more to save Kansas for freedom than Howe.

Howe's connection with John Brown and the Harper's Ferry incident, Higginson reviews quickly, saying:

> Dr. Howe left the United States for a short time,--needlessly, as he afterward thought,--and was later examined at Washington before a congressional committee, but with no result. There was some difference of opinion among John Brown's friends as to their duty after his death; but Dr. Howe was never much troubled by the necessity of satisfying the consciences of others, if he could only satisfy his own.[59]

Needless to say, these comments were a generous interpretation. Without condemning Howe's attitude, Higginson neither praises nor excuses; he simply glosses over the whole affair quickly.

Howe was also with Higginson as a guard of Wendell Phillips when the latter was in danger of being attacked by a mob. He too joined Higginson's plan to form a guerrilla party in Virginia to

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[59] Ibid., pp. 299-300.

save Washington when it was in danger of attack. As can be seen from this brief survey, Higginson's and Howe's anti-slavery careers were parallel in many respects, and one cannot help recognizing how much one of Higginson's sentences about Howe is a self-portrait.

> His anti-slavery life was . . . that of a man of chivalrous nature, with a constitutional love for freedom and for daring enterprises, taking more interest in action than in mere agitation, and having, moreover, other fields of usefulness which divided his zeal.[60]

Higginson summed up the days of the abolition agitation and the principal characters of the movement in an article which appeared as late as 1898.[61] He looked back with pleasure to the stimulating Garrisonians whose meetings he attended. "There was no monotony of opinion, because there were many speakers who--like Theodore Parker, Henry Wilson, Francis W. Bird, and latterly myself--were voters in theory and practice and yet sought the society of these non-voters as more stimulating than any other."[62] He pointed out again, the leadership of Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Edmund Quincy. In the aftermath of the war, Phillips turned to other reforms and continued his public services; Quincy became a brilliant and delightful "flaneur," resuming the life of a cultivated Bostonian described so aptly by Howells in A Modern Instance.

Higginson also described the "types" of men and women who took part in the campaign. There were combatants--like the fiery non-voters,

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[60] Ibid., p. 301.

[61] "Anti-Slavery Days," The Outlook, LX (September 3, 1898), pp. 47-57.

[62] Ibid., p. 51.

Stephen and Abby Kelley Foster and the indomitable Parker Pillsbury with (in Lowell's phrase) "a crater in each eye." Others on the lunatic fringe, Higginson humorously describes in another essay[63] in which he mentions the white-robed, white-haired Father Lamson; Abby Folsom, described by Emerson as the "flea of conventions;" Charles Burleigh, whose long curls and beard had a distinctly Christ-like look; Henry C. Wright whose occasional and imperious "Now, Chairman" instead of "Mr. Chairman" gave him "a weight of manner which his matter did not always confirm;"[64] and Nathaniel Peabody Rogers who out-Garrisoned Garrison in advocating extreme abolitionist measures. The Hutchinson family was another element which added interest to the anti-slavery meetings. Consisting of several brothers and one sister, they "put immense fire and fury into 'The Car Emancipation.'" Frequently one of the brothers would solemnly throw all the money collected at the door into the laps of the astonished audience, while the others looked on "in the reverence of untaught persons to the acts of the insane."[65]

In spite of the fanatics who clung to this reform, Higginson maintains that, in general, the reformers of that day were, in his estimation, of a really superior type.

> With admirable individuals among all these, yet the collective tone has never seemed to be pitched quite so high. . . . I can only explain it by remembering that the anti-slavery reform was . . . the most absolutely disinterested, with the largest proportion of sacrifice and the smallest of personal benefit.[66]

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[63] "The Eccentricities of Reformers," Contemporaries.

[64] Ibid., p. 332.

[65] Ibid., p. 335.

[66] "Anti-Slavery Days," p. 55.

Surely Higginson's appraisals of the principal leaders discussed above corroborate that statement. To a certain extent, these biographical sketches further clarify Higginson's position as an abolitionist during the pre-war period, for he differed somewhat from the older abolitionists whose work he commemorated. Garrison was a non-resistant, non-political disunionist. Phillips was a non-political disunionist, but not a non-resistant. Whittier was a pacifist on religious grounds, but supported the Union, joining the Liberty Party and later the FreeSoilers. Higginson was closest to Theodore Parker and Samuel Gridley Howe with whom he was a co-worker in the Thomas Sims, Anthony Burns, and John Brown affairs. As a Disunionist Free Soiler, and, later, Republican, he supported Charles Sumner as the representative of his views. He advocated physical resistance, if necessary, to incursions on human rights, and believed that political action in the government could bring action to bear on the slavery issue more readily than verbal objection on pacifist, moral grounds.

Later, however, in his essay, "Anti-Slavery Days," he wrote,

> Technically, as a policy, disunion undoubtedly failed. It must always be remembered that it was not advocated merely as an abstract point of moral consistency, irrespective of consequences, but as a legitimate working policy to be pursued.[67]

Early in 1861, Wendell Phillips had argued for disunion as the best method of abolishing slavery. Had his advice been followed, Higginson says, it is very probable that slavery would still be existing or it would have been abolished by a war severer than the Civil War. The principles of the Garrisonian abolitionists triumphed, Higginson maintains, "yet this was in respect over the ruins of the precise

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[67] Ibid., p. 57.

policy they advocated, the destruction of the Union."[68] Higginson's final stand on the subject was in agreement with Carl Schurz, "that while they [Disunionists and Unionists] were right both in principle and motive, and while Webster, in motive at least, may have been finally wrong, yet it took Webster's influence also to establish, through love of the Union, the final success of the principle he seemed to sacrifice."[69]

Between the time of John Brown's attempted insurrection and the Civil War, Higginson wrote several historical essays for the Atlantic Monthly from a definitely anti-slavery viewpoint. Each had to do with insurrectionists against slavery and their methods of revolt.

The first group were the Maroons of Jamaica who rebelled against the English as early as 1655 and refused to be taken as slaves under the domination of England. Forming guerilla bands, they held fastnesses, "cockpits," in the mountains where they were totally inaccessible to the white men. From here they poured volleys of arrows into the forces of soldiers sent to oust them. The high military authorities of that period admitted that the subjugation of the Maroons was more difficult to obtain than a victory over any army in Europe. These people, Higginson emphasizes, "were fighting for their liberty, with which aim no form of warfare seemed to them unjustifiable."[70] They spread a reign of terror over the white inhabitants for a number

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] "The Maroons of Jamaica," Travelers and Outlaws (Boston, 1888), p. 123.

of years until a treaty was made at last in which guaranty of continued independence was an essential part of the bargain. This was soon violated by the Colonial government on the grounds that the Maroons had not entirely complied with the terms of their treaty. About six-hundred of the blacks surrendered to the government and were shipped to Halifax in 1796 where they constructed the "Maroon Bastion"--their only visible memorial. The race eventually declined in their new environment where they were supposedly supported by the governments first of Jamaica and then of Nova Scotia. Finally, in 1800, their sadly reduced population was transferred to Sierra Leone where they have disappeared from history. Those who remained in the Jamaica mountain fastnesses, continued to retain a qualified independence and flourished.

Although this essay is somewhat academic, it is quite evident that Higginson's purpose was to build up public sentiment in favor of all men who clung to their freedom in spite of serious obstacles. The record of the Maroons of Jamaica, Higginson maintained, "still retains its interest . . . as that of one of the heroic races of the world; and all the more, because it is with their kindred that the American nation has to deal, in solving one of the most momentous problems of its future."[71]

"The Maroons of Surinam" is a companion essay describing the Negroes of the Guiana forest. The English government again made a treaty with the blacks in 1749, but did nothing to stop the cruel treatment of those of their number who remained slaves of the white man. The Maroons had told some very plain truths to the white ambassadors about the conditions of the Negro, but the planters did nothing to mend their ways.

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[71] Ibid., p. 149.

By 1772 insurrections, which had been sporadic since the treaty, reached their highest point. A Captain Stedman, also the historian of these people whose history Higginson followed in his narrative, was sent with a force of soldiers to quell the uprising. But the tropical rains, insects, and attacks of the Maroons killed off most of his men before they could really begin to fight. The guerillas were brutal in their tactics. This they learned from their betters, Higginson maintained. If they were not brutal, "it would have demonstrated the absurd paradox, that slavery educates higher virtues than freedom. It bewilders all the relations of human responsibility, if we expect the insurrectionary slave to commit no outrages; if slavery has not depraved him, it has done him little harm."[72]

The two forces, however, faced about equal odds. The white soldiers did not know the territory and could not become acclimated. The Maroons had very few modern weapons and had to depend entirely upon their knowledge of the country and their skill at making surprise attacks. By 1777, the English government had spent forty thousand pounds a year for about five years, and left both parties essentially as when it began.[73] Recent expeditions, visiting Guiana, had found the Maroons of Surinam still enjoying their wild freedom and multiplying rapidly. The essay closes with a final thrust at slavery:

> Their life does not yield, indeed, the very highest results of spiritual culture; its mental and moral results may not come up to the level of civilization, but they rise

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[72] "The Maroons of Surinam," ibid., p. 167.

[73] Ibid., p. 182.

> far above the level of slavery. In the changes of time, the Maroons may yet elevate themselves into the one, but they will never relapse into the other.[74]

Similar in theme, but more interesting in presentation, are three essays describing the insurrectionary warfare of American Negro leaders, Gabriel, Denmark Vesey, and Nat Turner.

In 1800, in Virginia, a plot was reported by a few loyal slaves to their master that Gabriel, a Negro slave of Thomas Prosser, had prepared an uprising among the slaves of several plantations. Gabriel was reputed to be "a fellow of courage and intellect above his rank in life," to be about twenty-five years of age, and to be "guiltless of the alphabet."[75] Gabriel, of course, was arrested before he could go into action, and was finally convicted and executed.

The proposed insurrection took on a decidedly political coloring in the newspapers of the day. The plot was ascribed by the Federalists to the Jeffersonian Democrats and their "French babble of the natural equality of man." The Democrats could find no better repartee than to consider the whole matter a Federalist attempt to renew commercial intercourse with San Domingo.

Regardless of alleged political implications, the thought of an uprising of the slaves struck terror into the hearts of the whites. The Southern papers suppressed the news. Higginson says that, in his research on the topic, he could find no Southern newspapers of the period in public libraries. He had to gather his material of Southern reports from reprints in Northern papers. The matter was kept so quiet

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[74] Ibid., p. 184.

[75] "Gabriel's Defeat," ibid., p. 190.

that even meetings of the Virginia Legislature took place behind closed doors. It is interesting to note, Higginson asserts, that in these mysterious sessions lay the germs of the American Colonization Society. It was not until 1817, however, that the first formal meeting of the Colonization Society took place.

The revolt of Denmark Vesey took place in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1822. A self-appointed Negro prophet, Denmark Vesey, believed that he was called by God to free the slaves. Although he was a free man himself, he saw that his mission was to release his brethren from bondage no matter how ruthless the manner. He had an awe-inspiring power over the Negroes and organized several bands at various points of the city on the appointed day of his planned insurrection. The plot was discovered before it could take place and Denmark Vesey with his conspirators were tried, sentenced, and hanged. The discovery of the plot revealed that most of the slaves were ready to unite, and that the plans were known at least within a forty-mile radius from Charleston. The proposed insurrection threw the slavery question open to the public. The Missouri Compromise and other political measures were held responsible for causing the uprising. Restrictions after that time, Higginson says, were placed upon the education of slaves, and the accounts in newspapers which recounted this incident had become extremely rare.[76]

Nat Turner's insurrection, which created such a reign of terror throughout the South, resulted in one instance in a mob scene in Baltimore, Maryland, where William Lloyd Garrison was run through the

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[76] "Denmark Vesey," ibid., pp. 215-250.

streets of the town tied with a rope because it was believed that copies of his Liberator had incited the revolt.

Nat Turner, like Gabriel, felt that he was destined for some great work. He "fasted, prayed, preached, read the Bible, heard voices when he walked behind his plough, and communicated his revelations to the awe-struck slaves."[77] He was a slave of Joseph Travis, and was considered upright and highly gifted.

One Sunday afternoon, in September, 1831, with six other Negroes, he discussed his plan for an uprising against the whites, a plan he had been plotting for almost four years. The uprising was to begin that night. The blacks were to massacre every white person they met. During the next forty-eight hours terror swept along the southeastern border of Virginia in Southampton County as more than fifty people were murdered. The Negro forces swelled with recruits as it passed from plantation to plantation.

Turner made a fatal mistake, however. On his way to the town of Jerusalem, some of his men stopped at a plantation to enlist their friends. Nat Turner waited at the gate; then, leaving his six or eight companions, he walked the half-mile to the house to hasten those who had gone in. During his absence a party of eighteen white men came up suddenly, broke up the guard at the gate and rode up to the house. The blacks, coming out of the house, broke into disorder, retreated, and scattered.

By this time the entire country was alarmed. Armed forces were sent by the government to quell the revolt. Nat Turner became a hunted man and the whites in retaliation killed on the average of a

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[77] "Nat Turner's Insurrection," ibid., p. 280.

hundred and twenty Negroes a day. Atrocities occurred day and night on the part of the whites amid protests from the press. Every Southern state seemed to have caught the insurrectionary fever and perpetuated it by minor uprisings in several directions at the same time. From September 15, until October 30, Nat Turner, the principal instigator of the revolt, was hunted. Upon his capture, he was tried, and on November 11, he was executed.

It is obvious that these narratives are an expression of Higginson's sympathy for the oppressed. His moral is clear: all men have an innate love of personal freedom for which no amount of indulgence on the part of slaveholders can be substituted. In most cases, Higginson points, the leaders of the uprisings were the slaves of kind masters. In turning against them, they were not retaliating against alleged cruelty, but they were fighting for a liberty they had never known.

While Higginson's historical facts are sketchy, he fills in the background with details of human interest or ample excerpts from newspaper accounts which considerably expand the point he is making. The essays are often discursive and sometimes rambling, but frequently they sparkle with a touch of humor which gives the most serious subject a lightness of tone. Bliss Perry says of Higginson, that he was fortunate in settling upon the essay as a form of literature precisely adapted to the instincts of his mind.

> The flexibility of the essay form, its venturesomeness, its perpetual sally and retreat, tempted his happy audacity. . . . That style of his--light and flexible as a rod of split bamboo--is the style of many of the immortal classics and humanists; and it holds, when the bigger and coarser styles warp and weaken.[78]

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[78]Perry, op. cit., p. 79.

Yet entwined in the flexible style of these essays is an earnest humanitarianism which is an expression of the idealism and high purpose of the nineteenth reformers of New England, of whom Higginson was one of the finest representatives.

CHAPTER III

THE SOLDIER AND HIS REGIMENT

A. The Civil War and Army Life in a Black Regiment

There was a young curate of Worcester
Who could have a command if he'd choose ter,
But he said each recruit
Must be blacker than soot,
Or else he'd go preach where he used to.[1]

This amusing limerick about Higginson, while not entirely true factually, came close to the spirit of his military career. After Lincoln's call for the formation of troops, Higginson obtained authority from Governer Andrew to raise a regiment of white soldiers in the fall of 1861. Between October, 1861, and February, 1862, when about half the necessary ten companies had been provided for in different parts of the State, recruiting was suddenly stopped, much to Higginson's disappointment.

By August, 1862, however, he "could keep out of the affair no longer,"[2] and obtained permission to open a recruiting office in Worcester where he had little difficulty in getting the required number of men for the nucleus of a company of which Higginson took command. The drilling he found easier to teach than he expected. Being older than most of the raw officers (he was thirty-eight at

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[1] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 251.

[2] Ibid., p. 248.

time), he says he did not have disciplinary problems with his own immediate command, nor did he find it hard to obey his general who "was by occupation a working mechanic, and uneducated except in war."[3] The general went home at night, however, and the regiment became a heterogeneous mass of men, as yet little trained either to command or to obey. After the regiment was given a permanent colonel, discipline was tightened, and "all went as it should." Higginson was with this group for about a month, when he received a letter, November 5, 1862, from Brigadier-General Rufus Saxton, military commander of the Department of the South, asking Higginson to become colonel of a regiment of freed slaves which Saxton had received authority to organize. "It was an offer that took my breath away, and fulfilled the dream of a lifetime,"[4] Higginson said of that moment. A first regiment of emancipated slaves, as such, had never before been officially mustered into the United States Army principally because public opinion still opposed such an attempt and because the government was reticent about trying such an experiment. Obtaining a short furlough, Higginson went to South Carolina to look over the situation. Satisfied that General Saxton was in earnest, Higginson resigned his Massachusetts commission and cast his lot with the Negro troops for two eventful years. His accounts of this experience appeared as independent essays in the Atlantic Monthly through 1864, 1865, and 1867.[5] They

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[3] Ibid., p. 250.

[4] Ibid., p. 252.

[5] 1864: "Regular and Volunteer Officers (September); "A Night in the Water" (October); "Leaves from an Officer's Journal (November, December). 1865: "Leaves from an Officer's Journal" (January); "Up the St. Mary's (April); "Up the St. John's" (September); "Our Future Militia System (September). 1867: "Out on Picket (March); "Negro Spirituals (June); "Up the Edisto (August).

were later collected in Army Life in a Black Regiment in 1870. William Dean Howells reviewed the book in 1869 before its publication and discussed it as "a series of carefully wrought studies of negro character as a phase of humanity, and of graphically recounted episodes of regimental or personal adventure, all full of peculiar life and color of Southern scenery [which] we might praise . . . as excellent and charming literature."[6] Later critics have given this book a higher place in the scale of literary accomplishment. In his treatment of the civil war memoirs, George F. Whicher says, "Perhaps the palm of literary reporting should go to Thomas Wentworth Higginson for his Army Life in a Black Regiment."[7] Van Wyck Brooks also considered it Higginson's one book of permanent interest,

> a first-rate document of the Civil War. . . . In later years, Higginson never rose again to the literary heights of some of these chapters. . . .He has written one of those rare books that recall a passage of history as the works of formal historians cannot recall them.[8]

Higginson entered upon this experience with a sense of importance. On the steamer nearing Charleston, South Carolina, November 23, 1862, he had written in a letter:

> Here is . . . a position of great importance; as many persons have said, the first man who organizes and commands a successful black regiment will perform the most important service in the history of the war.[9]

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[6]William Dean Howells, a review of Army Life in a Black Regiment, Atlantic Monthly, XXIV (November, 1869), pp. 639-644.

[7]George F. Whicher, "Literature and Conflict," Literary History of the United States, Robert Spiller et al (eds.), (New York, 1953), p. 570.

[8]Van Wyck Brooks, New England: Indian Summer, 1865-1915 (New York, 1940), p. 131.

[9]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 215.

With a kind of quasi-missionary-military purpose, Higginson set about his task of transforming freed men into able soldiers, all the while having the thrill of knowing that this kind of work was punishable by death under the Confederate government. The freed slaves, too, knew that they were going into the war "with a rope round their necks."

During the time he was with the regiment, Higginson kept a diary recording his impressions of the Negroes. He joined them with the idea that if they were treated like men, not slaves, the Negroes would respond to military discipline favorably. He was not disappointed. They learned drill routine quickly, their innate sense of rhythm accounting for this. They had less trouble learning their right hand from their left; in this respect they were superior to their white brothers with whom Higginson had drilled. And they took pride in their duties, making good sentinels. Higginson found this out to his chagrin one rainy night when he was not permitted to pass until he gave the correct countersign. He believed, however, that the Southern freed slaves were more fitted for offensive operations and partisan warfare than for mere garrison duty. The only drawback, he believed, was that they were subject to "pulmonary diseases." There were many cases of pneumonia and pleurisy, and severe coughs were a common complaint. Other than that, everything about his five hundred men pleased him. He found them more manageable than white soldiers, with fewer vices. They were eager, active, pliant, and child-like. He wrote after three days with his company:

> They are simple, docile, and affectionate almost to the point of absurdity. The same men who stood fire in the open field with perfect coolness, on the late expedition, have come to me blubbering in the most irresistibly

> ludicrous manner on being transferred from one company to the regiment of another.[10]

Instead of considering the Negro as a martyr or hero, as Howells pointed out in his review, Higginson portrayed the human side of the Negro character. He found that their needs were few; sugar, home and tobacco would satisfy them. Their pleasures were simple, "Give these people their tongues, their feet, and their leisure, and they are happy."[11] Their vices were infrequent, "A simple and lovable people, whose graces seem to come by nature, and whose vices by training."[12]

The diary records the Christmas and New Year's of 1862 which were spent in limited festivity. Christmas day was celebrated by omitting the curfew and permitting the soldiers to sit up and burn their fires, and have their little prayer-meetings. Of this Higginson wrote:

> All night, as I waked at intervals, I could hear them praying and 'shouting' and clattering with hands and heels. It seemed to make them very happy, and appeared to be at least an innocent Christmas dissipation, as compared with some of the convivialities of the 'superior race' hereabouts.[13]

On New Year's Day a barbeque of ten oxen was prepared for the company and the many expected visitors who had been invited to a program. The program began about eleven-thirty at which the President's Proclamation was read and colors were presented to Higginson and his officers. As he accepted the flag and waved it, he was deeply impressed by an unexpected incident. An elderly male voice from the

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[10] "Camp Diary," Army Life in a Black Regiment, III (Boston, 1900), p. 14.

[11] Ibid., p. 29.

[12] Ibid., p. 24.

[13] Ibid., p. 47.

audience, joined in by a few women's voices, began singing "My Country 'tis of thee." The thrill of that moment is caught in Higginson's description.

> Firmly and irrespressibly the quavering voices sang on, verse after verse; others of the colored people joined in; . . . I never saw anything so electric; it made all other words cheap; it seemed the choked voice of a race at last unloosed. Nothing could be more wonderfully unconscious; art could not have dreamed of a tribute to the day of jubilee that should be so affecting; history will not believe it; and when I came to speak of it, after it was ended, tears were everywhere.[14]

The remainder of the program went off successfully, but Higginson was deeply moved by this spontaneous outburst of a people who had never had a country, and who saw the first flag which promised them anything.

Higginson was equally fascinated by the modes of entertainment of his troop. Making the rounds of the camp at night, he would frequently come upon a group listening with intense pleasure to a drawn-out tale of one of the soldiers describing with perfect mimicry his escape from his master. Other groups took part in the colorful "shout," rhythmically clapping hands and dancing grotesquely in circles, while a few privately "deaconed" out prayers from memory, or sang improvised spirituals which Higginson recorded as he heard them.

The spirituals he found to be an important factor in the religious spirit of the Negroes. Higginson believed this spirit gave his men patience and resignation, especially in sickness. It also strengthened them by giving them zeal, energy, and daring. "Their philosophizing is often the highest form of mysticism; and our dear surgeon declares

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[14] Ibid., p. 55.

that they are all natural transcendentalists."[15] These qualities were inherent in their songs which he made it a practice to copy. Coming upon a fire "round which the dusky figures moved in the rhythmical barbaric dance negroes called a 'shout,'" he would write down in the darkness, perhaps, with his hand in his pocket, the words of a song. "I have afterwards carried it to my tent, like some captured bird or insect, and then, after examination put it by."[16] His interest in Negro spirituals, Higginson says, was of long standing. He had heard of them under the name "Negro spirituals" and had listened to some of his South Carolina friends sing a few. But Higginson learned that among his own men the songs were as simple and as indigenous as those of Scott's Border Minstrelsy, and "more uniformly plaintive, almost always more quaint, and often as essentially poetic."[17] Higginson's article which resulted from this interest, was a pioneer one on the subject[18] and was both part of a movement and an influence.

Francis J. Child had wakened interest in American and European folklore at Harvard, and abolitionists were among the first to use the Negro spiritual to establish a cultural heritage in the United States for the Negro. Shortly after Higginson's article appeared in the Atlantic Monthly (1867), a few abolitionists (Lucy McKim Garrison, Charles Pickard Ware, and William Francis Allen), published a collection of songs under the title, Slave Songs of the United States.

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[15] Ibid., p. 73.

[16] Ibid., p. 70.

[17] "Negro Spirituals," Army Life in a Black Regiment, p. 269.

[18] Henry Nash Smith, "The Widening of Horizons," Literary History of the United States, p. 648.

Other ventures followed upon this: Fisk University student singers toured the North in 1871 for funds for their school, and Joel Chandler Harris exploited Negro folk tales with his Uncle Remus stories in 1879. Within the decade of the 1870's, therefore, Higginson's contribution formed a part of the newly awakened interest in American folklore, and, as a pioneer work on the subject, helped to create a cultural prestige for the Negro.

Higginson reproduced the words of the songs in the original dialect as nearly as possible and tried to avoid what he considered Lowell's only error in the "Bigelow Papers," the extreme misspelling which only confused the reader. Some of the songs were extremely popular camp songs, "Hold Your Light," "Bound to Go," and "Room in There." Others were songs belonging emphatically to the Church Militant, "Hail, Mary," "My Army Cross Over," "Ride, Kind Savior." Others counselled religious resignation to suffering: "This World Almost Done," "I Want to Go Home." Still others were rhythmical boat songs, "The Coming Day," "One More River." A spiritual conflict was suggested in "O, The Dying Lamb," "Down in the Valley," and "Cry Holy." The song Higginson thought most poetic and closest to external nature was the one entitled, "I Know Moon-Rise."

I know moon-rise, I know star-rise,
Lay dis body down.
I walk in de moonlight, I walk in de starlight,
To lay dis body down.
I'll walk in de graveyard, I'll walk through de graveyard,
To lay dis body down.
I'll lie in de grave and stretch out my arms;
Lay dis body down.
I go to de judgment in de evenin' of de day,
When I lay dis body down;
And my soul and your soul will meet in de day
When I lay dis body down.[19]

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[19]"Negro Spirituals," Army Life in a Black Regiment, pp. 283-284.

Of this poem, Higginson remarked, "Never, it seems to me, since man first lived and suffered, was his infinite longing for peace uttered more plaintively than in that line."[20] ("I'll lie in de grave and stretch out my arms.")

In all, Higginson published thirty-seven Negro folk-songs which had never before appeared in print, as far as he knew. He says that they were more than a source of relaxation to the men, "they were a stimulus to courage and perhaps even a tie to heaven."[21] He never heard profane or secular songs while in camp, he maintains; neither were minstrel ditties from the North nor hymns from books accepted among the soldiers. The spirituals were more to their liking. "By the aid of these they could sing themselves, as had their fathers before them, out of the contemplation of their own low estate, into the sublime scenery of the Apocalypse."[22]

During his days in camp, of course, Higginson's interest in the songs of his soldiers was incidental to the main task of training and warfare, and he was anxious to test them on the battlefield for he knew that the country was watching his experiment.

He obtained permission, therefore, to go up the St. Mary's River with three boats and about four hundred men to forage for lumber within the enemy territory. He landed a small advance force at night. They found a Negro just come from the Confederate camp who gave them useful information. Setting out with a larger force, Higginson marched

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., p. 299.

[22] Ibid.

with them into a pine woods about midnight, met a troop of the enemy in the dark, exchanged a few shots, then carried one dead and a few wounded back to the boat. No one could see the number of the enemy because of the darkness, nor could they tell how many they had injured. The experience proved to Higginson that his Negro soldiers had the stamina and clear-headedness he expected of them. The next morning they found themselves in possession of the enemy's headquarters, for they learned later that they had killed the first lieutenant of the cavalry and that the remainder of the company (which must have been very small) retreated into the woods, not daring to return to their camp. Higginson commanded the camp to be burned, not looted, but succumbed to the temptation to confiscate a piano which he took to a school for colored children in Fernandina, his next stop.

The expedition went further up the river. Higginson, in the meantime, promised to hunt for bricks for Colonel Hawley at Fernandina, and to obtain information for Lieutenant Hughes about the Confederate steamer, the Berosa. The boat ascended the river that night, and Higginson felt the delicious excitement of this excursion into strange enemy country.

> Never shall I forget the mystery and excitement of that night. I know nothing in life more fascinating than the nocturnal ascent of an unknown river, leading far into an enemy's country, where one glides in the dim moonlight between dark hills and meadows. . . . On such occasions every nerve is strained to its utmost tension; all dreams of romance appear to premise immediate fulfillment.[23]

The cruise involved a stop for the promised bricks which they succeeded in obtaining. This was followed by a dangerous descent down the St. Mary's River on the return trip where the boats were

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[23]"Up the St. Mary's," ibid., p. 113.

attacked from the bluffs at three different points. One of the men was killed.

The trip up the St. John's River followed on orders from General Hunter to occupy Jacksonville, Florida. Higginson's chief aim was to get his men into action. That of the Florida commissioners was to get them into Florida because many of the Negroes were Floridians and knew the country. They thought it worthwhile to risk something in an effort to hold Florida, and perhaps bring it back into the Union.

Higginson with one naval and one army gunboat (the remaining one having foundered on the way) entered Jacksonville quietly and took possession of the town without any resistance from the inhabitants. The city was in good condition, occupied by about five hundred white people and some Negroes--none of them able-bodied enough to recruit. Higginson, however, found his regiment too few in number to hold the town against possible enemy attack and also to make forays up the river. He was soon reinforced by a white army contingent which caused him some groundless apprehension. After a few minor skirmishes with the enemy, and a very short stay, the entire army was recalled without a reason. Unfortunately, upon evacuation, the white soldiers set fire to a part of the town without orders. Higginson was grateful that the Negro soldiers were never accused of the vandalism in which they had no part.

A third cruise, up the Edisto River, had as its objective the destruction of a bridge of the Charleston and Savannah Railway. The boats stopped at Wiltown Bluff and met a large group of slaves who had been working in the rice fields. Higginson describes their wretched condition with sympathy and mentions their gratitude at the arrival of

the Negro troops. Taking two gunboats, one of which grounded frequently, the army troop set on further up the river toward the proposed bridge. Two miles from the bridge, the engine gave out and Higginson's boat grounded in the mud. The second smaller boat went ahead, was attacked as it rounded a bend in the river and retreated to be followed shortly by Higginson's craft which was finally dislodged. The Confederates bombarded the two boats as they passed downstream. Several men were killed and Higginson was wounded. However, the crafts successfully returned to Wiltown Bluff, picked up the pickets and refugees and returned to Beaufort, South Carolina.

After a month or two of convalescence in the North, following his injury, Higginson returned to camp and settled down to an uneventful army life at Camp Shaw. During this time Higginson saw his men mature. "Sometimes it comes over me with a pang that they are growing more like white men,--less naive and less grotesque."[24]

In February of 1864, orders were again received to go into Florida. Higginson describes the uncertainty of the wait for the troops who were to relieve them at Camp Shaw, their arrival, the delay in waiting for transportation for his own troops, and finally, the eager loading of the boats--only to be countermanded because of alleged smallpox cases among the soldiers, which Higginson believed did not actually exist. The soldiers were very disappointed until they learned that they were to have taken part in the unfortunate Battle of Olustee.

The following day a boatload of dead and wounded arrived in camp to be taken care of. Of this occasion Higginson wrote:

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[24]"Florida Again," ibid., p. 317.

> But for a few trivial cases of varioloid, we should certainly have been in that disastrous fight. We were confidently expected for several days at Jacksonville, and the commanding general told Colonel Hallowell that we, being the eldest colored regiment, would have the right of line. This was certainly to miss danger and glory very closely.[25]

Higginson and his regiment remained on picket duty at Camp Shaw until his medical discharge in October, 1864. During this stay he had time to enjoy the natural beauty of the South, and two delightful essays, "Out on Picket" and "A Night in the Water" are rich in descriptions of his observations of peach-blossoms, yellow jasmine, fresh young ferns, white bloodroot, and snowdrops. The mockingbird, cardinal grosbeak, jay, sparrow and wren are all noticed. Because of his military position, Higginson regretted that he could not botanize as was his wont at home.

> Nature seemed but a mirage, and not the close and intimate associate I had known. I pressed no flowers, collected no insects or birds's eggs, made no notes on natural objects, reversing in respects all previous habits. Yet now, in retrospect, there seems to have been infused into me through every pore the voluptuous charm of the season and the place; and the slightest corresponding sound or odor now calls back the memory of those delicious days.[26]

One evening when he saw the "glimmering flames which at intervals starred the opposite river-shore"[27] he had an irresistible urge to cross the river at dusk and see "whether it were men or ghosts who hovered round these dying embers." That night he slipped into the water and swam across the river to spy into the enemy camp. He made a few observations "on points of minor local detail and arrangement."[28]

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[25] Ibid., p. 326.

[26] "Out on Picket," ibid., p. 198.

[27] "A Night in the Water," ibid., p. 209.

[28] Ibid., p. 218.

and swam back. The experience, performed with the greatest secrecy and caution, is skillfully told. No detail is omitted to prolong the sensation of danger and suspense. The essay closes artfully with, "It seemed strange that the morning had not yet dawned, after the uncounted periods that must have elapsed; but when /my/ wardrobe arrived I looked at my watch and found that my night in the water had lasted precisely one hour."[29]

The accounts given by Higginson of his forays up the sluggish Southern rivers and on picket duty amid the lush Southern vegetation, seem, indeed, like a "military picnic." Higginson's narrative of his part in the War, entirely negligible in the eyes of historians, relates the brighter side of a particularly unlovely era in American history. He never sounds the depths of the human tragedy taking place around him. Unlike Whitman and Crane, he sees no pathos in the wounded or the dying. The greater misfortunes of the War impinge themselves from the outside into the little world of Higginson's First South Carolina regiment; they seldom enter into it. But one cannot help but be struck by Higginson's optimistic approach to problems, of the directness and the common-sense of the decisions made by this minister-littérateur suddenly turned soldier. He faced the problems of managing unwieldy and insufficient equipment, and of coping with the general inefficiency of army heads in understanding military situations. However these realities darkened his days as an officer, Higginson glosses over them in his boundless enthusiasm and love of action, in his joy over his discovery of the achievements of the Negro, and in his delight in the beauty of

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[29] Ibid., p. 227.

South. His Army Life in a Black Regiment, therefore, unfolds as a highly readable account of one man's black regiment which proved itself.

Howells said of the tone of this book:

> A man who took command of the first negro regiment formed during the war, who led it throughout the struggle, and who, having fought the Rebels, turned and fought the more disgraceful government for the pay of its true and faithful soldiers, might be expected to write in a spirit of extravagance and even exaggeration; but there is nothing of this kind in Colonel Higginson's record, and nothing is more taking in him than his perfect temperance and reserve.[30]

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[30]Howells, op. cit., p. 643.

B. Writings Related to the War

Fourteen years after the Civil War Higginson returned to Jacksonville, Florida, which he had left in flames. One of his purposes was to examine the conditions of the freed slaves. Their living quarters he found had improved considerably--they had tables and beds in their homes. Most of them were wearing shoes and stockings. Some owned several acres of land, raised their own crops and worked in nearby mills, or in the newly discovered phosphate quarries, or in factories.

The racial problem Higginson looked at optimistically. The attitude of the white man toward the Negro he believed had changed considerably. "I am satisfied that it results from the changed feeling created towards a race of freedmen and voters."[1] He saw a relaxation in the laws of South Carolina which recently admitted colored lawyers to the bar.

Reconstruction was still going on, however, and the South was poverty stricken, which Higginson considered the mildest punishment ever inflicted upon a losing nation. It had changed the social status of the wealthy Southerner from one who easily borrowed on his crops or sold his slaves, to a "pay as you go" arrangement which was making energy and industry fashionable. He advocated a local self-government for each of the Southern states so that reconstruction could take place without federal interference.

Higginson's article, in which he allowed for much more improvement in the conditions of the freed slaves, is characteristically optimistic. He saw progress on all fronts, educational, social, and

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[1]"Fourteen Years After," Army Life in a Black Regiment, p. 376.

political. Although he admitted that there were still political and social problems, he hoped they would eventually straighten themselves out. Abuses of the Negroes he felt could be righted at the polls so far as they had the strength or skill to assert their rights. He knew that the antagonism incited by the Ku Klux Klan and the spoliation of the Negro vote added fuel to the existing prejudice of Southern whites. He advised Negroes in states where they were terrorized from voting to leave these states for others which would treat them better. Of racial prejudice he said:

> It is not in nature that the jealousy of race should die out in this generation, but I trust they will not see the fulfilment of Corporal Simon Crum's prediction. Simon was one of the shrewdest old fellows in the regiment, and he said to me once, as he was jogging out of Beaufort behind me, on the Shell Road, 'I'se goin' to leave de Souf, Cunnel, when de war is over. I'se made up my mind that dese yer Secesh will neber be cibilized in my time.'[2]

Higginson could offer no solutions to the immense problems facing the South, except to recommend confidence in the Republican Party. Although the South has been afflicted since the Civil War with racial prejudice, much progress has been made to somewhat confirm Higginson's hopes, but in the perspective of almost a hundred years, it must be admitted that Corporal Crum's remark is still partially valid.

After Higginson returned from the War in 1864, he settled in Newport, Rhode Island, where his wife had moved for her health. Here he took up civilian life again as a writer and a lecturer. Here he met many of the eminent literary figures of the day who stayed at

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[2]"Conclusion," ibid., p. 357.

Newport during the summer months. The whole "Atlantic force" were reported in the current newspapers to be permanent residents of the place. Here Higginson and Julia Ward Howe began their "Town and Country Club" which drew many celebrities to their light-hearted social and literary gatherings.

It was during this time that Higginson began a translation of Epictetus, "to keep my interest in slavery," he wrote to his old army surgeon.[3] He intended his two-volume work to supersede Elizabeth Carter's version which he followed closely. He claimed as his reason for the new translation "the advantage of writing more than a century later, and hence with more side-lights and a more modern style."[4] Van Wyck Brooks, in his discussion of Longfellow's translation of Dante suggests that this inclination toward translation of major classics on the part of writers indicates the close of a literary epoch.[5] This was true of the post-war era in America which brought with it the gradual close of the romantic epoch. Higginson's translation of Epictetus was only one of several such tasks going on at this time. Others were Bryant's Homer, Cranch's Virgil, George Herbert Palmer's Odyssey, and Bayard Taylor's Faust. Higginson, of course, did not think of his translation in this light. He found it simply as an easy transition from camp life to civilian life. And in translating the noble writings of Epictetus, he could "think with satisfaction that he was himself a slave, and was the favorite author of Toussaint L'ouverture, the black military leader."[6]

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[3] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 263.

[4] Epictetus (Boston, 1865), I, vi.

[5] Brooks, op. cit., p. 27.

[6] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 270.

During the same year he edited two volumes of memorial tributes of Harvard graduates who had died in the war. Of the ninety-five memorials gathered in the two volumes, eleven were written by Higginson. Among these, two were about his relatives, Stephen G. Perkins and Samuel Storrow. One was of the younger brother of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, Arthur Fuller, acting chaplain of the Sixteenth Massachusetts Infantry, who died at Fredericksburg.

The emphasis in each memoir is on the personal character of the subject, rather than on the events of the war or the battle in which they died. From these personal sketches Higginson said that two things could be inferred. The first is "that there is no class of men in this republic from whom the response of patriotism comes more promptly and surely than from its most highly educated class."[7] The general idea that cultivated Americans lacked patriotism and energy is false. The lives of the Harvard graduates represent that class which would elsewhere form an aristocracy. Yet it was this class of men, Higginson asserts, who threw themselves promptly and heartily into the war, guided by solid conviction and absolute law of conscience. The second inference is that college education in America must be healthy and sound when it sends forth a group of young men who were so eager to serve their country and preserve its institutions.

The sketches are short and well-written, but of concern today only to those who have an antiquarian interest in Harvard or in the family names which these memorials represent.

In 1892, Higginson prepared with Mrs. Florence W. Jaques, the "List of Battles and Casualties of Massachusetts Regiments during the

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[7]Harvard Memorial Biographies (Cambridge, 1864), I, v.

War of the Rebellion," which was published in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, January, 1892.

In 1889 Higginson was appointed Massachusetts State Historian and worked on his methodical and ponderous Massachusetts in the Army and Navy during the War of 1861-1865 for five years. His interpretation of the campaigns and leading personalities, Higginson says, was based on the monumental work, War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. He tried to be objective. Speaking of his narrative in the preface, he said that he "was placed in a position not to flatter or apologize, not to produce a perfectly colorless tale, avoiding questions, but simply to tell the truth as he could best ascertain it, and thus anticipate, so far as he could, the dispassionate judgment of posterity."[8]

The succeeding chapters detail the various campaigns of Massachusetts troops and naval forces. These are followed by lengthy lists of army and navy officers, with the briefest of military records, their highest rank, the date of death, and whether they died directly in the line of battle, of wounds, or as prisoners. The volumes are a monument to Higginson's methodical mind and his organizational ability.

After his experiences in the war, Higginson felt qualified to offer a few suggestions in the event of a future disaster. He wrote a short article for the Atlantic Monthly in which he pointed up the general inefficiency of the officers of the Civil War who had had little or no preparation for their responsibilities. He suggested that military training be made compulsory in grade and high school

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[8]Massachusetts in the Army and Navy during the War of 1861-1865 (Boston, 1896), I, xiv.

for an hour a day or at least three days a week. The training would then keep on reserve a supply of future soldiery which would require very little basic training in the event of a war. The time and money saved in this training would be tremendous. The English and the Swiss had carried out this plan successfully, Higginson maintained, not only for the good of the country but also for the discipline and good order of their schools. He concluded his essay with four suggestions as to the form which this future militia should take.

> 1. There should be no exemption from personal service, except on the ground of age or physical infirmity. . . .
> 2. Whether the appointment of officers be elective or gubernatorial, they should equally undergo a strict examination.
> 3. The strictest military law should be enforced during the musters or encampments.
> 4. There should be a national Inspector-General of Militia appointed by the War Department, with Assistant-Inspectors-General for the different States,--all to be Regular-Army officers, if possible, thus securing uniformity of drill and discipline.[9]

Higginson commemorated the life of the outstanding military figure of the Civil War when he wrote a memorial sketch of Ulysses Simpson Grant, which he based on Grant's Memoirs rather than on his own personal acquaintance. Grant's presidential administration is entirely ignored in this study. Instead, Higginson considers him as a soldier and as a representative American. "As with Lincoln, so with Grant, the reader [of the Memoirs] hails with delight this exhibition of the resources of the Average American."[10]

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[9]"Our Future Militia System," Atlantic Monthly, XVI (September, 1865), pp. 377-378.

[10]"Grant," Contemporaries, p. 304.

Higginson thought the providential character of Grant's life unique, for Grant had had little inclination toward a military life and a poor record at West Point. His early record, Higginson says, was similar to that of the young Napoleon at the military school of St. Cyr, where he was reported as "very healthy." Grant did not even enjoy athletics which might have prepared him for his future command. Neither did he show any leadership in the Mexican war. This experience showed him, however, that his country was in the wrong and it gave him the habit of simple and discriminating justice to his opponent.

Higginson liked the quiet, unassuming manner with which Grant narrated his part in the Civil War, and the apparently imperturbable manner with which he had met critical situations. Mere imperturbability would be useless to a commander, however, as Higginson points out, unless he were gifted with a military instinct. This Grant exhibited under several trying circumstances.

The fact that Grant was the first great and conquering commander "developed by modern republican institutions"[11] impressed Higginson. Grant's description of his interview with General Lee, "in which was settled the permanent destiny of the American nation," is related more quietly, he says, than the ordinary reporter would describe the outcome of a college rowing-match.

> Such a description, read in connection with Lincoln's Gettysburg address, shows that simplicity stands first among all literary gifts; that the greater the occasion, the more apt men are to be simple; and suggests that no time or place has ever surpassed, in this respect, the examples left behind by these two modern American men.[12]

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[11] Ibid., p. 314.

[12] Ibid., p. 315.

This mark of simplicity, Higginson felt, belonged to Grant as a typical American. Along with it he possessed a generous amount of common sense which enabled him to make judicious decisions. And, always he had in mind the idea that he was dealing with his fellow countrymen, both as friends and as foes, "a habit of mind generated by a republic." This gave him a humane rather than mechanical outlook on the results of the war. An example of this, Higginson says, was Grant's recommendation that the defeated Confederate soldiers keep their horses to help them bring in their crops. This, Higginson believed, facilitated the whole process of reconstruction. It was a consideration which one might expect of a republican general. He kept in mind the instincts and habits of the people with whom he was dealing. In this respect he was like Lincoln. "Lincoln with sympathetic humor and Grant with strong sense kept always in mind the difference between a people's war and a mere contest of soldiers."[13]

The claims of Grant to permanent fame, Higginson believed could be based on four reasons:

> First in the fact that he commanded the largest civilized armies the world ever saw; secondly, that with these armies he saved the integrity of the American nation; thirdly, that he did all this by measures of his own initiating . . .; fourthly, that he did all this for duty, not glory, and in the spirit of a citizen, not the military spirit, persisting to the last that he was . . . more of a farmer than a soldier.[14]

The personal qualities which Higginson emphasizes in Grant's life are closely allied to those one finds in his social theory of American democracy. The fact that America could produce a man of the caliber

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[13] Ibid., p. 326.

[14] Ibid., p. 327.

of Grant or of Lincoln was, to Higginson, a rewarding thought. It is not necessary, Higginson maintains, for a republican government to keep great men on top all the time, because according to the democratic theory, public matters can be guided by the common sense of the community. But what we need to know is whether leaders will be forthcoming for specific duties when needed; "and in this the Civil War confirmed the popular faith, and indeed developed it almost into fatalism."[15]

Higginson's abolitionist activities closed with the emancipation proclamation and the Civil War. As this review of his efforts indicates, his life as an abolitionist was enriching, broadening, and maturing.

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[14] Ibid., p. 327.

[15] Ibid., p. 304.

CHAPTER IV

THE COLONEL AND THE LADIES

A. Woman Suffrage Activities

Thomas Wentworth Higginson's interest in the cause of women's rights can be dated as far back as 1837 when he was about fifteen years old. In an article[1] written almost sixty years later, he tells of the first awakening of his mind to the fact of the inequality of women. The incident recounted is the visit to his mother by a Mrs. Rufus King, a well-educated woman from Cincinnati, Ohio, who had come to Cambridge in 1857 to direct the college training of a younger brother, two sons, and a nephew.

> As she was making some criticism at our house upon the inequalities between the sexes, my mother exclaimed, in her ardent way, 'But only think, Mrs. King, what an education you have obtained.' 'Yes,' was the reply, 'but how did I obtain it?' Then followed a tale almost as pathetic as that told in Mrs. Somerville's autobiography, of her own early struggles for knowledge. I cannot now recall what she said, but it sank into my heart, at the age of fifteen or thereabouts, and if I have ever done one thing to secure to women better justice in any direction, the first impulse came from that fortunate question and answer.

It is not surprising therefore to learn that Higginson approved the woman suffrage movement from its earliest days and was one of its most zealous supporters. Along with his other work, Higginson assisted the women leaders who were spearheading the movement by accepting offices in the suffrage associations, by lecturing and by

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[1] "The Woman Who Most Influenced Me," Woman's Home Companion (October, 1895), p. 8. Also in Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 17.

writing for the cause. To appreciate the part played by him, it is necessary to examine briefly the background of the movement.[2]

The history of the "woman question" before the Civil War in the United States is the story of the growth of increasingly vigorous protests by women against their so-called subjection to men. Certain women in Europe had set the pace and their names were frequently on the lips of the agitators as examples of enterprise, intelligence, and bravery. Among them were Mary Wollstonecraft (and her Vindication of the Rights of Women, 1790), Harriet Martineau, George Sand, Frederika Bremer, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mary Somerville, and Florence Nightingale.

America, too, had produced a lengthy list of women "who did"--from early Colonial times to 1848, the date noteworthy for the "Declaration of Sentiments," the first formal woman suffrage protest. Frances Wright in the 1820's propagated radical ideas on theology, slavery and the social status of women and suffered the denunciation of the press and the pulpit. Mrs. Emma Willard worked for the higher education of women. Elizabeth Blackwell, as late as 1848, was the first woman to pass successfully a medical course.

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[2]Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage (eds.). History of Woman Suffrage, 6 volumes (New York, I, 1881; II, 1882; III, 1885; IV, 1902; V, VI, 1921). Volumes IV, V, VI were edited mainly by Ida Husted Harper. Ida Harper states in the introduction to Volume IV, "In not a library can the student who wishes to trace this movement to its beginnings obtain the necessary data except in these /first/ three volumes." (p. vii) It is for this reason that I have relied so heavily on this work for my information on Higginson's part in the pioneer days of the movement, for the first three volumes contain newspaper clippings, letters, speeches, and minute reports of the early conventions in which he was so active. Other sources I have consulted are Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, Woman Suffrage and Politics (New York, 1923) and Mary R. Beard, Woman As Force in History (Minneapolis, 1944), pp. 424-462.

In 1832, Lydia Maria Child published her History of Women which is considered the first American storehouse of information upon the question. In 1836, Ernestine L. Rose came to America from Poland to lecture upon the science of government, and to advocate enfranchisement of women. The Grimké sisters, Sarah and Angelina, came North from South Carolina, to join the abolitionists and the suffragettes. Margaret Fuller, in 1840, published an essay in the Dial entitled, "The Great Lawsuit, or Man vs. Woman: Woman vs. Man," in which she demanded equality for woman in education, industry, and politics. This, with her parlor conversations on art, science, religion, politics, philosophy, and social life, gave a new impulse to woman's education as a thinker.

The women most active in the suffrage reform, however, were Mrs. Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Antoinette L. Brown, and Lucy Stone. As pioneers, they met with much opposition, but they were also actively supported by several leaders of their day, among whom were the men and women most prominent in the anti-slavery movement. Although agitation over the rights of slaves grew to make slavery the burning issue of the day, before the Civil War public opinion was also mounting in regard to the civil rights of women. Discussions of property rights of women and of their place in society were carried on in the legislatures, in the press, and eventually in the homes. Women's work in other reform movements gave an indirect impetus to the suffrage cause, because they had first to establish their right to speak publicly and to serve on committees of anti-slavery or temperance societies. Opposition to these activities was so strong among abolitionists in the early days of the anti-slavery

movement, that it brought about a split in the American Anti-Slavery Association in May, 1840.

The World's Anti-Slavery Convention held in London in the same year barred several American women who had come as representatives and voters. Among these were Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton who were most eloquent in their indignation. After this experience, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Stanton resolved to hold a women's rights convention of their--a resolution which they acted upon eight years later. Lucretia Mott, with her sister Mrs. Martha C. Wright, Mrs. Stanton, and Mrs. Ann Clintock, prepared and held the historic Seneca Falls, New York, Convention in 1848. They set down their purposes in a "Declaration of Sentiments" modelled on the Declaration of Independence which ambitiously demanded equal rights in "the universities, in the trades and professions; the right to vote; to share in all political offices, honors, and emoluments; to complete equality in marriage, to personal freedom, property, wages, children; to make contracts; to sue, and to be sued; and to testify in courts of justice."[3] The Declaration was adopted and signed by one hundred men and women. A two-day meeting of the convention was so inadequate for the discussion of such an extensive subject that another meeting was held in Rochester, New York, two weeks later.

Almost coincident with these meetings, local suffrage societies sprang up in all parts of the country, not so much because of the Seneca Falls and Rochester Conventions as for the "ripeness of the

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[3] History of Woman Suffrage, I, p. 73.

time, and [with] no other connection with the original movers than the announcements of the press."[4] The movement rapidly solidified into an organization of its own. In October, 1850, the first National Woman's Rights Convention was held in Worcester, Massachusetts. Higginson was among the eighty-nine "leading men and women of six States"[5] who signed the Call, thereby adding his name to the roster of abolitionist leaders who lent their support to this cause.

As in the anti-slavery reform, Higginson's contribution to the woman suffrage movement was that of agitator. From 1850 until the end of his life in 1911 he was active as officer or lecturer of the many conventions,[6] and after the War, as co-editor of the suffrage organ, The Woman's Journal.

Besides his work on suffrage platforms, Higginson spoke before the Committee of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention in 1853, appealing for the ballot for women as a new measure to be added to the proposed revision of the State Consitution. After quoting portions of the preamble of the Massachusetts Constitution, Higginson emphasized the idea that women were individuals, a part of the people, and citizens as defined by the Preamble. He said:

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[4]Catt and Shuler, op. cit., p. 21.

[5]History of Woman Suffrage, I, p. 222.

[6]1854, Vice-President of the Fifth National Convention, Philadelphia; 1855, Speaker at the Convention at Saratoga Springs, New York; 1856, Vice-President of the Seventh National Woman Rights Convention; 1858-1859, Speaker at the Ninth and Tenth National Conventions, New York; 1859, Committee member to circulate a memorial to be sent to the State Legislature.

After the War, he was a frequent speaker at the American Woman Suffrage Association conventions and the New England Woman Suffrage Association. The History of Woman Suffrage contains the minutes of each of these conventions and records Higginson's activities.

> The people are not merely to have good laws, well administered; but they must have an equitable mode of making these laws. The reason of this is, that good laws are no permanent security, unless enacted by equitable methods. Your laws may be the best ever devised; yet still they are only given as a temporary favor, not held as a right, unless the whole people are concerned in their enactment.[7]

He further developed the clause in Section 9 of the Massachusetts Bill of Rights: "All inhabitants . . . having such qualifications as they shall establish by their form of government, have an equal right to elect officers." "They," Higginson pointed out, were the inhabitants of Massachusetts. Yet in view of the great number of men who had migrated to the West or were absent on long voyages, the majority of the inhabitants of Massachusetts were women.

> You disfranchise the majority then; the greater part of 'the inhabitants' have no share in establishing the form of government, or assigning the qualifications of voters. What worse can you say of any oligarchy?[8]

Higginson also wrote a caustic open letter to the members of the Constitutional Convention complimenting it on its selection of an "honorable body." He wrote in a satirical vein:

> And yet there are those to whom the daring thought has occurred, that to convoke such ability and learning, only to decide whether our Legislature shall be hereafter elected by towns or districts, is somewhat like the course of Columbus in assembling the dignitaries of his nation to decide whether an egg could be best poised upon the larger or the smaller end. A question which was necessarily settled, after all, by a compromise, as this will be.[9]

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[7] History of Woman Suffrage, I, p. 250.

[8] Ibid., p. 251.

[9] Quoted from The Una, June, 1853, in History of Woman Suffrage, I, p. 253.

He ended by pointing out that as Columbus's discovery of half the world was due to the statesmanship of Queen Isabella; "it is surely a noble hope, that the future Isabellas of this Nation may point the way for their oppressed sisters of Europe to a suffrage truly universal, and a political freedom bounded neither by station nor by sex."[10]

In spite of his speech and letter and the efforts of several leaders such as Lucy Stone, Wendell Phillips, and Theodore Parker, with whom he worked, the Committee of the Massachusetts Legislature stated in its report that "it is inexpedient to act on the petition" of several parties that women be permitted to vote.[11]

In an effort to put theory into practice, Higginson tried to encourage the election of women as officers on committees of other reform platforms. At the World's Temperance Convention in 1853, a business committee of one member from each state was appointed. When a motion was made that Susan B. Anthony, Secretary of the Woman's State Temperance Society, be appointed to this committee, immediate protest arose from all sides. Higginson, indignant at the hostile attitude, asked to be excused from serving on the committee and moved that Lucy Stone be substituted, a suggestion which caused more consternation. Angry at the confusion and noise which followed, Higginson invited all persons who wished to call a whole world's temperance convention to meet again that afternoon in another place. The attitude of the protesters caused comment in The Una, and Horace Greeley in the

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., I, p. 254.

New York Tribune trounced the offending parties.[12]

After the Civil War, the abolitionists merged with the suffragists to form the American Equal Rights Association to agitate for the ballot for both women and the freed slaves. This amalgamation created unlooked for but inevitable problems. The "Negro question" became more pressing than the women's rights issue and the abolitionists insisted that Negro enfranchisement come before that of woman suffrage. The new Republican government, faced with the reinstatement of the Southern states in the Union and the necessity of determining the legal status of the Negro, put pressure on the States for the ratification of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments. Most of the abolitionists, like Higginson, were Republicans and believed that the slavery question was not settled until the Negro was given citizenship and the ballot. The suffragettes such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton fought for "universal" suffrage, but the Boston abolitionist wing of the Equal Rights Association, represented by Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, Lucy Stone, Horace Greeley, George Curtis, Frederick Douglass, and Higginson, believed this to be the "Negro's Hour" and in 1869 they broke away to form the American Woman Suffrage Association. Higginson was instrumental in organizing this association, as his name appears on the original Call.[13] He was chosen president of the first American Woman Suffrage convention and was made committee member for the permanent organization of the conventions.[14] Susan B. Anthony and her New York group formed the National Woman Suffrage Association which soon

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[12]These articles are quoted from The Una and the New York Tribune (May 18, 1853) in History of Woman Suffrage, I, pp. 502-504.

[13]Other signers were Lucy Stone, Julia Ward Howe, Caroline Severance, and George A. Vibbert. History of Woman Suffrage, I, p. 222.

[14]Ibid., II, p. 760

tried to merge with the American Woman Suffrage Association but was refused admittance by a majority vote.

Higginson was also instrumental in founding the New England Suffrage Association in 1868, and was a member of the executive committee.[15] He urged Julia Ward Howe to be president of the organization which was germinal in its activities and assisted in originating the American and Massachusetts suffrage associations mentioned above, and other local and county suffrage societies. It also set up the Woman's Journal as a suffrage organ.[16]

Besides his work at the suffrage meetings, Higginson contributed to The Una, the first (though short-lived) woman suffrage paper in the United States. He also published, with Lucy Stone, the Woman's Rights Almanac for 1858 which contained carefully chosen quotations portraying in three "pictures" 1) the degraded position of women under Hindoo Law in 2000 B.C., 2) under Anglo-Saxon Law in 1848 A. D., and 3) the rapid progress made by women in society since the Seneca Falls Convention.

Higginson's speeches at the conventions urged women to throw off the yoke of subjection imposed upon them for centures and to assume the rights which belonged to them. His arguments at the meetings were the standard ones used by most of the suffragists. At the 1856 meeting held at the Broadway Tabernacle in New York, he told women that they needed to overcome three obstacles to their rights: 1) the obstacle of folly in which they were trained, falsely believing themselves to be admired if they had no great principles (like the Woman's Right movement) to appreciate; 2) the obstacle of fear created by those who

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[15] Ibid., II, p. 266.

[16] Ibid., II, p. 268.

would join forces with the suffragists if they were not subject to ridicule; 3) the obstacle of prejudice held by women who, as a consequence, deprived themselves of their legal and social rights.[17] Repeatedly, he appealed to the women themselves for support of the movement, for it was always a mystery to him why so many women did not want suffrage.

In 1870 at the Massachusetts Convention held in New York City, he tried to show that without suffrage, society in general was the loser.

> Until woman takes a place with man in the legislation of the world, and in the administration of justice, she will suffer, and man through her will suffer; also, it is not because woman is so far above man that we claim her rights in this matter. It is because she is the other half of man and society is imperfect, and will remain so until she takes her proper place in the labors of the world. If a pair of scissors be broken in two, and you have it riveted together, it is not because you concede angelic superiority to either half, but simply because it takes two halves to make a whole.[18]

In the same year, at the first annual meeting of the American Woman Suffrage Association held in Cleveland, Ohio, he spoke of the "great, golden opportunity" for the advancement of women. Suffrage, he said, was not the only object to be obtained. The purposes of the American Woman Suffrage Association were very much broader in scope. They were

> to equalize the sexes in all the relations of life; to reduce the inequalities that now exist in matters of education, in social life and in the professions--to make them equal in all respects, before the law, society, and the world. . . . Suffrage for woman gained, and all else will speedily follow.[19]

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[17] Ibid., I, pp. 659-661.

[18] Ibid., II, p. 773.

[19] Ibid., II, p. 803.

Suffrage, however, must come first, he believed, for, the woman of modern times "with every step she takes in higher education, finds it harder to retain . . . self-respect while she is in a republican government and yet not a member of it." She can study political economy, but she cannot put her knowledge to practical use by the simple process of dropping a piece of paper into a ballot-box. She is also in need of self-protection. Improvements had been made in laws regarding women, but only after a long hard fight which could have been dispensed with had a single woman been inside the State House, "armed with the position of member of the Legislature and representing a sex who had votes."[20]

The ideas implicit in Higginson's speeches were given permanent and expanded form in his essays on the woman suffrage problem which appeared in the Woman's Journal. These, together with his column on society in general, which appeared in Harper's Bazar for several years, give not only his suffrage views, but the underlying social theory which permeated and motivated his reform activities.

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[20] Ibid., IV, pp. 424-425.

B. Higginson's Social Theory

Thomas Wentworth Higginson's first publication for the Woman Suffrage cause was an essay inscribed to the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention entitled "Woman and Her Wishes." Written originally for The Una in 1853, the article was reprinted in pamphlet form in the United States and in London in 1854. The Woman's Rights Almanac, mentioned above, which Higginson had compiled with Mrs. Lucy Stone, appeared in 1858. Both of these works were cooperative efforts on Higginson's part to encourage and abet the work of the woman suffragists.

In 1859 he wrote a lively and mildly satiric essay, "Ought Women to Learn the Alphabet?" for the Atlantic Monthly[1] which set forth examples similar to those found in the Almanac illustrating woman's subjection to man throughout history. It reviewed men and women reformers from the time of the Signora Moderata Fonte, the Venetian whose little known work was published in 1592, to Mrs. H. Mather Crocker who had published "Rights of Women" in 1848; it referred to Cornelius Agrippa of 1509 fame and the contemporary Agissiz and his "Mens Feminae Viri Animo Superior." The entire problem of woman's place in society revolved about the question, "Ought women to learn the alphabet?" which Higginson wove in and out of his discussion of woman's struggle for equality as well as his proposal for her enfranchisement. With a foresight felt only by the pioneers of the suffrage movement Higginson wrote:

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[1]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Atlantic Monthly, III (February, 1859), pp. 582-595. Also published as a tract in Boston, 1870, and in Manchester, England, 1873, and as Woman Suffrage Tract, No. 4, Boston, 1871. Republished in Woman and the Alphabet, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, IV, pp. 1-52.

> Everybody sees that the times are altering the whole material position of woman; but most people do not appear to see the inevitable social and moral changes which are also involved. . . .
>
> But in view of the rapid changes now going on, he is a rash man who asserts the 'Woman Question' to be anything but a mere question of time. The fulcrum has been already given in the alphabet, and we must simply watch, and see whether the earth does not move.
>
> There is the plain fact: woman must be either a subject or an equal; there is no middle ground. Every concession to the supposed principle only involves the necessity of the next concession for which that principle calls. Once yield the alphabet, and we abandon the whole long theory of subjection and coverture.[2]

In substance, "Woman and the Alphabet" contains the principal points regarding the advancement of women which Higginson developed over a period of many years in his numerous essays on this topic. The largest body of these essays were published in the Woman's Journal for which he contributed monthly for almost ten years.

The Woman's Journal was one of the many projects of the New England Woman Suffrage Association. With an eye for efficiency, the Association had purchased the Agitator in 1867, a publication in Chicago conducted by the enterprising Mary A. Livermore "on condition that she should come to Boston for one year, at a reasonable compensation, to assist by her editorial labor and speaking at conventions."[3] After three years, the magazine was conducted by Lucy Stone and her husband, Henry B. Blackwell, and for more than twenty years identified itself with the principles of the American Suffrage Association in its effort to secure favorable action in the states.

The Woman's Journal was not a fly-by-night enterprise as had been Susan B. Anthony's Revolution. Instead, it was, as Katherine Anthony points out,

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[2] Woman and the Alphabet, pp. 27, 32.

[3] History of Woman Suffrage, III, p. 274.

> a real business concern conducted in the best Boston tradition--a tradition of trusteeships, annuity systems, family trusts, and sound funding. . . . The Journal was locally well insured against failure. Organized by financial experts, the paper had every prospect to survive not only its trial years but many long years afterward. Besides its financial backing, a considerable body of advanced women, such as, for instance, the newly organized Sorosis in New York, were only waiting to support any nice woman's paper that might come along.[4]

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton complained in 1873 that the Woman's Journal was not belligerent enough,[5] but as Frank Luther Mott observed, "Among those who were less extreme the Woman's Journal won many friends."[6] The truth of these observations is borne out in the essays of Thomas Wentworth Higginson during his ten years as contributor to the journal.

Higginson began writing for the Woman's Journal in 1870, when its editorship was assumed by Lucy Stone. He later collected and reprinted one-hundred-five of his articles in book form.[7] In 1900, for the definitive edition of his works, he deleted twenty-two of the essays and inserted "Ought Women to Learn the Alphabet?" described above. This volume of his definitive edition (Volume II) was entitled Women and the Alphabet, and (except for the omission and insertion mentioned) is a reprint of Common Sense About Women.

Higginson's essays have a certain graceful forcefulness touched with good-humored persuasion and clear logic. His style was that of the

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[4]Susan B. Anthony: Her Personal History and Her Era (New York, 1954), pp. 241-242. In 1917 the name of the journal was changed to Woman Citizen, but later the older name was resumed until it ceased publication in 1931 with the record of being the longest-lived suffrage paper in America.

[5]Woman's Journal, IV (March 15, 1873), p. 85.

[6]A History of American Magazines: 1865-1885 (Cambridge, 1938), p. 94.

[7]Common Sense About Women (Boston, 1882).

platform speaker, a method he advised prospective women lecturers to use, "As to your employment of language, the great aim is to be simple, and in a measure, conversational. . . . For each point you make, provide at least one good argument and one good illustration."[8] This pattern he followed consistently for his feminine reading public. His essays furnished food for thought not only on the topic of woman suffrage, but also on the general status of the women of the 1870's whose improvement he sought by trying to awaken them to their own needs. Upon looking through the essays today and comparing their contents with the speeches of other suffragists, one finds that the articles are only capsule-size reproductions of the stock arguments for the woman suffrage campaign, made palatable by their pleasing style and simple, clear exposition. "Yet," Hellman writes, "so varied was Higginson's culture, so easy flowing his style, so wide the fund of quotations on which he loved to draw, and so pleasant his wit, that his essays, even when propagandist, are literature."[9]

However, behind the façade of Higginson's pleasantries, small parable-like examples, and gentility, lies his serious social theory, a theory which places him in the camp of those who looked to America with wide vision and saw the infinite possibilities of this vast country. As a product of his times, Higginson shared the unbounded optimism of the reformers with whom he associated, an optimism which he retained throughout his life, and which the experience and wisdom of almost eighty-nine years did not materially change.

It is the purpose of this chapter to trace Higginson's social theory through the large body of essays he devoted to the "Woman Question."

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[8]"How to Speak in Public," ibid., pp. 270-271.

[9]George S. Hellman, "Later Essayists," Cambridge History of American Literature (New York, 1931), III, Part II, p. 119.

Higginson considered woman suffrage an important factor in the formation of America into a free republic. "The best preparation for freedom," he wrote, "is freedom,"[10] and that freedom lay in granting the vote to women. For, "it seems obvious that the experiment of a republican government will be more fairly tried when one-half the race is no longer disfranchised."[11]

He criticized his country's attitude toward woman suffrage, saying that its thinking was in terms of the Old World.

> In all European monarchies it is the theory that the mass of the people are children to be governed, not mature beings to govern themselves; this is clearly stated and consistently applied. In the United States we have formally abandoned this theory for one half of the human race, while for the other half it flourishes with little change. What Americans commonly criticise in English statesmen, namely that they habitually evade all arguments based on natural right; and defend every legal wrong on the ground that it works well in practice, is the precise defect of our habitual view of women.[12]

With characteristic optimism, Higginson believed that the abuses inherent in America's government and way of life would eventually be corrected, if one had patience and time enough to await the outcome. He wrote:

> For, in the first place, our institutions rest--if they have any basis at all--on this principle, that good is stronger than evil, that the majority of men really wish to vote rightly, and that only time and patience are needed to get the worst abuses righted. How can anyone doubt this, who watches the course of our politics, I do not see.[13]

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[10]"The European Plan," Common Sense About Women, p. 184.

[11]"Too Much Prediction," ibid., p. 319.

[12]"Ought Women to Learn the Alphabet?" Women and the Alphabet, p. 34.

[13]"Dangerous Voters," Common Sense About Women, p. 386.

And again, "The basis of all representative government is in the assumption that good is ultimately stronger than evil. If we once abandon this, our theory has gone to pieces."[14]

To effect the good of the country, however, each citizen, he believed, should have the right to express himself by ballot, no matter what his social position, wealth, race, or sex. Only in this way could abuses be corrected. For "legislation is mainly for the protection of the weak against the strong, and for this reason the weak must be directly represented."[15]

The Revolutionary War cry, "Taxation without representation is tyranny," became a slogan which was considered as true of women in the 1870's as it was of the rebels of the 1770's. On this point Higginson said, "The act of taxing those who are not represented deprives them of their most essential rights as freemen. Virtual representation is altogether a subtlety and illusion, wholly unfounded and absurd."[16] In the same vein he wrote: "It is not in the nature of things, I take it, that a class politically subject can obtain justice from the governing class."[17]

Axioms from the Declaration of Independence were also strong supports for woman suffrage. Concerning them Higginson noted, "Granted that those who framed these provisions may not have understood the full extent of the principles they announced. No matter: they gave us

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[14]"How Will It Result?" ibid., p. 350.

[15]"The Votes of Non-Combatants," ibid., p. 369.

[16]"Some Old-Fashioned Principles," ibid., p. 287.

[17]"How Women Will Legislate," ibid., p. 389.

these principles, and, having them, we must apply them."[18] The very words, "We the people," echoed in many state constitutions and expressed again in Lincoln's "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people," had to be clarified. That it applied to women was a fundmental, almost trite, idea, but one which Higginson and other suffragists believed important enough to emphasize. That Higginson discussed the phrase in relation to women suffrage, though typical of the reasoning of suffragists, illustrates further his concept of American society.

His love for the principles of Jeffersonian democracy is further borne out in his open admiration of Lincoln's eloquent letter to the Boston Republicans, April, 1859. Lincoln had written:

> The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded with no small show of success. . . .
>
> All honor to Jefferson!--the man, who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there that to-day and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling to the harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression.[19]

In his defense of these principles, Higginson clashed with the Federalists of his day and openly criticized Francis Parkman with whom it is interesting to contrast him.

Higginson was asked to be one of five members of a symposium to answer Francis Parkman's article, "The Woman Question," which had appeared in the North American Review, October, 1879. The other members were Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Julia Ward Howe, Lucy Stone, and Wendell

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[18] "We the People," ibid., p. 276.

[19] Quoted by Higginson in "Founded on a Rock," ibid., p. 289.

Phillips.

Parkman exemplified the old Brahmin stock of New England who shared the Federalist dislike for the growth of equalitarian government and humanitarian faith in the natural goodness of the masses. In this dislike he was one with Longfellow, Cooper, Holmes, Motley, Prescott, and Lowell in his later years. As Schramm puts it, "Parkman himself might have joined Poe in his statement that 'democracy is the best government in the world--for dogs!'"[20] He stated his political opinion most clearly in a letter to the Abbe Casgrain, who had reviewed The Old Regime and had taken exception to many of its statements. Parkman wrote:

> My political faith lies between two vicious extremes, democracy and absolute authority, each of which I detest the more because it tends to react into the other. I do not object to a good Constitutional monarchy, but prefer a conservative republic, where intelligence and character, and not numbers, hold the reins of power. . . . I have always declared openly my detestation of the unchecked rule of the masses.[21]

It was, no doubt, this detestation of the masses that led him to speak out against woman suffrage which he felt would simply multiply the ignorance already existing. "Women throughout history have not had political experience. If they were suddenly granted the right to vote they would bring to the task the ignorance which makes them totally unprepared."[22]

In his arguments, Parkman repeated the eighteenth century belief in woman's mental and physical inferiority. "The physical make-up of

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[20]Wilbur L. Schramm, Francis Parkman (New York, 1938), p. xviii.

[21]Letter of May 9, 1875, quoted by Schramm, ibid., p. lxi.

[22]"The Woman Question," North American Review, CCLXXV (October, 1879), p. 317.

man and woman refutes the idea of suffrage; man is by nature combative; woman non-combative."[23] Man's mind is governed by reason; woman's by emotion. He charged Wendell Phillips with saying that rights and employments of women should be treated without regard to sex. The suffragists, he wrote, ignore the fundamental quality in the power of men and women which is founded, not on resemblances, but on differences of nature and function. This difference, he feared, would manifest itself in the future Delilahs who had already spread their snares for the Congressional Samsons. Parkman was certain of a harvest of sensational scandals occurring when "woman is fairly inside politics." For he felt that the worst men had been drawn into politics. Those most fit for it having least care to accept it. Since politics were repulsive to the best of men, he concluded they would be more so for the best of women. Women, furthermore, especially those in large cities, would easily fall prey to their own predilictions, "and they would support their favorites. They were too impressionable, too easy for demagogues and politicians."[24]

The remainder of his arguments were deftly summarized and refuted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton:

1. Women do not want to vote; the best would not, the worst would.
2. Women would debase politics rather than elevate it.
3. Woman suffrage would destroy the unity of the family.
4. If women vote, they must do military duty.
5. Woman suffrage would strengthen the Roman Catholic Church.
6. Woman suffrage based on taxation is opposed to the genius of our Government.
7. Suffrage is not a natural right.[25]

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[23] Ibid., p. 304.

[24] Ibid., p. 316.

[25] "The Other Side of the Woman Question," North American Review, CCLXXV (November, 1879), p. 879.

Mrs. Stanton rejected the first three arguments by pointing out that women were already voting in some parts of the country and that none of Parkman's objections held true. She denied that active military duty was a requisite for voting--a point which Higginson also developed and buttressed with statistics of men who were disqualified from the armed services but whom no one considered thereby disqualified from voting. In regard to the fifth point, Mrs. Stanton thought that voting women would weaken rather than strengthen the authority of the Catholic Church. On the idea of suffrage based on taxation as being opposed to the genius of the American government, she simply asked, "What about taxation without representation?" Suffrage, she claimed, is a natural right. "To have self-government, defend one's person and property, secure life, liberty, and happiness, not a natural right?"[26]

Lucy Stone's arguments were based on the quotation which had become, perhaps, an irrefutable cliché of the suffragists: "Governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." She pointed out the advantages already granted women during the past half century due to the agitation of suffragettes. She believed, however, that the common-law as proposed by William Blackstone's Commentaries, had become fixed in the tradition, usage, and habit of the country, and that, together with the dread of change, they were responsible for the opposition to woman suffrage.[27]

Julia Ward Howe's article, among other things, refuted Parkman's distrust of the multitudes. She wrote:

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[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., pp. 426-427.

> The danger of trusting mankind at large with the care of their own interests appears, and is, very great. The wise among the men as among women, are few. Culture, which quadruples the mental power of either sex, is not possessed by the majority in the known world. Ignorance may be deluded and misled, may even be bought and sold. Volumes of arguments are written and spoken in this sense. And yet, representative government in time always makes good its position and right to exist. One reason of this is that it not only founds itself upon popular education, but is in itself an education. Under its dominion, men are educated to their duties by the exercise of their rights. The greatest truths, moreover, in politics as in religion, are often hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to the simple multitude. It seen appears that the dangers foreseen in the enlargement of representation are dangers to the exceptional privileges of a class, not to the community.[28]

This paragraph could easily have come from Higginson's pen for it expressed the main principle of his social theory, that the masses could be trusted to guide themselves. In the concluding paragraph of Higginson's article he said:

> It was said of the American Federalists that they had too much of the wisdom of experience and too little of the wisdom of hope. It is too common, I think for our educated men to share this distrustful solicitude; and we may well turn from it to the more manly hopefulness of Frederick Douglass, born and bred a slave. 'I am willing,' he said, 'to trust all the virtue of the community to take care of all the vice of the community; and its knowledge to take care of all its ignorance. Therefore I am in favor of universal suffrage, and therefore I am in favor of extending that suffrage to women.'[29]

Higginson's essay made an appeal to the common sense of the reader. It must be recognized, he wrote, that times have changed. What was reasonable and just in the days of Scott's Ivanhoe cannot stand today. With Boswell's Johnson we must admit that "As manners make laws, manners likewise repeal them." The position of woman in America warrants a consideration of her legal and political equality with man. "The

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[28] Ibid., pp. 413-414.

[29] Ibid., p. 425.

strength of the woman suffrage movement in the United States of America lies in this, that every axiom, every position, claimed originally as applicable to American men, proves on reflection to be applicable to women also."[30] The political philosophy behind this idea lies in the principle upon which all American institutions rest. He asserted:

> It is that of the right of every adult person, not laboring under special natural disqualifications, to take part in the government of the country. How valuable or influential a part the individual will take may depend on a thousand things--education, wealth, energy, industry, worth; but no constitution can discriminate as to these things, and the effort to create inequality of rights on account of them has, when attempted on any considerable scale, always led to practical injustice. Nor has this injustice ever been more obvious than in the cruel laws in respect to women, now being gradually swept from the statute-books of our American States, but never seriously modified until, within less than fifty years, women themselves took up the discussion.[31]

Higginson also criticized Parkman in his articles for the Woman's Journal. He referred to Parkman's statement in which it was proposed that the real issue of the controversy was that the object of government was the good of the governed.[32] On this point both suffragists and anti-suffragists were in agreement, Higginson admitted. But the crux of the matter, Higginson believed, lay in the approach to this theory. Using De Tocqueville's Democracy in America as a guide, Higginson pointed out:

> A monarchy organizes better, does its work better, cleans its streets better. Nevertheless De Tocqueville, a monarchist, sees this advantage in a republic, that when all this is done by the people for themselves, although the work done may be less perfect, yet the people

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[30] Ibid., p. 421.

[31] Ibid.

[32] "The Good of the Governed," Common Sense About Women, p. 292.

> themselves are more enlightened, better satisfied, and, in the end, their good is better served. . . . 'The end of good government /De Tocqueville had written/ is to insure the welfare of a people, and not to establish order and regularity in the midst of its misery and distress.'[33]

The two paragraphs in which Higginson insisted on the value of democracy--in this case, for the advantage of women--are worth quoting in full.

> One class of thinkers, of whom Froude is the most conpicuous, holds that the 'good of the people' means good laws and good administration, and that, if these are only provided, it makes no sort of difference whether they themselves make the laws, or whether some Caesar, or Louis Napoleon provides them. All the traditions of the early and later Federalists point this way. But it has seemed to me a theory of government essentially incompatible with American institutions. If we could once get our people saturated with it, they would soon be at the mercy of some Louis Napoleon of their own.
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> When President Lincoln claimed, following Theodore Parker, that ours was not merely a government for the people, but of the people and by the people as well, he recognized the other side of the matter,--that it is not only important what laws we have, but who makes the laws; and that 'the end of the good government is to insure the welfare of the people,' in this far wider sense. That advantage which the French writer admits in democracy, that it develops force, energy, and self-respect, is as essentially a part of 'the good of the governed,' as is any perfection in the details of government. And it is precisely these advantages which we expect that women, sooner or later, are to share. For them, as for men, 'the good of the governed' is not genuine unless it is that kind of good which belongs to the self-governed.[34]

Furthermore, Higginson believed that government would have more internal peace where its people have the right to vote. "Enfranchised 'masses' which have a legitimate outlet for their political opinions, are far less dangerous than disfranchised masses, which must rely on mobs and strikes.'[35] And elsewhere he wrote: "Just in proportion

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[33] Ibid., p. 293. Quoted from Reeve's translation, I (London, 1838), p. 97.

[34] Ibid., pp. 294-295.

[35] "Drawing the Line," ibid., p. 307.

as the masses are enfranchised, statutes execute themselves without crossing bayonets."[36]

His trust in the masses (and in women as an integral part of them) was based on his concept of history. The world, Higginson believed, was in a constant state of evolutionary progress. In former times, the "Rob Roy" theory was necessary for preservation of both life and law.

> The good old rule
> Sufficeth him, the simple plan
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can.[37]

Modern times had progressed to such an extent that "the basis of civilized society is not physical force, but, on the contrary, brains."[38] Power is no longer in brute strength but in intellect.

> In our country, without class distinctions, the same truth can be easily shown. Physical power lies mainly in the hands of the masses; wherever a class or profession possesses more than its numerical share of power, it has usually less than its proportion of physical vigor. . . . The truth is that as civilization advances the world is governed more and more unequivocally by brains; and whether those brains are deposited in a strong body or a weak one becomes a matter of less and less importance.[39]

Exclusion of woman from the ballot, Higginson maintained, was in line with the "Rob Roy" tradition. Women, according to this theory were inferior because physically weaker. The "Rob Roy" idea, although abandoned in theory, was still being practiced as far as women were concerned.

> I do not see how any one can read history without seeing, all around us, in society, education, politics,

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[36] "The Votes of Non-Combatants," ibid., p. 369.

[37] "The Rob Roy Theory," ibid., p. 363.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., p. 366.

> the tradition of inferiority. Many laws and usages which in themselves might not strike all women as intrinsically worth striving for--as the exclusion of women from colleges or from the ballot-box--assume great importance to a woman's self-respect, when she sees in these the plain survival of the same contempt that once took much grosser forms.[40]

Enfranchisement of women, therefore, would be a forward step in the progress of society and would provide women with two necessary qualities of citizenship: self-respect and self-protection. The progress made thus far by women was encouraging for future development. "When we see the chrysalis open, and the butterfly come half out of it, we know that sooner or later it must spread wings, and fly. . . . Woman is the butterfly. Sooner or later she will be wholly out."[41]

A certain prediction of woman's use of the ballot was that she would surely use the right to protect herself. Even though woman would probably vote as men do on important issues, like slavery and temperance, she needed her own vote on all that concerned her own interests.

> Would a woman vote to sustain a law by which a Massachusetts chief justice bade the police take those crying children from their mother's side in the Boston court-room a few years ago, and hand them over to a comparative stranger, because that mother had married again? You might as well ask whether the colored vote would sustain the Dred Scott decision.[42]

In a later essay Higginson admitted that this extreme case had led to an alteration of the law of Massachusetts, but he added warningly, "The same thing might yet happen in some states of the

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[40] "Inferior to Man, and Near to Angels," ibid., p. 341.

[41] "Woman in the Chrysalis," ibid., p. 105.

[42] "For Self-Protection," ibid., p. 311.

Union. The possibility of a single such occurrence shows that there is still a fundamental wrong in the legal position of women."[43]

Higginson's defense of women in his many articles on woman suffrage exhibits a respect for the masses only because the masses were made up of individuals. "A republic like ours does not profess to deal with classes, but with individuals; since 'the whole people covenants with each citizen, and each citizen with the whole people, for the common good.'"[44] And again, "The individual ranks first in our sympathy: we do not wait to take the census of the 'class.'"[45] With an Emersonian touch, he also wrote:

> If there is only one woman in the nation who claims the right to vote, she ought to have it. . . . Emancipation swept this all away /laws for certain classes/, in most cases: classes ceased to exist before the law, as far as men at least were concerned; there were only individuals. The more progress, the less class in legislation. We claim the application of this principle as rapidly as possible in women.[46]

Higginson retained a respect for the masses throughout his life, but his zeal for the woman suffrage movement seems to have diminished a little by the end of the 1880's.

In 1887, Higginson wrote an essay for Forum which displays a conservatism unusual for him. In it he presented a few possible "unsolved problems" which he expected to arise with woman suffrage. Against such speculation he had warned his readers in the Woman's Journal, and in the case of this article, one wishes he had followed

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[43]"I Have All the Rights I Want," ibid., p. 354.

[44]"Individuals vs. Classes," ibid., p. 398.

[45]Ibid., p. 399.

[46]Ibid., p. 397.

his own advice. In regard to women as voters he said:

> It is also to be remembered that the controlling constituency thus created is not merely new, untried, and politically undisciplined, but is separated by impassable gulfs of temperament and experience from that which it replaces. It is farther to be observed that it will be in the curious and hitherto unexampled position of governing by moral power only; since the new constituency can only make the laws, and must enforce them by the secular arm of the old constituency. All this forms . . . no valid objection to the adoption of Woman Suffrage, the general arguments in favor of which he does not here propose to discuss. But it certainly furnishes good reason for more careful weighing of probable results than has been usual on either side.[47]

To the question "How large a number of women yet wish to vote?" Higginson believed that since the question of voting is not a natural right in the same sense that liberty is, and since enfranchisement had to be limited in some way by a voting age, or financial basis, or educational qualification, in order to secure a sound government, women should be consulted in the matter and "enfranchisement should not very greatly precede their probable wish, or at least willingness." This view was directly opposite that advocated in some of his Woman's Journal papers, and indicates a more cautious and discreet approach. In the earlier essays he favored immediate enfranchisement of all women without consideration of restricting qualifications, even if the privilege were desired by a few.

Another unsolved problem over which Higginson pondered and which, in a way, lined him up with his adversary Parkman and other anti-suffragists was: How many women will be likely to vote? And among these voters, how many will be from among the ignorant or the vicious? Furthermore, how great will be the danger of the increased presence of

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[47]"Unsolved Problems in Woman Suffrage," Forum, II (January, 1887), p. 440.

ignorant voters? In the Woman's Journal essays he had almost scoffed at these questions. He had admitted that women were as fallible as men, but that, as a group, they would not be any more vicious than men. In this article, however, Higginson did swing back to his usual optimism when he wrote:

> I think it is best that we should freely concede that if anarchy and socialism are looming up as serious prospective dangers, as exhibited among men--which I, for one, do not think--they are no less serious as seen among women. Believing as I do, that these terrors are very superficial, and that, in the fine words of Frederick Douglass, 'We can trust all the knowledge of the community to take care of all its vice,' I have no fears as to the result. It is very likely that we may have, on the way, some of the same obstacles from ignorant and unscrupulous voting on the part of women that we now experience on the part of men. It is the price we pay for self-government.[48]

Even though Higginson reverted to his usual faith in the masses, it is symptomatic of his later conservatism that he should have brought up the problem at all.

Another point regarding woman suffrage which he felt would work itself out was the fact that women voters would be likely to be more influenced by persons than by measures. This, he believed, would lead to the reform urged by Gamaliel Bradford, "that more power should be put into the hands of mayors and governors, in order that they may be distinct and responsible figures before the people, instead of distributing it among a multitude of minor officials, hardly known even by name to those who vote for them."[49]

The most important problem, he thought, related to the moral effect of suffrage upon the community. Here again his fear was similar to

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[48] Ibid., p. 445.

[49] Ibid., p. 446.

Parkman's worry over the snares of political Delilahs and Congressional Samsons.

> Who that remembers the Woodhall and Claflin period of our social history, or the Beecher-Tilton controversy, can look without some anxiety to the utterly unrestricted mingling of men and women, in periods of great excitement, and under the strongest inducements to use whatever means of influence may prove most potent in dealing with one another? Grant, for the sake of argument, that the persons immediately concerned in public life, under the new order, are likely to be utterly above all personal danger in this close intercourse, what is to guard them against the evil of suspicion? There will be no point so vulnerable, no mode of attack so promising, as those growing out of the question of personal chastity, in these untried relations. To all the present opportunities for scandal there will be added a new one; and this, in the hands of an unscrupulous antagonist, will be worth all the rest put together. Woman Suffrage, it may be urged, may improve the wisdom and justice of legislation, especially as regards women themselves, but it will hardly promote, at first, the purity and decency of political campaigns.[50]

Higginson's solution to this peculiar problem is rather absurd, and, happily, has not been adopted. He believed the Quakers had the answer in their policy of having separate bodies of men and women whose joint action must be secured for all measures. "Such twin legislatures might well enough replace the cumbrous Senate and House of Representatives of our State governments."[51]

On the whole, this article, while advocating woman suffrage, proposes prudential measures which indicated the growing conservatism of Higginson's later years. After this article he published two leaflets on the woman suffrage topic: "For Self-Respect and Self-Protection," a speech given at the annual meeting of the American Woman Suffrage Association in Philadelphia, November 1, 1887,

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[50] Ibid., p. 447.

[51] Ibid., p. 448.

and "Straight Lines or Oblique Lines," Woman Suffrage Leaflet, November, 1892. He also continued writing for and about women, besides keeping up a voluminous output of history, biography, and literary criticism.

In many of Higginson's essays for the Woman's Journal and, later, for Harper's Bazar, he continued to champion the rights of the masses, and to criticize certain phases of society in America and Europe which seemed to violate his idea of democracy. One group which appeared to be the only remnant of class distinction in America was the so-called fashionable "society." This group he analyzed gently but critically. They were the "foam" of society whose influence was very limited. "The utmost social prestige in America is local, provincial, a matter of the square inch."[52] In this respect, fashionable American society differed from European society whose influence controlled not only fashion, but government. It ruled in the country as well as in the city. "But in America the social prestige of the cities is nothing in the country; it is a matter of the pavement, of a three-mile radius."[53]

Higginson could see only one purpose for such a class--the preservation of good manners and social refinements. "But," he adds, "as soon as it steps beyond this, and attempts to claim any special weight outside the sphere of good manners, it shows its weakness, and must yield to stronger forces."[54] The existence of such groups throughout the country, Higginson felt, created petty and taxing activities, such

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[52]"Foam and Current," Common Sense About Women, p. 151.

[53]Ibid., p. 152.

[54]"In Society," ibid., p. 156.

as the ridiculous practice of sending calling cards,[55] and the waste of physical energy entailed in making undesired social calls for the sake of shadowy prestige. Besides this, women in society were the victims of burdensome social obligations which they had to fulfill as women did in Europe, but without the trained help usually found there. With a mild contempt, he pitied them--the most overworked women in America.[56]

This mode of life, Higginson maintained, was artificial and imitative. He thought it "idle to attempt to transport into American life the social traditions and delusions which require monarchy and primogeniture, and a standing army, to keep them up--and which cannot always hold their own in England, even with the aid of these!"[57] "Society," he felt, did not represent American life, for it had no direct influence upon its growth or movements. Even though some women in society had contributed to the anti-slavery bazaars and woman-suffrage festivals, nevertheless, the majority of them gave only a moderate amount of sanction to these movements.

American society, Higginson wrote, was broad in its scope. Conventional position and family tradition did not exert an influence comparable to that secured by education, energy, and character.

> No merely fashionable woman in New York, for instance, has a position sufficiently important to be called influential compared with that of a woman who can speak in public so as to command hearers, or can write so as to secure readers. To be at the head of a normal school, or to be a professor in a college where co-education prevails, is to have a sway over the destinies of America which reduces all mere 'social position' to a matter of cards and compliments and page's buttons.[58]

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[55]"The Battle of the Cards," ibid., p. 159.

[56]"Some Working-Women," ibid., p. 163.

[57]"Foam and Current," ibid., p. 153.

[58]"In Society," ibid., pp. 155-156.

In spite of his repudiation of fashionable society, Higginson was concerned about maintaining a standard of courtesy and morality in America. He despised the class whose whole aim was to keep in existence a set of social amenities. But he was also chagrined by the vulgarity of which Americans were accused by Europeans.

It is interesting, therefore, to turn from Higginson's propagandistic essays published principally for the woman suffrage cause to his essays for Harper's Bazar which dealt somewhat with this problem.

Harper's Bazar, begun in 1867, under the editorship of Mary L. Booth, "was a ladies' Harper's Weekly," as Frank Luther Mott describes it,

> with the same type of English serials, double-page pictures, miscellany, and humor, and with fashions and patterns taking the place of politics and public affairs. The art work was excellent with cartoons by Nast and engravings by the great Weekly group.[59]

For some years George William Curtis, over the signature, "An Old Bachelor," had written a column, "Manners Upon the Road," which dealt with American social life. On Curtis's resignation, Higginson continued this department, beginning his work in 1885. The editors wished him to contribute a series of papers "treating of the higher interest of women, social, moral, and historical," but to omit any references to the controversial woman suffrage topic.[60] Higginson agreed to do so and wrote a series of articles which conformed to the policy of the Bazar. The sixty essays were later published in

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[59]Mott, op. cit., III, p. 389.

[60]Letter from Miss Booth, November, 1884, quoted in J. Henry Harper, The House of Harper (New York, 1912), p. 250.

book form.[61] A similar collection of Higginson's essays was also published by Harpers in 1892.[62] In these two collections of about ninety articles, Higginson dealt with topics of interest to women suggested to him by the times. Upon examination of them, one finds that Higginson's basic ideas of democracy stand out as clearly in his treatment of American courtesy and morality as they did in his defense of woman suffrage. Although he harbored a strong dislike for fashionable society and its preservation of social amenities, he was sincerely concerned about the lack of refinement of some Americans. He believed that a happy medium could be established between the two extremes: "We need to keep always balanced between the influences of refined culture and natural force."[63]

The cultivation of good manners, he asserted, began in the home. "The first ingredient of good manners is self-respect; the second, that unselfish consideration for others which is best to be learned in a refined and kindly home. All social graces are merely the imitation or elaboration of these high qualities."[64] In another place he wrote:

> The basis of all manners lies in the gentleness, the self-control, the unselfishness, which a good mother teaches her children, if she can, in a log-cabin or a mining camp; the uprightness, the conscientiousness, the self-respect, which can face queen or clown without being overcome by either. . . . The foundation of manners lies

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[61] Women and Men (New York, 1888).

[62] Concerning All of Us (New York, 1892)

[63] "Are Women Natural Aristocrats?" Common Sense About Women, p. 117.

[64] "Processes," Concerning All of Us, p. 116.

> in character, and those who have not this foundation may at any moment be thrown off their balance, and reveal themselves as boors or bores.[65]

Natural gentility, however, even though based upon an upright, well-trained character, was not enough, Higginson asserted. The customs and habits of society should also be learned, for "they are to a great extent what might be called funded or accumulated good feeling; they are largely the product of long years of experience, which have brought to perfection the art of avoiding awkwardness and simplifying all procedure."[66] Although this kind of courtesy had a Franklin-like utility in benefiting the one possessing it, nevertheless, its influence was also carried into a spiritual realm.

> Manners come next to morals, not alone because they help us to make the world pleasanter, and thus render life easier all around us, but also because they afford the key to those greater successes and usefulnesses for which all generous persons long. And their domain goes beyond this world; for if the utmost saint makes himself personally repulsive, he so far diminishes our desire to meet him in any land of pure delights. Miss Edgeworth says in 'Helen' that anyone who makes goodness disagreeable commits high-treason against virtue; and I remember how elevated a doctrine it seemed to me when I heard one of my ignorant black sergeants say, in a prayer I accidentally overheard, 'Let me so live dat when I die I may hab manners, dat I may know what to say when I see my heabenly Lord.'[67]

The question of American manners, as far as Higginson was concerned, was directly related to American democracy. The gradual emergence of women from a state of subjection (allowing for its unquestionably good results), had brought about an evil which he

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[65] Ibid., p. 115.

[66] "The Empire of Manners," Women and Men, p. 77.

[67] Ibid., p. 79.

facetiously labeled "girlstereousness," the feminine counterpart of boisterousness. It was the loudness among women, young ones in particular, which gave the impression of rudeness and ill-breeding. Higginson pointed out that an accusation of this fault was frequently directed, not to the rural districts or the lower ten thousand, but to the wealthy who could afford a trip to Europe, to those whose "whole aim in life might seem to be the cultivation of its elegances."[68] In Europe, this form of vulgarity was "described broadly as 'Americanism;' and, so surely as any peculiarly shrill group is heard coming through a European picture-gallery, it is straightway classed by all observers as belonging to the great Republic."[69]

In a later essay he excused this fault in American women, saying:

> In reality, that of which they complain is only the inevitable confusion resulting from the new-born assertion by women that they have a place in the world as individuals; not merely in the mass, or, as it were, in bulk. An occasional excess of self-assertion is very pardonable in those who have only just awakened to their right of asserting themselves at all.[70]

Besides Higginson's commentary on American manners, he directed many remarks toward English social standards, which, by contrast, highlight his concept of American democracy. He could speak of English social life from his readings and from his limited observations as a tourist. He had visited England twice in the 1870's, once in 1872 and again in 1878.[71] Already in middle age on his first trip (he was

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[68] "Girlsterousness," Common Sense About Women, p. 173.

[69] Ibid.

[70] "Voices," Women and Men, p. 167.

[71] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 272.

forty-eight), he was quite unlike the younger generation of Boston of whom Van Wyck Brooks speaks. He did not look across the sea like them, "despairing of a nation that had passed their powers of comprehension." Nor was there a hankering in his breast for "the ancient homeland, as if three generations of history had gone for nothing."[72] He visited England to see the literary giants whom he admired. He enjoyed the experience and was intrigued by the human qualities of the personalities whom he met. His comments about them are generous and kindly. But for England's social system, he expressed caustic criticism in his essays. It was a caste system, he believed, which was a direct contrast to his own ideal of American democratic social equality. Several of its practices he found repugnant to his democratic theory.

Perhaps the most disagreeable standard to Higginson was England's "cast-iron etiquette" based upon heredity and rank. In England the man of genius or of character had to defer to another who held a title or a fortune. This state of affairs Higginson scorned as being artificial and unrealistic. The individual, under these circumstances, was sacrificed; real worth was subordinated to meaningless titles.

> A cast-iron etiquette like this puts ceremony above the man; a descent above a character; and above all a social rule above that instinct of hospitality which bids even the Bedouin Arab and the American Indian give the guest the place of honor at his board. . . . It is character that should be exalted, not station; and the more the character counts for, the less important is the station.[73]

His opinion of royalty was equally as disdainful. The position of monarchs he considered outmoded, a plaything suited only for children who love to pretend. "The very name and associations of royalty are

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[72]Brooks, op. cit., p. 140.

[73]"Exalted Stations," Women and Men, p. 127.

coming to belong to the childish domain just as distinctly as Puss-in-Boots or Jack and the Bean Stalk.[74] As a final thrust at the monarchial system, he wrote:

> Recent discoveries in Egypt have shown that the person of a king may be kept in tolerably good preservation for several thousand years. But the pictured result seems to indicate that for royal mummers, as for the institution they commemorate, it is easy to survive not only usefulness, but even good looks.[75]

In another essay Higginson summarized his attitude toward England's society in Matthew Arnold's words: "The English aristocratic society materializes the upper classes, vulgarizes the middle classes, and brutalizes the lower classes."[76]

Higginson also considered the differences between American and English temperaments. He spoke of the "added drop of nervous fluid" which characterized the American man or woman and was noticeable in the French-like qualities of quickness, flexibility and power of adaptation. This "added drop" Higginson believed had an influence in two directions. "It wears out on one side, and yet sustains and builds up on the other. Impairing something of the vital forces, it yet extracts more work out of what is left."[77] Evidence of its beneficial power is seen in the contrast between the health of well-known personages in England and America. Intellectuals such as Hammerton, Symonds, Stevenson, Henley, and Kipling had to resort to the climates

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[74]"The Toy of Royalty," ibid., p. 107.

[75]Ibid., p. 109.

[76]"A House of Cards," ibid., p. 189.

[77]"English and American Health," Concerning All of Us, p. 119.

of other countries for the sake of their health. But men like Whittier and Holmes, in their declining years, lived serene and wholesome lives. Florence Nightingale was wholly invalided for many years, while Clara Barton, whose ordeal during the Civil War, if not as intense as that of Florence Nightingale, was more prolonged, was still in active vigor until late in life.[78]

These qualities of temperament, Higginson maintained, were "probably the result partly of climate, partly of institutions."[79] The American type as portrayed by Archibald C. Gunter's extravaganzas, stands out in greater contrast when compared with the English type represented by Rudyard Kipling's works.

> For a steady advance to certain death it is difficult to surpass Kipling's Englishman, but for the rescue of distressed damsels, for the recapture of a captured fort, or for the blowing up of a gunboat and saving one's self by swimming, the American in fiction certainly takes the lead nine times out of ten.[80]

However, on balancing the worth of the two types, Higginson believed, "It matters not which is the higher type, or whether either is to be viewed as a high one; the point is that each is a distinctive type by itself, and so worth considering."[81]

Another characteristic found in Americans was cosmopolitanism.

> This is precisely what pleases the American; he would like to pass for an Englishman in England, a German in Germany, a Frenchman in France. His adaptiveness takes that form, and this readily distinguishes him from these two other

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[78] Ibid., p. 118.

[79] "A New National Temperament," ibid., p. 135.

[80] Ibid., p. 136.

[81] Ibid., p. 135.

> nations. It is not that he is ashamed of his nationality; he is vindicating the cosmopolitan aspect of that nationality. He has a vague feeling, which may, after all, turn out to be the correct instinct, that the latest national type should not exclude, but sum up, its predecessors; should so include their traits that it can freely borrow from them, and even adapt itself to them.[82]

The direction taken by the American type, therefore, was somewhat different from that of other nations. In regard to this Higginson said, "Nothing can prevent the American race from developing in its own way and furnishing its own type."[83] And it is not surprising to find among Higginson's efforts to mold public opinion toward a greater appreciation of American democracy this remark: "What we desire, or should desire, is to have the American type the best type that the world has ever seen. Nothing short of this is an aim worthy the effort."[84]

Having lived during the period of the utopian experiments of the Transcendentalists, Owenites, and Fourierists, Higginson watched with interest the Bellamy Nationalist movement with which he was sympathetic but not active. His somewhat guarded approval of other Christian Socialists is evidenced by his recommendation of their works to the young readers of The Ladies Home Journal.[85] Here he listed Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, W. D. Howell's Traveller from Altruria, R. T. Ely's Socialism and Social Reform, Henry George's Progress and Poverty, Lawrence Gronlund's The Co-operative Commonwealth, and

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[82] Ibid., p. 137.

[83] Ibid., p. 138.

[84] "Parochialism," Women and Men, p. 225.

[85] "The Young Girl's Library," The Ladies Home Journal, XII, no. 2; XIII, no. 1 (November, 1895), p. 4.

W. S. Sumner's What Social Classes Owe to One Another.

In a few of his brief discussions on property, Higginson commented superficially on Edward Bellamy and Henry George and their relation to property and labor problems. The points he brings up in his articles for women's magazines are very minor in comparison with the all-over labor-capital issues of the turn of the century. He discussed, for example, the problem of ownership of farm property by city dwellers who vacationed during the summer in deteriorated or abandoned farm houses. Large estates of a thousand acres or more were owned by non-residents and sometimes small villages were held by absentee owners. Higginson was concerned with such questions as, "Who will then be the legal citizens of the town? who will vote in its town meetings? who will decide its politics? who will represent it in the Legislature?"[86] The solutions proposed by Edward Bellamy or by Henry George, Higginson felt were inadequate for solving this peculiar problem.

> The property thus taken is not wrested away from the poor, for if it were offered as a gift in small holdings it would not commonly be taken. It is precisely the poor who cannot afford to take it under existing conditions; it is only available as a toy for the rich man or as a play-place for his children. Surely it is a changing period for any region where a systematic and organized effort is made to bring in strangers for a nominal occupancy. No new theory of property, as of Mr. Bellamy or Mr. George, can essentially affect this situation, for, granting that the land really belongs to the whole community, this is the way in which the whole community now wishes it to be used.[87]

Higginson did not propose a remedy. He merely pointed out the circumstances which were, after all, mere details in the economic chaos of

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[86]"The Future of Small Country Towns," Concerning All of Us, p. 73.

[87]Ibid., p. 72.

the 1890's.

In another essay Higginson touched upon a phase of labor of concern to his women readers: the dislike of Americans to become domestic servants, a disinclination which he attributed to the American way of life.

> The reasons given for preferring other work are always the same--the greater personal freedom after the work is over, and the dislike of a menial position. Unluckily both of these preferences are so directly in the line of American life--that is, of what we all instinctively feel--as to render it quite unlikely that they will be soon overcome. Practically these two points are one, since the restriction of liberty is but an indirect result of the menial position.[88]

Although he could give no solution to this particular problem, Higginson upheld the dignity of labor as being essential to the integrity of the country. Regarding this he wrote:

> Fourier thought there might be a 'sacred phalanx' by which the more repulsive duties in society might be joyfully undertaken. Mr. Bellamy, on the other hand, thinks that in the period of general enlightenment people will render these services to each other, and will scorn to take what they would not give. He also suggests that all the more arduous or unattractive labors will be equalized with those more attractive by shorter hours of labor. These are speculations for the future. The main thing to be recognized is that our republic must stand or fall by the essential dignity of labor, and that all arrangements which seem to deny this must be gradually remoulded.[89]

Besides this fine point of the labor problem, Higginson toyed with the idea of private monopoly in an essay deploring the European custom of enclosing private property behind high walls, such as he had found in the region of Killarney where all the property of that

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[88]"Domestic Service in the Millenium," ibid., p. 86.

[89]Ibid., p. 87.

area belonged to two men. "It certainly set one thinking," he wrote, "as to whether the human race, as such, had any rights in the planet, and one could easily understand how the teachings of Henry George, for instance, would find such a community quite ready to listen."[90]

With Henry George, Higginson believed that the abundance of natural resources belonged to all men; but with the law he saw the justice of the right of eminent domain which gave to the state, as the voice of the people, the power to appropriate the land and the water supply of private individuals for the general good--granting a just compensation to the owner. Higginson, however, did not advocate any control measures beyond those recognized in this principle of "eminent domain." He was too conscious of tradition and of the limitations of human nature. This is obvious in the following paragraph:

> The real restriction lies in the essential conservatism of a self-governing people, in all that relates to property. Nothing but some very great and flagrant wrong will ever excite an American community, even temporarily, to any but a very slow and gradual modification of an existing tenure. This being the case, it is rather a satisfaction to recognize, on an authority so high as Professor Dwight's, that the basis of our institutions is the principle that, in a general way, the earth belongs to man. Apparently it is parcelled out into separate holdings simply because the race has found this to be, thus far, the best way of securing the general good. The right of individual property, thus recognized, rests on a surer basis than any stone-walls can give.[91]

In addition to his expression of this traditional view of private property, Higginson wrote about American wealth in terms which he did not materially change over a number of years in spite of the growing alarm of economists over the unequal distribution of money. In the

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[90]"The Walls Down," ibid., p. 193.

[91]Ibid., p. 195.

1890's he wrote:

> The whole matter of money, indeed, instead of being regarded more seriously in America than in Europe, is really taken far more lightly, because it is here so much more readily made and lost. An American business man may easily have more ups and downs in a year than his steady-going English compeer in a lifetime. . . .
>
> The simple truth is that while the admiration for mere wealth is as old as the world, it is seen at its utmost in an aristocratic, not a democratic, community.[92]

A few years later, rather unrealistically, he wrote that the American republic was a failure when "considered as a means of vindicating the supremacy of wealth."[93] Looking at wealth from the point of view of its social advantages, he asserted that only heredity, such as one finds in England, could give it a permanent hold.

> It can never obtain great and permanent prizes in America, because there are no such prizes, at least none that are bought with money. . . . To buy possessions that are sure and permanent, wealth must take passage for England and invest itself in nothing short of a peerage.[94]

Judged by the meager references quoted above, it is evident that Higginson's attitude toward certain social problems which arose toward the close of the century was superficial and vague. Although he was an idealist, Higginson was not utopian in his views of society. He spoke of America in terms of a classless society, it is true, but in the spirit of a reformer, not a revolutionist. He must have been aware of the class distinctions created by wealth, but his idealism forced him to cling to the theory that in a republican government which promised equality before the law, it was inevitable that social equality should follow, and was, in fact, already in effect.

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[92] "On the Transplantation of Wealth," ibid., p. 78.

[93] "English and American Plutocracy," Independent, LIV (July, 1902), p. 1753.

[94] Ibid.

By the turn of the century, as he was approaching his eightieth year, Higginson saw the need for a better understanding of socialism and proposed its study by university students. In 1905 he protested to Harper's Weekly for labeling him a Socialist because of this suggestion. By this time the term Socialist had taken on opprobrious connotations since the formation of the Socialist Party of Eugene V. Debs in 1901 which championed the opportunistic Marxian brand of socialism. As a vindication of his proposal, Higginson wrote to Harper's Weekly that his approval of the formation of an "Intercollegiate Socialist School" did not mean that he desired the minds of the rising generation to be imbued with socialistic doctrines. "The movement does not aim to produce socialists," he explained, "but to create students of socialism."[95]

Three years later he noted in his diary, "Foolish and exaggerated paper on me in Boston 'Post,' announcing me a Socialist."[96] That same year he wrote to a friend:

> I have for many years had some leaning toward Socialism, I suppose, but the thing for which I joined The College Association was because I thought it very undesirable that colleges should ignore the very word as they almost uniformly did then; Harvard being almost the only one which allowed it even to be mentioned. . . . As for the name 'Socialist,' I never either claimed or disclaimed it, regarding it as a mere feeler in the right direction and refusing any prominent place in the movement. I remember that Dr. Edward Hale and I both took this same position in a similar organization formed by Edward Bellamy in his time.[97]

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[95] Harper's Weekly, Correspondence Section, XLIX (July 29, 1905), p. 1094.

[96] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 398.

[97] Ibid.

Although Higginson felt that Socialism was "a feeler in the right direction," his position on the matter is conservative and somewhat hazy. He had always held a respect for the masses, but he was equally concerned about the rights of the individual as his work for the woman suffrage movement indicates. He could be called a socialist only insofar as the term applied in the early stages of the movement (as Dombrowski asserts) to "anyone who granted the validity of some measure of interdependence and mutual obligation among men."[98] But by the turn of the century Higginson's liberalism became increasingly diluted and his mind grew less and less able to comprehend or come to grips with the basic factors underlying the social disturbances of later years. For, as Hintz notes,

> In the Slavery and Women's Rights questions he was on solid and familiar ground, facing squarely and courageously issues which the romantic idealism of his high period was adequate to cope with effectively. It is likely, therefore, that his most solid achievement and his soundest thinking in the way of social reform was done in these two fields.[99]

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[98] James Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America (New York, 1936), p. 26.

[99] Howard W. Hintz, Thomas Wentworth Higginson: Disciple of the Newness (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Dept. of English, New York University, 1937), p. 564.

C. Advice to Young Contributors

In one of his short essays entitled "Parochialism" Higginson discusses the problem of a literary center in America, and asks judiciously, "What can be less profitable than all this talk about a literary centre, this foolish struggle between rival cities?"[1] It is a significant question for a Brahmin by birth and education to ask, for the question reflects a broad-minded view of the literary trend of the post-war era and indicates the fact that Higginson kept his finger on the pulse of the literary world. The era of Emerson's idealism was passing, and with it Boston's and Concord's literary dictatorship. Their prestige was shifting to New York and to the cities of the West and the South. Furthermore, the voices heard from were no longer those of the college-bred who spoke with the culture and refinement so evident in all of Higginson's work. The new poets and fiction writers were speaking the language of the common people--in their provincial dialects--and, by attempting to narrate life as it was actually lived, they accelerated the tendency toward literary realism.

It is characteristic of Higginson that he should have looked upon these changes optimistically and regarded them as steps forward in the development of the country. A literary center smacked of English aristocratic tradition, one of Higginson's pet antipathies. To him the center was not the important thing; it was the literature that mattered. He pointed this out clearly when he wrote:

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[1]"Parochialism," Women and Men, p. 225. This topic is also discussed in "Do We Need a Literary Centre?" Studies in History and Letters, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, VII (Boston, 1900), pp. 266-274.

> What we need is to produce good books; this once done, it makes no more difference in what part of the country they are produced than in what part of a man's farm--the north-east or south-west corner--he raises those fine apples. . . . We are all enriched when Miss Murfree suddenly reveals to us a new literary centre in Tennessee, or Miss Edith Thomas in Ohio, or Hubert Bancroft in San Francisco. . . . What we need is the development of a high literary life through a number of different fountain-heads.[2]

The literary class, he believed, "had now come more in sympathy with the popular heart."[3] Among this class which was so vital to the growth of an "Americanism" were a number of women poets, novelists, and short story writers. Most of them lacked the training essential to high literary production. But, as Pattee points out,

> The quality of the feminine product was high enough to find place in the most exclusive monthlies, and the quantity published was surprising. The Atlantic Monthly, for instance, during the decade from 1870 published 108 poems by Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, and Aldrich, and 450 other poems, and of the latter 201 were by women.[4]

For the most part, however, the poets were imitative and sentimental. Their thin volumes, bound in creamy vellum and daintily tinted cloth were filled with commonplaces in rhyme. Yet they were popular enough to fill the book tables in homes and plentiful enough to cause critics to consider them in groups of ten or twelve each month.[5]

Against the mediocrity of women fiction writers, Higginson spoke out frankly. In an essay "More Thorough Work Visible," he showed how college education had advanced women in the fields of science, economics, mathematics, and astronomy. But in literature, he felt that the

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[2] Women and Men, pp. 225-226.

[3] "Americanism in Literature," Studies in History and Letters, p. 235.

[4] Fred Lewis Pattee, A History of American Literature Since 1870 (New York, 1916), p. 335.

[5] Ibid.

colleges had not as yet trained women to produce anything permanent. That women had engaged in journalism and with much success he admitted, but, "it must be remembered that journalism is not literature, though it belongs to the same genus and may be quite as important."[6] He cautioned women contributors to American magazines, "that journalism itself is hardly more ephemeral than all poetry or fiction short of the highest; and our rapid American life has already created and forgotten several generations of such short-lived celebrities."[7] He threw out a challenge for literary work of a more solid and thoughtful nature, demanding both scholarship and a trained power of expression.[8]

To assist women writers overcome some of the difficulties inherent in writing and publishing, Higginson wrote two essays, "The Search After a Publisher,"[9] and "A Letter to a Young Contributor."[10] In both essays he points out that "influence" with editors is not a requisite for success. The editors know what the public desires and "their own interpretation of this is a matter of life and death to them, and they stand by it."[11] An editor, moreover, is constantly looking out for new names; "he hungers and thirsts after the genius of the future."[12] Higginson further advises the young aspirant to train for her profession as physicians or watch-makers train for theirs. There are grades of merit, he says:

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[6] *Women and Men*, p. 288.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 289.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 290.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 151.

[10] *Atlantic Monthly*, IX (April, 1862), pp. 401-411. Reprinted in *Hints on Writing and Speech Making* (Boston, 1887).

[11] "The Search After a Publisher," *Women and Men*, p. 152.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

> It is merit to produce a work of genius; but there is also a great, though lower, merit in studying the taste of your time, watching its tendencies, and thereby producing just the work that is currently demanded--just what readers want and children cry for. This also needs labor and special preparation. . . . 'First produce something so good that no publisher can afford to do without it.'[13]

In his "Letter to a Young Contributor," Higginson paternally counselled the neophyte to see that her paper was neat, clean, and in such shape that it would not need the slightest literary revision. As to style, it should be charged with life, and "Such being the majesty of the art you seek to practice, you can at least take time and deliberation before dishonoring it,"[14] a sentence which attracted Emily Dickinson's attention. Labor to make your thought clear, he insisted, as if your life depended upon it. "Be neither too lax nor too precise in your use of language: the one fault ends in stiffness, the other in slang."[15]

While avoiding slang, he exhorted, do not avoid Americanisms. In this bit of advice he set down briefly a principle basic to his literary theory. He believed that older traditions and associations should be maintained and followed, but Janus-like, he was looking to what was new in America that could be incorporated into its language and literature without cheapening. He was willing, even anxious, to accept the increase in vocabulary resulting from industry and immigration. Both sources, he felt, enriched the language. However, he

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[13] Ibid., p. 155.

[14] Hints on Writing and Speech Making, p. 19.

[15] Ibid., p. 30.

did not believe that everything in America was subject matter for literature. While he welcomed the local color writers, he was not completely convinced that they were producing literature of permanent value. He spoke of this when he said:

> As a rule, . . . it is the less educated classes which are more easily drawn, though not necessarily or always the most worth drawing. Hence we are acquiring a gallery of rustic groups spread over the continent, while the traditions of polish and refinement are ignored either for want of personal experience or skill.[16]

He set up a standard which he believed to be a challange to the writer of American fiction. James Fenimore Cooper and Harriet Beecher Stowe, he said, introduced a daring Americanism of subject, first the Indian and then the Negro. Such successes were not to be repeated because they were based on temporary situations.

> But they prepare the way for higher triumphs to be won by a profounder treatment,--the introduction into literature, not of new tribes alone, but of the American spirit. To analyze combinations of character that only our national life produces, to portray dramatic situations that belong to a clearer social atmosphere,--this is the higher Americanism.[17]

This is a recurring theme in Higginson's essays on American literature as they were in his essays on American society. A democratic society "enriches and does not impoverish human life, and gives more, not less material for literary art."[18] The reason for this, he believed, is that culture is distributed through all classes, which diminishes class distinction and develops individuality. And

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[16]"Local Fiction," Book and Heart (New York, 1897), p. 64.

[17]"Americanism in Literature," Studies in History and Letters, p. 241.

[18]Ibid., p. 239.

as he emphasized the dignity of the individual in his social theory, he laid stress on it again in his critical essays when he wrote, "democracy has just as distinct a place in society, and, above all, in the realm of literature. . . . The distinctive attitude of the American press must lie, if anywhere, in its recognition of this individual importance and worth."[19] By doing away with the social castes found in English novels, such as Scott's, writers in America could and should "freely seek the Common."[20] The new movement in American letters, Higginson believed, was an outgrowth of the teachings of the early idealists, especially of Emerson and the Transcendentalists. Now that that early idealism had passed away, "the far wider movement which is establishing American fiction, not in one locality alone, but on a field broad as the continent, unconsciously recognizes this one principle,--the essential dignity and worth of man."[21]

In the portrayal of life in America by Howells (whose later work he commends) and some of the local color writers, Higginson noted the absence of the "moral tag" which had been so prominent in the poetry and fiction of the previous generation.[22] He believed this to be a quality of true art which found recent precedents in Madame Bovary and Tolstoi's Anna Karenina. The moral in

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[19]"The New World and the New Book," ibid., p. 246.

[20]Ibid., p. 247.

[21]Ibid., p. 250.

[22]"Discontinuance of the Guide-Board," Book and Heart, p. 9.

both of these books, he maintained, was implicit in the merciless fates of the characters. On this point he says,

> Realism must hold the field so long as it has a right to do it, and it can only be asked to fulfill the condition of its being. If we excuse it, as we plainly must, from the perpetuation of the guide-board, we can only ask that it shall go on and do its work so well that no such aid shall be needed; that its moral, where there is one, shall be reasonably plain; that is, so clearly put as to produce a minimum of misunderstanding.[23]

Realistic fiction should also fulfill a reasonable condition. Set free from the "guide-board," it should be a law unto itself and stop short of undesirable materials. It should "obey that high and significant maxim of the Roman augurs--never let the sacred entrails be displayed outside the solemnity of the temple,"[24] Higginson's only objection to Zola.

Thus, during the period between Emerson's idealism and Dreiser's realism, Higginson moved as a transitional figure who saw in the future of American letters an ideal of American literature which he himself tried to achieve and to encourage in others. Among those whom he most encouraged were certain women whose paths in life crossed his and to whom he literally reached a helping hand. Some of the names of these women have since found their way into anthologies as representative of this or that movement. Others are unknown today. For purposes of study, these writers have been grouped in the following manner: 1) Higginson's personal acquaintances; 2) women whose writings influenced his career; 3) his literary protegees; and 4) Julia Ward Howe, his associate.

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[23] Ibid., p. 11.

[24] Ibid.

Besides commenting upon or aiding these women, Higginson wrote a few noteworthy essays about women which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly. His novel Malbone, though less successful, can also be classified among these literary ventures, for in this work he drew a group of feminine characters which demand a brief study. He also included two short stories among his collected works whose women characters are of interest.

D. Biographies, Essays, and Fiction

While Higginson was living in Newport, Rhode Island, he first met Una Hawthorne who was engaged for a time to his nephew. Although the engagement was later broken off, Higginson valued the friendship of Una Hawthorne, not only for herself, but also for the associations she gave him with her father's memory, Hawthorne having died in 1864.

In 1864 he visited Una at Concord and described the visit in a letter to his sisters. The simplicity of the furnishings and the plainness of the house made Higginson wish to give the family "a Franklin and a tract of woodland."[1] After dinner, Una and Higginson took a walk "through groves and up orchards and toward Walden Pond, past Thoreau's cellar with a pine tree of ten years' growth in the middle, and up over some cliffs he also described."[2] They visited the Old Manse and met Elizabeth Ripley, who "seemed as if she might have lived there since the Revolution."[3] Higginson was thrilled to read an inscription on the window-pane which he quoted in his letter from memory, "Una Hawthorne, aged ten months, was held up at that window to see the falling golden leaves, and how she enjoyed them."[4] He was equally delighted to look over some of Hawthorne's note-books and to remain for the night in a lower room of Hawthorne's tower. The following year Una took Higginson through Sleepy Hollow to visit her father's grave.

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[1] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 238.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 239.

[4] Ibid.

Higginson included a biographical sketch of Una Hawthorne in one of his later volumes of collected essays.[5] This sketch is made up principally of letters, one written by Hawthorne describing Una's personality as a child. A few letters by Mrs. Hawthorne picture little intimate scenes of Hawthorne's domestic life--ice-skating on a nearby pond, an evening at home by his fireside with his family. Another includes descriptions of nature as seen in Brattleboro, Vermont, where Una visited Higginson's sister one spring. This letter shows a love of nature which Higginson shared with her. He described Una's letter to him as being

> like a clump of sod from the woods with all the spring flowers in it and dank with moisture and fragrant with rich earth. It has transported me there and made me think it a kind of insanity of conscience which made me think I must go to meetings in New York and Boston instead.[6]

In 1869 and 1870, Una wrote to Higginson from Dresden, Germany, where she was lonely and discontented. Higginson was planning a trip to Europe which he made in 1870, but was unable to visit Una, who had invited him several times. Una was later engaged to be married to Albert Webster, who died in 1876 on his way to Honolulu for his health. Una died the next year in England apparently of a broken heart.

Higginson thought Una "one of the rarest types of character" he had ever known, "a woman of unsurpassed truthfulness and penetration."[7] Besides her personal attractiveness, Higginson was drawn to her and to Mrs. Hawthorne because of their intimate relations to Hawthorne whose work he admired immensely. The tidbits he offers in his recollections

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[5] Part of a Man's Life (Boston, 1905).

[6] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 240.

[7] Part of a Man's Life, p. 269.

of Una and Mrs. Hawthorne in another short essay, "An Evening with Mrs. Hawthorne," are interesting from a biographical rather than from a critical point of view.

At the time of his visit with Una and the walk to the Old Manse, Higginson spent the evening with Mrs. Hawthorne who showed him some of her husband's diaries. It was then that Hawthorne won Higginson's respect when a passage in one of the diaries, "I am more an Abolitionist in feeling than in principle," caught Higginson's eye. Mrs. Hawthorne also told Higginson of an incident that took place regarding The Scarlet Letter. Hawthorne was in the habit of reading his manuscripts aloud to her in the evening.

> He [Hawthorne] read a second evening, and the concentrated excitement had grown so great that she could scarcely bear it. At last it grew unendurable; and in the midst of the scene, near the end of the book, where Arthur Dimmesdale meets Hester and her child in the forest, Mrs. Hawthorne sank from her low stool upon the floor, pressed her hands upon her ears, and said that she could hear no more.
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> Hawthorne put down the manuscript and looked at her in perfect amazement. 'Do you really feel it so much?' he said. 'Then there must be something in it.'[8]

Higginson wrote that he hesitated repeating the incident told to him privately, but added that he believed "everything which illustrates the creation of a great literary work belongs to the world."[9]

Both of these biographical sketches are important insofar as they relate a few incidents in the personal life of Hawthorne. Neither Mrs. Hawthorne nor Una achieved the degree of renown accorded Hawthorne's son Julian or his younger sister Rose whom Higginson mentions in passing.

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[8]Ibid., p. 107.

[9]Ibid.

To Higginson the lack of fame was negligible. Mrs. Hawthorne and Una were revered by him, not only as personal friends, but because of their close association with Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Lydia Maria Child, the subject of one of Higginson's early biographical sketches[10] was one of the women whom Higginson credits with being a formative influence in his life. Twenty years his senior, Mrs. Child was a minor figure who belonged to George Ripley's circle and attended Margaret Fuller's "Conversations." She was familiar enough with the social, literary, and transcendental theories of the times to be able to quote Fourier and Swedenborg. She knew the Brook Farm residents and their inquiries into life and the evils of society.

Like many later women correspondents, Mrs. Child wrote a series of articles relating her impressions of a visit to New York. She told of its prison conditions, its poor, and its Swedenborgian meetings. These she sent as articles to the Boston Courier and finally republished them as Letters from New York. Higginson says that her Letters did much to promote an already existing tendency toward an "inquiry into the foundations of social science."[11] The Letters, he says, were "eagerly read by us young Transcendentalists."[12]

In his own private life, Higginson believed that Mrs. Child's Letters was a work, which, among other influences, assisted him in

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[10]"Lydia Maria Child," first appeared in Eminent Women of the Age (1868). It was reprinted with a few changes in Contemporaries.

[11]Contemporaries, p. 128.

[12]Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 102.

choosing the liberal and "radical" side of many controversial social problems. In the early forties, with his future still undecided, Higginson says that he "longed anew, under the influence of George Sand and of Mrs. Child's 'Letters from New York' to put myself on more equal terms with that vast army of handworkers who were ignorant of much that I knew, yet could do so much that I could not."[13] The earnestness of these aspirations is reflected in his notes:

> What destiny is intended for me, I cannot tell--not to go in the beaten track I am sure. I cannot express how strongly I long to come out and obtain a working place among men. How my ability will second my wishes I know not, but some things are in every one's power--to live a true, sincere, earnest, independent life. Of this I think daily and hourly.[14]

These aspirations were directed, in part, toward the reform movements by the Letters from New York.

As a consequence of his enthusiasm for Mrs. Child's Letters, the young Higginson sat down one evening and wrote a review which he completed about midnight. His biographer states: "His satisfaction was great, for it seemed to him that he now saw the way to gratify his 'longing to do something for the world,' and wrote, 'I feel as if a new world were opening before me and my work were now beginning."[15] This review proved to be Higginson's first prose publication which was printed in the Present, November 15, 1843.

About this same time, he read Mrs. Child's "Appeal for that Class of Americans Called Africans," which, he says, "had more formative

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[13] Ibid., p. 77.

[14] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 63-64.

[15] Ibid., p. 66.

influence on my mind in that direction than any other, although of course the eloquence of public meetings was a more exciting stimulus."[16] It was not only the work, but the courageous example of Mrs. Child who faced the persecution heaped upon her, which inspired him to adopt the principle of going against public opinion for the sake of righteousness. Higginson wrote to his fiancee, Mary Channing, at a time when he was seriously considering following in the footsteps of Emerson, Garrison, Mrs. Child and other "radicals." Here he expresses a mature understanding of the possible dangers of such a choice.

> I have been worrying a great deal lately as to what is to be done for this preposterous world. . . .
> The great reason why the real apostles of truth don't make any more impression is this--the moment any person among us begins to broach any 'new views' and intimate that all things aren't exactly right, the conservatives lose no time in holding up their fingers and branding him as an unsafe person--fanatic, visionary, insane and all the rest of it--this has been the case with all reforms great and small and moreover there is often some ground for it because it is the enthusiastic (i.e., half cracked people) who begin all reform. Mrs. Child you know has long been proscribed as an entirely unsafe person and as for Mr. Emerson and Mr. Alcott, it doesn't do for a sober person even to think of them.[17]

Higginson sized up Mrs. Child's character, reputation, and influence briefly when he said, "She seemed always to be talking radicalism in a greenhouse; and there were many good people who held her all the more dangerous for her perfumes. There were young men and maidens, also, who looked to her as a teacher, and were influenced for life, perhaps, by what she wrote."[18] It is evident that Higginson classed himself

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[16] Contemporaries, p. 123.

[17] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 68.

[18] Contemporaries, p. 128.

among these young people.

Until her retirement from public life (about 1868), Mrs. Child and her husband David Lee Child, were staunch abolitionists. Higginson joined them on many anti-slavery platforms as lecturer. As editors of the Anti-Slavery Standard, which they conducted for eight years, Mr. and Mrs. Child, with their cultivated taste, made the Standard and its policies "attractive to many who were not attracted by the plainer fare of the Liberator."[19] Higginson added his bit to their weekly by contributing, in 1846, a youthful poem entitled, "A Word of Hope."

Higginson highly commends the generosity and boldness of this pair, especially Mrs. Child's kind but unusual offer to nurse John Brown after the Harper's Ferry incident. Since Higginson himself had taken active measures to assist John Brown and had tried an unsuccessful scheme to rescue him and his companions, he felt a strong kinship of spirit with Mrs. Child. Her letters and those of her correspondents, Governor Wise and the irascible Southerner, Mrs. M. J. C. Mason, which were exchanged at this time, found their way into print. Of them Higginson says,

> The great excitement of that period, and the general loss of temper that prevailed, may plead a little in vindication of Mrs. Mason's vehemence, and must certainly enhance the dignity of Mrs. Child's reply. It is one of the best things she ever wrote.[20]

Like many of the New England reformers, Mrs. Child thought of herself more as an author than as a reformer. Higginson dispassionately

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[19] Ibid., p. 126.

[20] Ibid., p. 135.

appraises her literary efforts by discussing their historical significance. Her faults were many, Higginson admits, but she was a pioneer in many fields, and, although hers was not a creative genius, "She wrote better than most of her contemporaries, and well enough for her public."[21]

In this sketch, as in most of his short biographies, Higginson overlays the bare facts of his subject's life with personal reminiscences and anecdotes which give an added charm to his writing. Although at first glance, he seems to be placing undue importance on such a minor figure as Lydia Maria Child, it must be remembered that Higginson was expressing contemporary opinion, as Lowell's tribute in his "Fable for Critics" attests.[22]

The essay is significant also, not only as a tribute to a woman leader, but as a reflection of Higginson's own character. He expresses admiration and reverence for a person of high moral courage whose writings and life expressed an ideal, which, though part of the times, had a definite formative influence on his career. And it seems that in summing up Mrs. Child's life, he was also summing up his own character:

> She was one of those prominent instances in our literature of persons born for the pursuits of pure intellect, whose intellects were yet balanced by their hearts, both being absorbed in the great moral agitations of the age.[23]

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[21] Ibid., p. 141.

[22] Referring to Lowell's tribute to Mrs. Child, Higginson says that Lowell "gave himself up to one impulse of pure poetry" in describing her. Ibid., p. 128.

[23] Ibid., p. 140.

Besides Lydia Maria Child's influence on Higginson's early life, Margaret Fuller left her stamp on him because of her association with Emerson and other Transcendentalists. Although thirteen years younger than Margaret Fuller, Higginson had the added advantage as her biographer, of a personal, though not close, acquaintance. Both Margaret Fuller and Higginson were born and reared in Cambridge. Margaret had been a friend of Higginson's older sisters, while Higginson had been a playmate of her younger brothers. Margaret's sister, Ellen Fuller, had married Higginson's brother-in-law, Ellery Channing, and for a short period of separation from her husband, Ellen and her children had lived under the Higginsons' roof.

Although Higginson felt a kinship to Margaret Fuller through these domestic ties, it was principally through her writing that she exerted upon him "a more immediate intellectual influence than anyone except Emerson, and possibly Parker,"[24] and was partially responsible for his liberal social and political views.

Higginson would have been an admirer of Margaret Fuller even had he not had personal connection with her. In 1844, she had written Woman in the Nineteenth Century, the only precedent on this topic being Mary Wollstonecraft's Vindication of the Rights of Women published fifty years before. Many of her progressive theories concerning women were those which Higginson expounded from 1850 to the end of his life. Among a few of her ideas which became popular through Higginson's writing and lecturing (as well as through the efforts of other feminists), were her advocacy of a wider range of occupations for women to give them opportunities to use their talents, of higher education to perfect their

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[24]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Margaret Fuller Ossoli (Boston, 1884), American Men of Letters Series, p. 2.

intellects, and of the right to equal political power with men. Although these ideas are commonplaces in our day, they were startling and daring in the early nineteenth century, particularly because they came from the pen of a woman. Margaret's book, Woman in the Nineteenth Century, was an inspiration to the early organizers of the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 and the woman's rights conventions of the early '50's. Katherine Anthony asserts:

> Women told on the platform of how they had read her book and, as they learned for the first time that there were other women with the same feelings as themselves, their 'incarcerated souls' had been liberated. We have the story of how Susan B. Anthony went out to Mount Auburn one Saturday morning in 1855 and wandered about trying to find Margaret Fuller's monument but had to come away without finding it,--'which she regretted.' Margaret was a vivid presence in those early years of the woman movement.[25]

Since Higginson was among the first to sign the Call of the 1850 Convention, it is evident that Margaret Fuller's spirit and breadth of view were handed down to him through this reform movement as it was in the intellectual world of literature. Although Higginson gives the book only passing notice in the biography and speaks of it as "full of thoughts and suggestions, . . . yet discursive and unmethodical," one may judge his admiration for its contents by the fact that he made use of excerpts from it in his essays on woman suffrage.[26]

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[25]Katharine Anthony, Margaret Fuller: A Psychological Biography (New York, 1920), p. 81.

[26]"'Earth Waits for her Queen' was a favorite motto of Margaret Fuller Ossoli" he wrote in Woman and the Alphabet while speaking of woman's readiness now to step out of her Cinderella state in order to assume the privileges and responsibilities which were rightfully hers. Woman and the Alphabet, p. 26.

In another essay, he spoke of woman's influence in affairs of state. Formerly women were forbidden to rule the throne but through mischief or malice, their power was felt at "second-hand." Higginson here quotes Margaret Fuller as saying, "Any woman can have influence, in some way. She need only to be a good cook or a good scold, to secure that." Woman should not merely have a share in the power of man,

In 1884, Higginson published a biography of Margaret Fuller, which, for years, has been a standard reference. In general the book is a defense of Margaret Fuller's life against the caricature of her as a "seeress" which stands out in her Memoirs. Higginson depended upon unpublished manuscripts which he rightly believed gave a picture of Margaret Fuller as a human being with high aspirations and which showed her as a person faced with almost insurmountable obstacles of poor health, poverty, domestic trials, jealousy of critics, lack of formal education, and her own shortcomings. At each step in her life, she was censored by critical public opinion, and because she lacked graceful tactfulness, she made many enemies, while at the same she was capable of forming lasting friendships. A brief discussion of Higginson's treatment of some of the controversial phases of her life will illustrate his contribution to a better understanding of her character.

Margaret Fuller's first attempt, Higginson maintains, to influence others as well as to perfect and clarify her thoughts was through her "Conversations" with women disciples. Under Carlyle's and Emerson's influence, she had been reading the German poets and philosophers and consequently brought down upon herself the opprobrious imputation of being "German" at a time when Immanuel Kant, Higginson says, was thought to be more dangerous than any French novelist[27] and Goethe was believed to be her model. Higginson, in defense of her work, shows the extent of German influence by pointing out a passage in one of her manuscripts

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"for of that omnipotent Nature will not suffer her to be defrauded,--but it should be a chartered power, too fully recognized to be abused." Woman and the Alphabet, p. 267

[27]Margaret Fuller Ossoli, p. 283.

in which she wrote, "As to Goethe . . . I do not go to him as a guide or friend, but as a great thinker who makes me think."[28] Higginson believed, however, that Emerson, not Goethe, came nearer to being her intellectual master. However that may be, Margaret Fuller carried her thoughts on the German philosophers and Platonic mysticism into her "Conversations" with the women who joined her for that purpose. Higginson believed that, instead of being indicative of the vanity and presumption with which she has since been charged, the conversations were a preparation for a deeper intellectual as well as social life. Margaret Fuller wished to do her part in the world, but (before the Dial period) felt herself too immature to write, and, therefore, believed that talking would be the easiest form of intellectual action, as this exercise would assist her in clarifying her thoughts. Actually, it gave her a discursive and unsystematic habit of mind which Higginson believed to be one of her major literary faults.

Higginson points out that Harriet Marineau, Margaret Fuller's English contemporary, had unjustly criticized Margaret when she wrote that while Margaret Fuller and her adult pupils sat gorgeously dressed, "talking about Mars and Venus, Plato and Goethe, and fancying themselves the elect of the earth in intellect and refinement, the liberties of the republic were running out as fast as they could go, at the breach which another sort of elect persons were devoting themselves to repair."[29] The statement, Higginson says, was not only

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., pp. 126-127.

unjust but untrue. He points out that the conversations were not as unrealistic as Harriet Martineau believed. Many of the women who met with Margaret Fuller were later among the most ardent supporters of the abolitionists. Although Margaret Fuller entered into the abolition reform tardily, her conversations "served as a moral--even more than a mental--tonic,"[30] a quality most evident among the New England abolitionists and which she seems to have been instrumental in fostering among her followers.

Because his biography of Margaret Fuller was part of the American Men of Letters Series, Higginson dwells at length on Margaret Fuller's editorship of the Dial, speaking of her rather extravagantly as the "alembic into which they [Emerson, Parker, Thoreau, Alcott] were all distilled and the priestess who superintended this intellectual chemic process."[31] He discusses her troubles as editor in handling the unique individualities of Emerson, Ripley, Alcott, Hedge, and Parker. One of her major editorial difficulties was to steer a middle course between such disparate personalities as the idealistic Alcott and the headstrong, practical Parker.[32]

The purpose of the Dial, it must be remembered, was to furnish a medium for free expression, and for the discussion of principles rather than for the promotion of measures.[33] Higginson says that

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[30] Ibid., p. 129.

[31] Ibid., p. 130.

[32] Parker wished a Dial with a "beard" and later began his Massachusetts Quarterly Review which, as Higginson facetiously puts it, was "the beard without the Dial." Ibid., p. 161.

[33] Ibid., p. 152.

Margaret Fuller maintained this ideal by frankly, but kindly, criticizing her contributors--even Emerson, as a letter quoted by Higginson testifies. That her criticisms were accepted and acted upon indicates the respect for her opinion shared by the leading minds of the day. Although she had to resign the Dial to Emerson's editorship after two years because of poor health, her work was important, Higginson believed, for without her the Dial would never have become a reality. Nor could it have been kept afloat financially if Margaret had not invested most of her earnings into it and frequently, in desperation at the procrastination of contributors, had she not written much of the copy--in one issue this meant eighty-five of the one-hundred-thirty-six pages.[34]

Higginson's discussion of the Dial, while factual and superficial, has the added interest of being a commentary by one who was himself a younger disciple of the movement. By his own life Higginson endorsed the ideals and principles of the Transcendentalists in a practical way. Of the Dial he wrote:

> When one considers the part since played by those whose youthful enthusiasm created this periodical, it is needless to say that their words kindled much life in the hearts of those still younger. It is a sufficient proof of the advantage of this potent influence that it worked itself clear, at last; and those who were reared on the 'Dial' felt the impulse of its thought without borrowing its alleged vagueness.[35]

In his chapter on Brook Farm, Higginson refutes the myth concerning Margaret Fuller created by Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance.

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[34] Ibid., p. 164.

[35] Ibid., p. 172.

He says of her that she "had neither the superb beauty of Zenobia, nor her physical amplitude, nor her large fortune, nor her mysterious husband, nor her inclination to suicide, nor, in fine, was she a member of Brook Farm community at all."[36] Higginson cites letters to the effect that Margaret Fuller was considered by George Ripley a potential resident of Brook Farm, as were also Emerson, Parker, and S. D. Robbins. Margaret Fuller, however, seems to have been most reticent about joining the project until she could see something substantial being accomplished by its members. Her only active association with the group, Higginson says, was attendance at an occasional festivity and a "retreat" there each New Year's Eve. Higginson himself was not enthusiastic about Brook Farm although he was inspired by the ideals which motivated it.

Margaret Fuller's ambition for an active life was partially fulfilled, Higginson maintains, by her philanthropic work in New York where she lived for a time with Mr. and Mrs. Horace Greeley and contributed to the Tribune. The excerpts quoted by Higginson from Greeley's Recollections point up Margaret Fuller's interest in the Irish immigrants, prison reform, capital punishment, New York slums, prostitutes, and the blind. These social problems were the subject of many of her Tribune articles.

The Tribune, as had the Dial, also gave her an outlet for literary criticism which, Higginson believes, exerted a wider influence than did her articles on social questions. He considers her to have been "the best literary critic that America has yet seen."[37] Her paper on Goethe

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[36] Ibid., p. 173.

[37] Ibid., p. 290.

in the Dial and her perceptive criticism of Wordsworth he believed were classic examples. That she could also go against public opinion and err in judgment is seen in her comments on Longfellow and Lowell. She remarked that Lowell was "absolutely wanting in the true spirit and tone of poesy," a remark for which Lowell unkindly retaliated by satirizing her as Miranda in his "Fable for Critics."[38] She spoke of Longfellow's poems as being too highly praised by his contemporaries, and that one of Longfellow's photographs resembled a "dandy Pindar." She had reluctantly reviewed Longfellow's book of poems when asked to do so by Greeley, and in her outspoken manner stated her honest opinion. Exception was taken to her review by everyone but the mild author himself. Although her criticisms were forthright and sometimes harsh, Higginson agreed with Horace Greeley that her intellectual honesty was the noble quality which covered a multitude of faults and gained for her many admirers as well as many critics.

Her later life in Italy and her tragic death were described by friends who had been with Margaret Fuller at the time. Higginson stresses Margaret's life of action, which he admired, by quoting from a letter written by Lewis Cass, Jr., American Charge d' affairs at Rome, who had befriended her when the French attacked that city.

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[38]Higginson could not quite forgive Lowell for his treatment of Margaret Fuller in this poem. That Lowell should have struck out the reference to Professor Francis Bowen and left the references to Margaret Fuller untouched even after her noble life and pathetic death, he could not condone. He says in the biography, "at the moment when Lowell was satirizing her in his 'Fable for Critics,' she was leading such a life as no American woman had led in this century before. During our own Civil War many women afterwards led it, and found out for themselves what it was." Ibid., p. 5.

Margaret saw the uprising against Austria and became entangled in the Italian revolution. Giving her whole sympathy to the progressive party, she stood beside Mazzini upon his return after a seventeen-year exile. She saw the Italian republic established, and she saw it fall. In April of 1849, Rome was beseiged by the French. She is reported by Cass to have been heroic in her care for the wounded during her stay there.

As for her marriage to Marquis Ossoli, Higginson relies on the correspondence and narrative of Mrs. William W. Story, an intimate friend of Margaret's, who was in Europe at the same time. Although many of the letters concerning this affair had been published in the Memoirs, Higginson lays stress on certain passages which had been omitted. If the marriage had seemed irregular to her American friends, Higginson tries to clear the air by emphasizing the fact that Margaret had at first refused Ossoli as a lover because of the difference in their ages. When she finally consented to marry him, as a letter from Mrs. William Story states, the marriage was kept secret because of expected difficulties with the Ossoli family. Mrs. Story asserted that Margaret showed her the marriage certificate and the baptismal certificate of their son, but both have since been lost. Although later biographers have questioned the existence of such a certificate and refer to the marriage as a "Fourieristic union," Higginson accepts the word of Mrs. Story which is the only evidence on this question, and has, perhaps, as much, if not more, authority than those who presume otherwise with no evidence to substantiate their opinion.

Higginson makes no personal comment about the marriage of Margaret and Ossoli. However, he does quote their touching correspondence

written during the period of their separation while Ossoli was on military duty. The letters express their love and also their fear for their own safety and that of their child. The decision to take passage for America for the publication of Margaret's history of the Roman Republic as well as for protection was follwed immediately by Margaret's premonition of disaster. As is well known, she, her husband, and son were lost in a shipwreck which occurred within sight of New York harbor. Even her death, however, had to be vindicated. The commanding officer had stated that Margaret lost her life because she refused to be separated from her husband and son. The evidence, Higginson shows, is inadequate, and the fact that the child's body was washed ashore in the arms of a sailor argues against the accusation of the mate who had himself left the ship before it was abandoned by the passengers or crew. Katharine Anthony says that Margaret assumed an unnatural pagan stoicism and resignation of her fate when she could have taken action and saved herself. The entire incident is not clear in written or verbal reports and Higginson believes the matter should be closed with due honor to the dead, while Katharine Anthony explains it as a strange mental paralysis and passivity with which Margaret had been stricken at various times in her life.[39]

In the final chapters of the book, Higginson appraises Margaret Fuller's literary achievements and personality. He finds that she shared the faults of her contemporaries, Emerson and Thoreau. If they were discursive, unsystematic, with too much reliance on intuition and imagination, it was natural, he maintains, that she should

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[39]Anthony, op. cit., p. 207.

have shared their fault. Her "Conversations" also gave her a habit of rambling. Higginson believed she corrected this to some extent through her training on the Tribune, for journalism made her more capable of precise concentration. Yet her obscurity (such as it was) was never "wanton or whimsical, but is rather that kind which, as Coleridge has said, is a compliment to the reader."[40]

Higginson gives a fairly objective picture of Margaret Fuller in this biography. Although in many places his discussion is clearly apologetic, he is never so eulogistic as to ignore the faults in her personality or her work. He depended largely upon heretofore unpublished manuscripts and, in this attempt at a more accurate portrait of Margaret Fuller, he contributed a work of scholarship which has been relied upon by subsequent biographers.[41] As to her personality, Higginson said, "She was not one of those charming, helpless, inconsequent creatures" whom Howells depicts. Rather, "she demanded a great deal from life, but generally knew what she wanted, stated it effectively, and at last obtained it."[42] Although she was a thinker, her aim was not self-culture, as Higginson painstakingly repeats. She expected her thought to fructify itself in action for her fellows. This was actualized by her writings for humanitarian causes in the New York Tribune and by her espousal of the revolutionary party in Italy. Higginson probably did not understand fully the implications

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[40] Margaret Fuller Ossoli, p. 285.

[41] Notably Margaret Fuller by Katharine Anthony quoted above and Margaret Fuller and Goethe by F. A. Braun (New York, 1910).

[42] Margaret Fuller Ossoli, p. 312.

of her sympathy for Mazzini and his revolutionists, for his emphasis was wholly on Margaret's physical and mental suffering during the war and her active attendance on hospital duty with the wounded soldiers.

In a way, this emphasis on her active life, while rectifying mistaken theories of early biographers, also reflects somewhat Higginson's own views of the man or woman of letters whose lot was not to remain in an ivory tower theorizing about the conditions of the world, but to set out and do for mankind what needs to be accomplished within the limits of his own powers. This was exemplified time and again by Higginson in his own life, and it is not surprising that he should point up this characteristic in Margaret Fuller, whom he ardently admired and whom he credits with being the inspiration of his own reform activities.

Among Higginson's protegees who achieved a degree of success during her lifetime, was Harriet Prescott Spofford. She had attended the Putnam Free School, Newburyport, which she entered in 1849. Part of the literary training of the students of this school consisted in having the pupils take part in amateur declamations, contribute to the school paper, and listen to visiting lecturers. Interest in original composition was aroused by prize-giving, and this by persons not immediately connected with the school.[43]

Higginson came to Newburyport in 1847 as pastor of the First Religious Church and Society. Through his efforts and aided by Professor Alpheus Crosby, he established a series of prizes for the

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[43]Elizabeth K. Halbeisen, Harriet Prescott Spofford: A Romantic Survival (Philadelphia, 1935), p. 40.

best poetry and prose written by these young people. Harriet Prescott won first place with an essay on Hamlet, and for a time, Higginson took a personal interest in her literary growth. She says of him, "Coming into the humdrum life of the town, he was like some one from another star."[44]

Higginson was obliged to resign his pastorate in 1849, but remained in Newburyport for two years more, making himself "as acceptable a citizen of the town as could be reasonably expected of one who had preached himself out of his pulpit."[45] In 1852 he accepted a call to the Free Church of Worcester, where he remained until the Civil War. He kept in contact with Harriet Prescott during these years--inviting her to his Free Church in 1854,[46] and describing to her Charlotte Cushman the actress.[47] He also guided her reading--advising her first to "live in Nature,"[48] and to read Thoreau, whose "Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," is fascinating "beyond compare to anyone who knows Nature."[49] The authors he was chiefly anxious she should read "earnestly and appreciatively" were Shakespeare and Emerson. Of Emerson he said:

> I know of no author whose writings seem to me so densely crowded with absolute truth, and so graceful in beauty; though there is never any artistic wholeness in his Essays; they are a series of exquisite sentences; and yet more than this I value for you that

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[44] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 96.

[45] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 130.

[46] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 122.

[47] Ibid., pp. 130-131.

[48] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 103.

[49] Ibid., p. 105.

> noble calmness, gentleness, courage and freedom; and that pure air and unflinching moral heroism which make him the very strongest teacher for the moral nature that this generation has given. I know this by its fruits, in myself and my contemporaries.[50]

The effusiveness of this recommendation, written about 1859, is strong evidence of Higginson's personal enthusiasm for Emerson and of his sincere love for nature. It was at this time that he was writing his fine nature study essays for the Atlantic Monthly. He had already contributed "Water Lilies" (1858), "April Days" (1861), and "My Outdoor Study" (1861), which were to be followed by others in the ensuing years. He wrote to Miss Prescott in 1861 that he had received many congratulatory letters about "April Days" from all classes of people, and was then finishing "My Outdoor Study," which was based on a description of the lake where he frequently went boating.[51] How much these nature studies meant to him is evidenced in the closing paragraphs of the same letter.

> These essays on Nature delight me so infinitely that all other themes seem tiresome beside them; I am sure that I have never come so near to Nature as during the last year, and therefore never so truly and deeply lived; and sometimes I feel so Exalted in this nearness that it seems as if I never could sorrow any more.[52]

Harriet Prescott must have shared this fervor, for Higginson compliments her by quoting a few remarks of hers in another essay, "The Procession of Flowers" (1862).

> Harriet Prescott Spofford says that some souls are like the Water-Lilies, fixed, yet floating. But

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[50] Ibid., pp. 105-106.

[51] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 157.

[52] Ibid., pp. 157-158.

> others are like this graceful purple blossom [Bladderwort], floating unfixed, kept in place only by its fellows around it, until perhaps a breeze comes, and, breaking the accidental cohesion, sweeps them all away.[53]

Inserted in "The Life of the Birds" (1862) is an excerpt from a letter which colorfully describes an oriole and a hummingbird.[54]

Higginson was delighted with Harriet Prescott's entrance into the Atlantic Monthly with her short story, "In a Cellar." He spoke of the story in a letter to his mother (1861) as being "brilliant and shows such an extraordinary intimacy with European life that the editors seriously suspected it of being a translation from some first-class Frenchman, as Balzac or Dumas, and I had to be called in to satisfy them that a demure little Yankee girl could have written it."[55]

Shortly after this, Higginson visited her in Newburyport, was charmed by her modesty (she felt it was a cheat to take $105 for a story), and attended a meeting of the Reading Club where the story was read in her presence. With a kind of self-satisfaction, Higginson concluded his letter to his mother, "One of the first things she did with the price of the story was to get a bouquet of flowers for Mary [Mrs. Higginson], which was a pleasant thing. She is always full of gratitude to me, for the little I have done for her."[56] Higginson later escorted her to one of the famous "Atlantic" dinners and tried to put her at ease in the presence of Harriet Beecher Stowe

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[53] Outdoor Studies, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, VI (Boston, 1900), p. 51.

[54] Ibid., p. 139.

[55] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 103.

[56] Ibid., p. 104.

(for whom the dinner was given), Holmes, Whittier, Lowell, Longfellow, and others.[57]

Higginson thought Harriet Prescott Spofford a "wonderful genius."[58] One is inclined, however, to believe that he was more impressed with her personality and literary promise than with her actual attainment. It is to his credit, however, that he recognized her talent and that his encouragement was responsible for opening a career which resulted in a prolific output of fiction and poetry between the years 1859 and 1921.

Higginson's acquaintance with Helen Hunt began in 1866 in Newport where she had retired, grief-stricken, after the death of her two children and her husband, Major Edward B. Hunt. She lived at Mrs. Hannah Dame's boarding house where Higginson and his wife had resided since Higginson's discharge from military service. Newport at that time was a favorite watering resort where the wealthy promenaded and drove their four-in-hands to the amusement of the native residents. It had also become a favorite summer haunt for the literary lions of the day to such an extent that Higginson and Julia Ward Howe were able to form a Town and Country Club "to remind their more frivolous friends of the duties of culture,"[59] as Van Wyck Brooks says. The meetings of this club attracted many writers who lived in town or were visiting there. Among them were George Bancroft, James Parton, his wife "Fanny

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[57] Cheerful Yesterdays, p. 179.

[58] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 103.

[59] Brooks, op. cit., p. 70.

Fern," Rev. Charles T. Brooks, Katherine P. Wormely, Dr. O. W. Holmes, Charlotte Cushman, Thomas G. Appleton, Charles C. Perkins, Alexander Agassiz, John LaFarge, and Clarence King.[60] Helen Hunt soon joined this literary "center" and became a special protegée of Higginson's. He noted her arrival in February, 1866.

> There is a new boarder here with two dainty rooms upstairs arranged by herself--Mrs. (Major) Hunt, a young widow. . . . She is in deep mourning for husband and child, and I fancy has private depression to correspond with her high spirits in the family, which are so far invariable. She seems very bright and seciable and may prove an accession.[61]

With new friends in Newport and with Higginson's kind encouragement, Helen Hunt entered upon a writing career. She began, Higginson says, to "study literary style and methods; she interchanged criticism with others, and welcomed it as applied to her own attempts; she soon ventured to publish more poems, and then to try herself in prose."[62]

For the next few years--until Helen Hunt moved to Colorado Springs--Higginson was her literary mentor. She trusted completely in his judgment of her work. The success which she met through her poetry, reviews, and prose pieces during this time seems to have justified the confidence. Higginson, speaking of her eagerness to learn, and of her aptitude during this period, says that she entered upon her literary career with the enthusiasm of a child. She distrusted herself, but was eager to try everything.

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 244.

[62] "Helen Jackson ('H. H.')," Contemporaries, pp. 148-149.

> I remember the surprise with which she received the suggestion that no doubt publishers would be happy to send her books if she would only review them; and her delight, as in a new world, when she opened the first parcels.[63]

He admired the rapidity with which she wrote, but adds, "The remarkable thing was that, with all this quickness, she was always ready to revise and correct, and was also a keen and minute critic of the writings of others."[64]

It was Higginson who maintained that Emerson had rated Mrs. Jackson's poetry above the work of all Americans. The statement is also hinted at in Mrs. Julia C. R. Dorr's reminiscent article which appeared in the Critic after Helen's death.[65] Emerson had visited Julia Dorr one evening and spoke of "H. H." Pulling out a folded paper from his pocket book he showed a poem to Julia who, in retrospect, believed that it was the sonnet, "Thought." Higginson mentions this incident in his essay on Helen Hunt and also in his Short Studies on American Authors.[66] He quotes Emerson as answering, when asked if he did not consider "H. H." the best woman poet in America, that perhaps it might be well to omit the word woman.[67] Ruth Odell, Helen Hunt's biographer, shows that Emerson's opinion of Helen Hunt was not quite so high as Higginson would lead one to believe. That he admired her poems greatly there can be no doubt, for she was one of the poets whom Emerson specially mentioned by name in his Preface to Parnassus. But he did not rate her first of

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[63] Ibid., p. 150.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Julia C. R. Door, "Emerson's Admiration of 'H. H.'" Critic, (August 29, 1885), p. 41.

[66] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Short Studies of American Authors (Boston, 1880), p. 41.

[67] Ibid.

all American poets.[68] Higginson, in his eagerness to champion Helen Hunt as a poet, could find no better credential than the opinion of Emerson.

Emerson, according to the same article of Julia Dorr's, had stated that Helen Hunt found it impossible to gain admission to the Atlantic Monthly and had told Emerson that her work had been rejected by Fields. Higginson denied this fact. As her personal friend and adviser he had repeatedly urged her, he maintained, to send some of her work to the magazine. She refused, however,

> saying that the editors were overwhelmed with poor poetry, and that she would wait for something of which she felt sure. At last she gave me her poem called 'Coronation,' /1869/ with permission to show it to Mr. Fields. . . . Fields read it at once, and exclaimed, 'It's a good poem;' then read it again, and said, 'It's a devilish good poem,' and accepted it without hesitation.[69]

Ruth Odell proves by referring to a letter of Helen Hunt to Fields dated April 16, 1867, that Fields had rejected her "Zone of Calms" almost two years before this.[70]

From November, 1868, to February, 1870, Helen Hunt was in Europe sending back to her friends "encyclicals," a series of monthly circular letters which recorded her journeys. She soon found that she needed another series for her more intimate friends. These she sent on the first of every month, addressed to Higginson, who circulated them among her other friends.[71]

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[68] Ruth Odell, Helen Hunt Jackson (New York, 1939), p. 86.

[69] Contemporaries, pp. 151-152.

[70] Odell, op. cit., p. 88.

[71] Ibid., p. 90.

During her fourteen months in Europe, Higginson served as her adviser and literary broker. She sent him her poems and travel bits with the request to send them on to whatever magazine or newspaper he thought them best fitted for.[72] A glance at the number of her publications which appeared during these months shows the amount of work which fell to Higginson.[73]

In 1870, with the encouragement of her friends, Helen Hunt published a volume of her collected poems entitled Verses. Although Fields, Osgood, and Company were somewhat reluctant to undertake the publication, the reception which followed was gratifying. Ruth Odell points out that Emerson was so pleased with the poetry that he later included three specimens in his Parnassus.[74] Higginson was laudatory but restrained in his review of the volume. "These verses," he wrote, "give the impression of remarkable power, not yet matured, though maturing," yet her freshness of imagination and intensity of feeling, he believed, had been unsurpassed since Elizabeth Barrett Browning.[75] His estimate in the last paragraph of this review is general enough to warrant its being said of any struggling poet. "We should say of the 'Verses by 'H. H.,'' as a whole, that they show great wealth in the raw material of poetry, and great occasional power of expression, with a careful conscientious execution."

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[72] Ibid., p. 106.

[73] Ibid., pp. 254-256. In 1869 thirty-eight pieces appeared in the following magazines: New York Independent, Atlantic Monthly, Galaxy, Nation, Hours at Home, Hearth and Home, Our Young Folks, Lippincott's Magazine.

[74] Ibid., p. 117.

[75] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, "Verses," Atlantic Monthly, XXVII (March, 1871), p. 400.

Yet, he felt that she avoided shallowness, the common fault of minor poets.

> To be sure, her utterance is not yet quite free; it is a little choked and resisted. She has resolutely dammed up the stream here and there, to obtain a greater head of water; and it is a great thing to be thus secured against shallowness, though one may sometimes miss the ripple of the unchecked brook.[76]

The poems, however, seem sentimental and flaccid judged by present-day literary standards. Her work became more enduring when she turned to prose and away from Higginson's direct supervision.

Helen Hunt had never entered into any of the New England "Sisterhood" of reforms which so engaged Higginson. She did not believe in abolition. She had been content to have colored people about her as servants, but was disposed to resent anything like equality. She could, however, show a generosity toward the individual Negroes she came to know. She also professedly abhorred, Higginson says, the idea of woman suffrage. Higginson partially converted her by taking her to a convention where she heard Lucy Stone speak. Although Helen attended the meeting with the intention of writing a denunciatory article against women reformers, Higginson maintains that she was completely captivated by the sweet voice of Lucy Stone and said to Higginson, "Do you suppose I ever could write against anything which that woman wishes to have done?"[77]

On one occasion, however, much against Higginson's better judgment, she overcame her deep-seated aversion for women lecturers by

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[76] Ibid.

[77] Contemporaries, p. 158.

enthusiastically sanctioning a lecture tour for Mrs. Leonowens, the author of An English Governess at the Siamese Court. Higginson entered into her plans reluctantly, even writing to his publishers in behalf of Mrs. Leonowens, but he questioned some of her statistics and criticized parts of the lecture on the score of good taste.[78]

Until 1871, Helen Hunt had written over the pseudonyms, "H.H.," "Marah," and "Rip Van Winkle." Between 1871 and 1884, she assumed the pen name "Saxe Holme" for her first attempts at fiction. Higginson read in manuscript all the Saxe Holm stories[79] whose authorship Helen Hunt persistently denied. Among the stories was one entitled "A Four-Leaved Clover" whose plot, involving a Prussian sergeant imprisoned in Libby Prison and Roxana Foote Beecher, the granddaughter of Lyman Beecher, Helen related to Higginson, which he considered important enough to record.[80]

In 1875 Helen Hunt married William Sharpless Jackson and moved to Colorado Springs where she lived for the remainder of her life, making frequent trips to the East and the far West. By 1877, with about four hundred published pieces of poetry and prose to her credit, she could write to Higginson, "He [her husband] knows how much I owe you--all my success as a writer."[81]

In 1879 Higginson wrote a critical evaluation of Helen Jackson's work which appeared in The Literary World and was later included in his volume, Short Studies of American Authors. Here Higginson's

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[78] Odell, op. cit., p. 120.

[79] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 258.

[80] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 245.

[81] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 258-259.

enthusiasm for "H. H."'s work appears to have run away with his judgment. In contrast to his restrained review of Verses in 1870, his praise is in the superlative. She is the woman who comes nearest to the genius of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, he said, and she makes Christina Rossetti and Jean Ingelow appear but second-rate celebrities. She has a grace and wealth like Andrew Marvell's which "carry us into the very life of external nature, or link us to the heart of man."[82] Her homely poems are praiseworthy for the cheer and strength they give to others. He also thought highly of her prose works.

The stories, Mercy Philbrick's Choice and Hetty's Strange History, he believed, had been done a great injustice by critics. Hetty's Strange History had been called morbid and immoral, "yet it is as stern a tale of retribution as 'Madame Bovary' or 'The Scarlet Letter.'"[83] Her Colorado sketches, he believed, give a true picture of the West which makes all other descriptions "crude, exaggerated, and therefore temporary."[84]

A third phase of Helen Jackson's life occurred as a result of her Colorado environment and her visits to California. She had not completely abandoned her dislike for "a woman with a hobby" until she heard in 1879 the Indians, "Standing Bear" and "Bright Eyes," tell of the wrongs suffered by the Poncas. From then until her death, she was untiring in her efforts to obtain justice from the government for the Indians. She wrote to Higginson:

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[82] Short Studies of American Authors, p. 43.

[83] Ibid., p. 48.

[84] Ibid., p. 49.

> I have done now, I believe, the last of the things I had said I never would do; I have become what I have said a thousand times was the most odious thing in life,--'a woman with a hobby.' But I cannot help it. I think I feel as you must have felt in the old abolition days. I cannot think of anything else from night to morning and from morning to night. . . . I believe the time is drawing near for a great change in our policy toward the Indian. In some respects, it seems to me, he is really worse off than the slaves; they did have in the majority of cases good houses, and they were not much more arbitrarily controlled than the Indian is by the agent on a reservation. He can order a corporal's guard to fire on an Indian at any time he sees fit. He is 'duly empowered by the government.'[85]

Her first achievement in this direction was A Century of Dishonor in which she incorporated all of the material she could gather after an exhaustive study of the treatment of the Indians. She worked day and night on it, until exhausted and nervously depleted, she sailed for England and Scandanavia with some friends for a much needed rest. Higginson was left with the task of proof-reading.[86]

Henceforth, Higginson says, she subordinated literature, not to an ulterior aim merely, for that she had often done before, but to a single aim.[87] While writing The Century of Dishonor, she said to him in a letter, "I shall never write a sentence, so long as I live, without studying it over from the standpoint of whether you would think it could be bettered."[88] She also wrote a number of articles on the California missions which appeared in the Century Magazine. Higginson seems to have been consulted regarding them. In a letter to

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[85] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, pp. 258-259.

[86] Ibid., p. 159.

[87] Contemporaries, p. 156.

[88] Ibid.

Mrs. James T. Fields asking that lady and Miss Jewett to read two papers on the Franciscan Missions, Helen wrote, "I have read them to Colonel Higginson, and he is moderately satisfied--suggesting, however, several changes."[89] Because The Century of Dishonor did not seem to move the authorities or the public to action quickly enough, she turned to fiction.

Higginson quotes the letter she wrote to him during the creation of Ramona,[90] which was done in a white heat of inspiration. Published serially in the Christian Union, 1884, the novel was issued in book form the same year.

By the time Ramona was completed, Helen Jackson's health had failed considerably. Although forbidden by the doctor to write, in her last days she wrote long and loving letters to her Eastern friends, especially to Higginson. He quotes her last letter to him in which she expressed her great concern for the Indians and felt that her Century of Dishonor and Ramona were the only things she had done of which she was glad. "The rest is of no moment."[91] Her own estimate of her works has proved truer of her literary reputation than that of her contemporaries.

Higginson was among Helen Hunt Jackson's most ardent champions. As a personal friend and as her literary adviser his admiration was genuine and sincere. Her poetry, he thought, ranked "above that of any American woman, and [he added significantly] its rival would be

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[89] In Huntington Library, a letter dated January 5, 1883, quoted by Ruth Odell, op. cit., p. 198.

[90] Carlyle's Laugh and Other Surprises (Boston, 1909), pp. 363-365.

[91] Contemporaries, p. 166.

found, curiously enough, in that of her early schoolmate, Emily Dickinson."[92] Her prose writings, he believed, possessed "an even excellence of execution which is not always to be found in her poetry, and which is surpassed by hardly any American writer."[93]

Elsewhere, he praised her ability to write a novel of adventure. She had written in Ramona, he believed, the best novel since George Eliot died.

> What action is there! what motion! how entrainant it is! It carries us along as if mounted on a swift horse's back from beginning to end; and it is only when we return for a second reading that we can appreciate the fine handling of characters, and especially the Spanish mother, drawn with a stroke as keen and firm as that which portrayed George Eliot's Dorothea.[94]

It is characteristic of Higginson that he should prefer the novel of adventure to the character delineations of Henry James and William Dean Howells with whom he contrasts Mrs. Jackson's novel. It is also characteristic of him that he should use her name as an example of the force of a woman on American history. In his plea for the higher education of women, he shows how Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin changed the whole relation between the white and Negro races and how the Indian situation was being influenced by Helen Jackson's A Century of Dishonor and Ramona.

At her death, Higginson hastily wrote a sketch of her life and work for the New York Evening Post, a second summary for the Nation, and a third for the Critic. These three he worked over

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[92] Ibid., p. 162.

[93] Ibid., p. 163.

[94] "Men's Novels and Women's Novels," Women and Men, p. 158.

into a revised version for the Century which he reprinted in his Contemporaries.

Higginson was also among the many who wrote tributes in verse to her memory.[95] His sentiments were those, not only of a personal friend, but of the reading public at large.

Ruth Odell believes that Helen Jackson's sudden growth as a writer came about upon her removal to Colorado, where she was separated "from the immediate circle of dilettantes who fed her ego and overpraised her output. . . . Praise from men like Higginson and Conway, and even Emerson, acceptance of her works by the foremost magazines of the country, and a reputation of being the most promising of the writers of her generation had urged her to conformity."[96]

This paragraph implies that her removal to Colorado and her trips to California cut her off completely from her Eastern friends and the plaudits of the leading magazines. As this brief examination of Higginson's role in her literary life indicates, she remained under his influence and direction all her life. That she wrote two books which

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[95]The following poem first appeared in Century Magazine (May, 1886) and was later reprinted in Higginson's Outdoor Studies, p. 358.

To the Memory of H. H.

O soul of fire within a woman's clay!
  Lifting with slender hands a race's wrong,
  Whose mute appeal hushed all thine early song,
  And taught thy passionate heart the loftier way,--
What shall thy place be in the realm of day?
  What disembodied world can hold thee long,
  Binding thy turbulent pulse with spell more strong?
  Dwell'st thou, with wit and jest, where poets may,
Or with ethereal women--born of air
  And poet's dreams--dost live in ecstasy,
  Teach new love-thoughts to Shakespeare's Juliet fair,
New moods to Cleopatra? Then, set free,
  The woes of Shelley's Helen thou doest share,
  Or weep with poor Rossetti's Rose Mary.

[96]Odell, op. cit., pp. 226-227.

more recent criticism grudgingly admits are still being read[97] was due, perhaps, not so much to her deliverance from the New England "dilettantes" as to the fact that, as Van Wyck Brooks states, "she happened upon a theme that stirred her to the depths and electrified her talent for a moment."[98]

Higginson presents an interesting focal point through which to contrast the two women whose literary careers he was instrumental in fostering. Helen Hunt Jackson, who followed his advice implicitly whose active, cheerful temperament was akin to his own, enjoyed immense popularity during her life. But today, except for her two books, Ramona and A Century of Dishonor, she is hardly read. Emily Dickinson, who went her independent way while asking Higginson's advice, whose shy, elusive temperament Higginson never understood, has risen steadily in public esteem and fulfilled the prophetic words she wrote to Higginson, "If fame belonged to me, I could not escape her."[99]

The story of the unique friendship of Higginson and Emily Dickinson, although told many times before,[100] is pertinent to this study of Higginson's influence on women writers of his day. The friendship

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[97]Carlos Baker, "Delineation of Life and Character," Literary History of the United States, Robert Spiller (ed.), p. 869.

[98]Brooks, op. cit., p. 300.

[99]Mabel Loomis Todd (ed.), Letters of Emily Dickinson (New York, 1931), p. 274.

[100]To mention but a few of the most recent commentaries: George F. Whicher, This Was a Poet (New York, 1938); Rebecca Patterson, The Riddle of Emily Dickinson (Boston, 1951); Theodora V. W. Ward, "Emily Dickinson and Thomas Wentworth Higginson," Boston Public Library Bulletin, V (January, 1953), pp. 3-18; Thomas H. Johnson, The Poems of Emily Dickinson (Cambridge, 1955) and Emily Dickinson: An Interpretive Biography (Cambridge, 1955).

began in 1862, unwittingly touched off by Higginson himself through his Atlantic Monthly article, "Letter to a Young Contributor."[101] Higginson was about thirty-nine years old; Emily Dickinson was thirty-one. His life in contrast to hers had been actively engaged in the ministry, in the abolition, woman suffrage, and temperance movements. He had also acquired distinction as a man of letters, having contributed to the Atlantic Monthly no less than twenty-one articles since its beginnings in 1857. Emily, on the other hand, after her schooling at Amherst Academy and Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, had retired to her father's house. Her contact with friends became more and more restricted. Often, in her later years, when she visited with them, they sat in the parlor while she conversed with them in a nearby hallway. Thomas H. Johnson says, "By the mid-seventies when her seclusion was nearly absolute, her refusal to see old friends was determined by the fact that the nervous drain during such encounters had become exhausting beyond her power to cope with them."[102]

Although the evidence is only circumstantial, biographers believe that during 1858 or 1859 Emily found her muse in Reverend Charles Wadsworth, an Episcopal minister in Philadelphia. Her love for Wadsworth (even though she saw him only three times in her life) matured her emotionally as well as artistically and found expression in a prolific poetic output. By 1862 the floodgates of her creativity were opened to such an extent that she wrote almost three hundred poems and for two years more others continued flowing at a rapid rate. It was

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[101]Reprinted in Hints on Writing and Speech-Making, pp. 9-48.

[102]Thomas H. Johnson, Emily Dickinson: An Interpretive Biography, p. 53.

about this time that she began to organize her poems into small packets.[103] When she turned to Higginson, therefore, Johnson says,[104] she believed herself to be an accomplished poetess, not the neophyte Higginson thought her. She felt the need of a competent judge who could tell her if her verses were "alive." One wonders, however, if she were not seeking approval or corroboration of her opinion instead, for, although she constantly pleaded for guidance, Higginson soon realized she would not or could not accept it. At any rate, Higginson became her professional audience of one and advised her not to publish. To this she replied that to publish "being foreign to my thought as firmament to fin."[105] Higginson offered, however, to be a release for her poetic energies by consenting to hear her "recite"; but, more important, his kindly, almost paternal, interest helped her to pass a psychological crisis which she faced at this time. For this she later thanked him. "Of our greatest acts we are ignorant," she wrote, "you were not aware that you saved my life."[106]

The letters to Higginson during the first year were concerned solely with her poetry. From the very first she addressed him with a naïveté not evident in her other letters to friends. She called him her "master," her "dear friend," her "preceptor," and habitually signed her letters, "Your scholar," "Your pupil," "Your Gnome." Higginson tried to direct her into smoother rhythms and rhymes, to guide her along the conventional patterns of the day. He found, very soon,

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[103] Ibid., p. 69.

[104] Ibid., p. 105.

[105] Todd, op. cit., p. 274.

[106] Ibid.

that she could not be persuaded to see the obvious faults that he pointed out: she corrected spelling errors, but her "gait" was "spasmodic"; her verse uncontrolled. She wrote in reply to this "surgery," "You say I confess the little mistake, and omit the large. Because I can see orthography; but the ignorance out of sight is my preceptor's charge. . . . I shall observe your precept, though I don't understand it, always."[107]

It soon became evident to both of them that the preceptor-pupil relationship was a game. Emily Dickinson could not alter her way of writing to follow Higginson's advice. Higginson says in his Atlantic article: "It would seem that at first I tried a little--a very little--to lead her in the direction of rules and traditions; but I fear it was only perfunctory, and that she interested me more in her, so to speak, unregenerate condition. Still she recognizes the endeavor."[108]

Although Emily continued to ask for advice, ("If I still entreat you to teach me, are you much displeased?") the following year the friendship between them shifted to a personal rather than a professional plane. Higginson, in the fall of 1862, volunteered for military service. He commanded a Negro regiment in South Carolina and was wounded, September, 1863. During this year, the frequency of the letters lapsed but was renewed in 1864 when Emily wrote from Boston where she was taking treatments for her eyes. The letters throughout the next twenty years of their friendship show a tender concern on Emily's part for Higginson's welfare and that of his wife--a concern that seems to have been mutual, for many of the letters treat of the sorrows and

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[107] Ibid., p. 277.

[108] "Emily Dickinson's Letters," Atlantic Monthly, LXVIII (October, 1891), p. 448.

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[107] Ibid., p. 277.

[108] "Emily Dickinson's Letters," Atlantic Monthly, LXVIII (October, 1891), p. 448.

joys of both families. Besides having interest in his personal welfare, Emily followed Higginson's literary career and "felt honor" for him, and was grateful when he sent her copies of his publications--Atlantic Essays, Short Studies of American Authors, and his sonnet on Helen Hunt Jackson.

After many invitations, Higginson finally visited Emily in August, 1870, an experience he recorded in a letter to his wife. He was greeted by Emily,

> a little plain woman with two smooth bands of reddish hair and a face a little like Belle Dove's, not plainer, with no good feature. . . . She came to me with two day lilies, which she put in a sort of childlike way into my hand and said, 'These are my introduction,' . . . and added under breath, 'Forgive me if I am frightened; I never see strangers and hardly know what I say'--but she talked soon and thenceforward continuously--and deferentially--sometimes stopping to ask me to talk instead of her--but readily recommencing.[109]

Higginson felt that she was

> too enigmatical a being to solve in an hour's interview, and an instinct told me that the slightest attempt at direct cross-examination would make her withdraw into her shell; I could only sit still and watch, as one does in the woods; I must name my bird without a gun, as recommended by Emerson.[110]

The concluding paragraph of a letter to his wife expresses even more forcibly his reaction to Emily's personality. "I never was with anyone who drained my nerve power so much. Without touching her she drew from me. I am glad not to live near her."[111]

Three years later Higginson again visited Amherst. He wrote to his sisters:

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[109]August 16, 1870, Todd, op. cit., p. 285.

[110]"Emily Dickinson's Letters," p. 452.

[111]August 14, 1870, Todd, op. cit., p. 288.

> I saw my eccentric poetess Emily Dickinson who never goes outside her father's grounds and sees only me and a few others. She says, 'There is always one thing to be grateful for,--that one is one's self and not somebody else,' but Mary /his wife/ thinks this is singularly out of place in Emily Dickinson's case. She (E. D.)glided in, in white, bearing a Daphne odora for me, and said, under breath, 'How long are you going to stay?' I am afraid Mary's other remark, 'Oh, why do the insane so cling to you?' still holds.[112]

In spite of his facetious reference to Emily Dickinson as his "partially cracked poetess,"[113] it is clear that Higginson sensed her need for his help outside of her wish for literary criticism. It was in this capacity, more than as a literary adviser that he filled his role. He wrote, "Always glad to hear her recite, as she called it, I soon abandoned all attempt to guide in the slightest degree this extraordinary nature, and simply accepted her confidences, giving as much as I could of what might interest her in return."[114] Johnson points out that Higginson's "willingness to play the game by her rules, to give the help she needed by simply replying as a friend to her letters, is to Higginson's everlasting credit."[115]

Higginson, nevertheless, found her poems entertaining enough to read at the Woman's Club in Newport (1875) where they "excited much interest."[116] When Helen Hunt Jackson visited Emily Dickinson and urged her to publish some of her work, Emily fled to Higginson for a refusal. Although Helen Jackson did receive one poem, Higginson evidently satisfied Emily Dickinson's plea for protection

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[112]December 9, 1873, ibid., p. 291. Also quoted in part in Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 268.

[113]To Anna Higginson, December 2, 1876, Todd, op. cit., p. 306.

[114]"Emily Dickinson's Letters," p. 450.

[115]Johnson, Emily Dickinson: An Interpretive Biography, p. 121.

[116]To Anna Higginson, November 30, 1875, Todd, op. cit., p. 297.

in this matter by agreeing with her that her poems were not for publication. Today, the vantage points of the recently published definitive editions of the Poems and Letters of Emily Dickinson as well as the perspective of sixty years of Dickinson scholarship have placed Higginson in a somewhat unfavorable light. Many of Emily Dickinson's biographers consider him obtuse in the extreme for not recognizing Emily's genius and for advising her not to publish her work. It must be remembered, however, that Higginson was representative of nineteenth century literary standards. He was rooted in the theory, as McCormick asserts, that the writer should master form, that literature should be pleasing aesthetically. This was secured, he believed, by "merging 'logical structure' and 'artistic structure'--ideas and expressions--into a harmonious whole. The mode of expression should be characterized by simplicity, freshness, appropriate choice of words, and thoroughness of preparation and revision."[117]

Emily Dickinson, to Higginson's mind, violated the edict on form and logical structure to such an extent that he advised her not to publish, advice which she clung to all her life. Had Emily Dickinson sought the "preceptorship" or Samuel Bowles, editor of the Springfield Republican and a close friend of the family, or of Dr. J. G. Holland, editor of Scribner's Monthly, she undoubtedly would have received the same direction, for, as Johnson also points, "They admired her originalities, but like Higginson they did not believe that she really wrote poetry."[118]

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[117]Edgar Lindsley McCormick, Thomas Wentworth Higginson as a Literary Critic (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, 1950), p. 72.

[118]Johnson, Emily Dickinson: An Interpretive Biography, p. 111.

Higginson, however, felt the superiority of her poems, which he believed transcended the fault of textual irregularities. But each time he read her poetry he came back to the problem, "what place ought to be assigned in literature to what is so remarkable, yet so elusive of criticism."[119]

As an experienced man of letters, he was aware of the kind of work acceptable to publishers, and of that "vast, unimpassioned, unconscious tribunal," of public opinion.[121] Rightly, he spoke of public opinion as "something more undying than senates, and more omnipotent than courts, something which rapidly cancels all transitory reputations, and at last becomes the organ of eternal justice, and awards a posthumous fame."[121] Little did he know in 1862 how true would be this comment in the case of Emily Dickinson. Yet it was through his efforts that posthumous fame finally came to her.

Higginson's position in the "literary debut" of Emily Dickinson was that of consultant and sponsor rather than initiator. It was her sister, Lavinia Dickinson, who decided to publish Emily's poems. Without understanding the content or quality of Emily's work, Lavinia, by her importunity finally won the reluctant consent of Mrs. Mabel Loomis Todd and Higginson to examine the manuscripts.

Within a week after Emily's death in 1886, Lavinia discovered a box of poems which Emily had not directed her to destroy. She immediately took them to her sister-in-law, Susan Gilbert Dickinson,

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[119]"Emily Dickinson's Letters," p. 445.

[120]"A Letter to a Young Contributor," Hints on Writing and Speech-Making, p. 23.

[121]Ibid., p. 24.

and asked her to re-copy them for publication. After a time, Susan returned the poems, which action Lavinia took to be a refusal to do the work. Lavinia then turned to Higginson to ask whether he would be willing to have the poems published. Higginson replied that

> he was extremely busy, and that the confused manuscripts presented nearly insuperable obstacles to reading and judging such quantities of poems. Though he admired the singular talent of Emily Dickinson, he hardly thought enough could be found to make an even semi-conventional volume. He told her that if this tangle of literary wheat and chaff could be put in easy shape for consideration, he would be glad to go over it carefully. Otherwise he could not give the necessary time.[122]

When Lavinia found that Higginson was not willing to accept the responsibility and the work involved, she begged her talented neighbor, Mrs. Mabel Loomis Todd, to begin the work, a task Mrs. Todd unwillingly undertook. The work proved to be an editorial maze with textual difficulties impossible for an amateur to unravel. In her notes, Mrs. Todd described the condition of the "volumes."

> She /Lavinia/ showed me the manuscripts and there were over sixty little 'volumes,' each composed of four or five sheets of note paper tied together with twine. In this box she discovered eight or nine hundred poems tied up in this way. They looked almost hopeless from a printer's point of view. The handwriting consisted of styles of three periods, absolutely different one from another. All were written in a hand which to most persons is exceedingly difficult to read, and many words were liable to be widely misconstrued. The poems were written on both sides of the paper, interlined, altered and the number of suggested changes was baffling. Almost every page had a number of crosses /before/ many of the words. Each cross referred to a choice of several words at the bottom of the page which the author had thought equally good, and quite as expressive of her meaning as the word actually employed in the text. There was nothing whatever to indicate which word was supposed to fit into which place. The crosses were all alike. As there

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[122]Millicent Todd Bingham, Ancestors' Brocades: The Literary Debut of Emily Dickinson (New York, 1945), p. 18.

> were frequently several sets of such changes on a page, no guide to assist in choosing could be relied upon except a sense of the working of the author's peculiar mind, by which the most characteristic word should be retained from the choice of several which she had indicated.[123]

By 1889 Mrs. Todd had copied enough poems to show to Higginson and was willing to accept his judgment regarding them.[124] She visited him at Cambridge to show him what she considered the most characteristic of Emily's poetry. On November 6, he returned the visit and asked Mrs. Todd to classify the poems into three sections, A, B, and C.

> He suggested putting all the best ones, and my own favorites, into a class marked A--not only those of most original thought, but expressed in the best form. The next choice, B, those with striking ideas, but with too many of her peculiarities of construction to be used unaltered for the public, and C, those I considered too obscure or too irregular in form for public use, however brilliant and suggestive.[125]

The poems were sent to him in their final form on November 18, 1889. Higginson's enthusiasm grew as he read through each section and rearranged about two hundred of the poems according to subject: life, nature, time, death, and eternity.

He suggested sending them to Houghton Mifflin Company for publication as he was one of their readers at the time. Houghton Mifflin refused to publish poetry whose rhymes were "all wrong."[126] The poems were finally submitted to Mr. Thomas Niles, Jr., of Roberts Brothers, because he had shown interest in Emily Dickinson's poetry on

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[123] Ibid., p. 17.

[124] Ibid., p. 33.

[125] Ibid., p. 24.

[126] Ibid., p. 51.

several occasions during her life. Mr. Niles sent the volume to Arlo Bates, a poet, for his criticism. Bates thought the poems showed remarkable talent, but he threw out some of the choicest pieces, which lowered him in Higginson's estimation.[127] The first volume finally included 115 of the poems.

Differences of opinion arose between Mrs. Todd and Higginson in regard to the titles of some of the poems. In many cases, Mrs. Todd's choices seem to indicate a better understanding. For example,

> He [Higginson] put the title 'A World Well Lost' to a little poem beginning
>
> I lost a world the other day.
> Has anybody found?
>
> thereby to my [Mrs. Todd's] mind entirely misrepresenting the thought. He suggested 'At Home' as a title for
>
> The bee is not afraid of me,
> I know the butterfly,
>
> whereas the gist of that poem lies in the last two lines, which 'At Home' never touches.[128]

Objection was also raised to Latin titles such as "Astra Castra," "Numen Lumen," and "Resurgam" which undoubtedly are heavy-footed when attached to Emily Dickinson's gems. The editors also took liberties with words in order to make lines rhyme. Such "creative editing" both Higginson and Mrs. Todd felt was necessary to make the poems palatable to the critics and reading public. An example is recorded by Mrs. Todd, who would have like to preserve the quaintness of the article in the second line of

> The grass so little has to do
> I wish I were a hay,

Higginson, however, decided that the line could not go in as it was

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[127] "My opinion of Mr. Bates has gone down greatly, for he certainly wished to leave out several of the best." Letter to Mrs. Todd, July 3, 1890, ibid., p. 55.

[128] Ibid., p. 57.

in the manuscript. ". . . everybody would say that hay is a collective noun requiring the definite article. Nobody can call it a hay!"[129] Higginson won.

Higginson wrote an article for the Century magazine, part of which was to be used for the preface of the first volume of poems. Because the Century could not print it before the publication of the poems, Higginson sent it to the Christian Union, September 25, 1890.

On the day of the publication of the first volume, Higginson wrote to Mrs. Todd expressing his astonishment at the remarkable quality of the poems which he was discovering in the letters he had been permitted to peruse. When he finally saw the printed volume he wrote, "Books just arrived--bound. I am astounded in looking through. How could we ever have doubted about them."[130] Throughout the work on this undertaking there had been no hesitancy on Mrs. Todd's part, her daughter maintains, about the value of Emily Dickinson's poetry. Higginson's reticence seems to have come from his fear of the incompetence of critics to recognize her genius. By the time he had finished the first volume, however, he knew that he was reading the work of an artist. Although his preface to the first volume was principally apologetic, he shows sincere appreciation when he says:

> Such verse must inevitably forfeit whatever advantage lies in the discipline of public criticism and the enforced conformity to accepted ways. On the other hand, it may often gain something through the habit of freedom and the unconventional utterance of daring thoughts. . . .
> But the main quality of these poems is that of extra-

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[129] Ibid., p. 32.

[130] November 12, 1890, ibid., p. 72.

> ordinary grasp and insight, uttered with an uneven vigor sometimes exasperating, seemingly wayward, but really unsought and inevitable.[131]

Emily Dickinson's poetry was received by the press and the public with mixed feelings which both delighted and exasperated the editors. What the critics had to say did not hinder the success of the first volume, which reached a sixth edition within six months.

In the meantime, Lavinia had a second volume under way with Mrs. Todd's and Higginson's assistance. By April, 1891, Higginson could advise Mrs. Todd, "Let us alter as little as possible, now that the public ear is opened."[132] Many of the poems which they included in this volume were those Emily had sent him in her letters.

Poems by Emily Dickinson, Second Series, appeared in November, 1891. Mrs. Mabel Loomis Todd had written the Preface which Higginson revised and approved. Mrs. Todd agreed to have Higginson's name appear first on the title page of this volume (it appeared second in the first volume), since she had written the preface. The reception by the critics was about the same as that accorded the first. In spite of favorable and unfavorable critical appraisals, the series sold, going through several editions.

Higginson and Mrs. Todd helped to create an audience for Emily Dickinson's poetry through lectures and magazine articles. The most widely read of Higginson's article today (recently reprinted[133]) is his Atlantic Monthly paper on the letters of Emily Dickinson. He

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[131]Mabel Loomis Todd and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Poems by Emily Dickinson (Boston, 1915), pp. v, vi).

[132]Bingham, op. cit., April 21, 1891, p. 127.

[133]Edward Weeks and Emily Flint (eds.), Jubilee: One Hundred Years of the Atlantic (Boston, 1957).

timed its appearance for the forthcoming second volume of Poems and succeeded in awakening interest, not only in her poetry, but in her prose style, which gave an impetus to the publication of the first volume of her letters.

An appraisal of Higginson's influence on Emily Dickinson's life and literary career is difficult because of its obliqueness. Beginning as her literary mentor, he became, instead, her "safest" friend who, without completely understanding her elusive nature, filled a psychological rather than an advisory need.

As co-editor of her poems he sought out those which had "form" and deliberately took liberties with others to give them conventional rhythm and rhyme. Yet, after further examination of a larger body of her poetry, he recognized an excellence present in her work which he was the first to acclaim publicly, if somewhat apologetically. By collaborating as editor of the first two volumes of her poetry, he was instrumental in presenting a new genius to the world. He seems to have been quite aware of this when he wrote exultingly to Mrs. Todd: "You are the only person who can feel as I do about this extraordinary thing we have done in recording this rare genius. I feel as if we had climbed to a cloud, pulled it away, and revealed a new star behind it."[134]

However, one cannot but feel grateful that Higginson's prudence, lack of interest, or obtuseness (whatever the cause) prompted him to advise Emily Dickinson to delay publication. By doing so, the poems were kept in readiness until the world would accept them. For who

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[134]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 368.

knows how soon the fire of Emily Dickinson's genius might have been snuffed out by the adverse criticism of critics who, like Higginson, could unreservedly applaud the poetry of Helen Hunt Jackson, but stand bewildered before the work of Emily Dickinson's genius.

Two years after Julia Ward Howe's eighty-sixth birthday, Higginson's pleasant biographical sketch appeared in Outlook.[135] For over forty years, Higginson and Mrs. Howe had been close friends. Together they represented the period of the "Newness," the generation of high ideals and strong faith in the perfectibility of man. They had fought shoulder to shoulder in several reform movements and had sat side by side as president and vice-president of several clubs.[136] Margaret Fuller and Lydia Maria Child had been his elders and his teachers. Harriet Spofford, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Emily Dickinson, while not much younger than he, were looked upon as his protegées, his pupils. Mrs. Julia Ward Howe was his peer.

Limited to less than ten pages which were half filled with illustrations, Higginson could only highlight Mrs. Howe's most striking qualities in this article. Characteristically, he emphasizes her reform activities, but gives more attention to her work in the Woman Suffrage movement than to the anti-slavery activities, in which both of them had been so active. He merely says of the abolition reform

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[135]"Julia Ward Howe," Outlook, LXXXV (January 25, 1907), pp. 167-168.

[136]The Radical Club, the Town and Country Club, the Boston Authors' Club, to name but a few.

that it gave her a liberal education. Through it she learned self-control and "the habit of speaking in public meetings or presiding over them; these helped to array all her quick-wittedness on the side of tact and courtesy."[137]

However, Higginson praises the whole-hearted energy with which she supported the woman suffrage movement and the quality of leadership she exhibited in the activities of the Woman's Rights Associations, especially as president of the woman's department at the 1883 World's Fair at New Orleans.

Julia Ward Howe's interest in world affairs began in her youth when, because of the European prestige of her father's (Samuel Ward) banking firm, she had been accustomed to think internationally. After her marriage to Samuel Gridley Howe, the reformer, in 1843, she spent a year abroad with her husband, making friendships with literary people and leaders of thought in several countries. Through her marriage she also came into contact with the Boston environment "of philosophers, poets, and Unitarians; practically all the prominent Massachusetts intellectuals and reformers of that period became her acquaintances."[138]

It was at Newport, Rhode Island, where Higginson lived for a number of years after the war, that the companionship between the Howes and Higginson became most pleasurable. Although Mrs. Howe was not the nucleus of a literary center in a strict sense, nevertheless,

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[137]"Julia Ward Howe," Outlook, p. 172.

[138]Margarita S. Gerry, "Julia Ward Howe," Dictionary of American Biography, Dumas Malone (ed.), IX (New York, 1932), p. 291.

her home attracted such families as "the Bancrofts, the Warings, the Partons, the Potters, the Welseys, the Hunts, the Rogers, the Harts, the Hollands, the Goodwins, Kate Field, and others besides, who were readily brought together for any intellectual enjoyment."[139]

It was at Newport, also, that the Town and Country Club was formed, of which Mrs. Howe was president and Higginson vice-president; Mrs. Howe good-humoredly referring to him as "my dear Vice." The Town and Country Club, in its earliest days became an outlet for fun and frolic with Mrs. Howe its brilliant leader, whose jokes were "we must remember, never absolutely out of taste."[140] Higginson gives the ridiculous program which was the theme of one of the meetings. Modeled on a Harvard Commencement exercise, mock degrees were awarded to Marianne Mott and Anne Bigelow--the latter being Mrs. Howe's little lamb, whom she welcomed "to a long career at the ba-a."[141] Lectures included on the program were "German language and letters," by Charles T. Brooks, the foremost German translator; "How to Sacrifice an Irish Bull to a Greek Goddess," Thomas Wentworth Higginson; "Social Small Potatoes, and how to enlarge their eyes," by George Waring; "Thesis Rhinosophica--Our Noses, and What to do with them," by Frances Parton (Fanny Fern); "Hebrew Roots, with a plan of a new Grubbarium," William W. Goodwin; a poem, "The Pacific Woman," by Francis Bret Harte, and "The Ideal New York Alderman" by James Parton. At the meeting, Higginson says, "She and I presided, dividing between us the two parts of Professor Goodwin's

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[139]"Julia Ward Howe," Outlook, p. 170.

[140]Ibid., p. 172.

[141]Ibid.

Oxford gown for our official adornment, to adorn the dignity of the occasion."[142] That was in the 1860's.

Higginson naturally does not follow the vicissitudes of the Club which died out for a time but was revived in 1874.[143] But a letter to Mrs. Howe among Higginson's correspondence throws added light on the cordiality of their friendship. A balance of some funds was left in the Town and Country treasury. Higginson tells Mrs. Howe:

> As you were the creator, baptizer, and long-continued curse of the club, I think that the disposal of the balance left in the treasurer's hands should be decided by you, whether you devote it to your personal adornments which maturer years justify, or to beneficiaries among the colored race, or those Italians who write you such graceful odes on your birthdays, should be left to you. You have put far from you those Vices of whom I am one, but I have no doubt that they would all agree in their opinion.[144]

Higginson succeeded in having Mrs. Howe elected as first woman member of the American Authors' Club, an event which occurred shortly after the publication of his sketch for the Outlook. In his notification to her, he wrote:

> Victory at last, and you are the first woman member of the American Authors' Club. It was carried through by the two editors of the 'Century' and Mark Twain, with maybe a little help from your humble servant, who would not join the Club till the Constitution was so altered as to admit women. The world moves![145]

Higginson pointed out that Mrs. Howe was one of the first contributors to the Atlantic Monthly. Of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" he wrote:

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[142] Ibid., p. 171.

[143] Letters and Journals of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 230.

[144] October, 1905, ibid., p. 234.

[145] February 5, 1907, ibid., p. 235.

> Mrs. Howe, like her friend Dr. Holmes, has perhaps had the disappointing experience of concentrating her sure prospects of fame on a single poem. What the 'Chambered Nautilus' represents in his published volumes, the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic' represents for her. In each case the poet was happy enough to secure, through influences impenetrable, one golden moment.[146]

Of her war songs he considered "Our Orders" the finest; "Hamlet at Boston" as strong and noble; "The Last Bird" as having a flavor of Bryant about it. He believed that "Eros has Warning and "Eros Departs" to be the profoundest. But he liked, next to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," a poem entitled "Rouge Gagne." Based upon the game "Rouge et Noir" the theme of which is that the red wins--red symbolizing for Mrs. Howe, life, faith, blushes, roses, battles, love. Higginson played on the color theme in a poem he wrote in tribute to Mrs. Howe for her eighty-sixth birthday. It was first printed in the Atlantic Monthly[147] and is included in his Outlook article.

Higginson speaks briefly about Mrs. Howe's prose--her Reminiscences which, he says, suffers from excess of material, and her little volume

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146"Julia Ward Howe," Outlook, p. 174.

147 La Couleur

"I stake my life upon the red!"
With hair still golden on her head,
Dame Julia of the Valley said.

But time for her has plans not told,
And while her patient years unfold
They yield the white and not the gold.

Where Alpine summits loftiest lie,
The brown, the green, the red pass by,
And whitest top is next the sky.

And now with meeker garb bedight,
Dame Julia sings in loftier light,
"I stake my life upon the white!"

"Mrs. Howe and her Commentator," Atlantic Monthly, XCVIII (October, 1906), p. 574.

of addresses on "Modern Society," which contains papers on Paris and Greece full of anecdote, sympathy, and memory.

Mention is also made of Mrs. Howe's domestic life and of her ilustrious children: her daughters--Julia, a poet and philosopher; Florence, the writer of "Social Customs," and "The Correct Thing;" Laura, author of Captain January and other children's books; Maud, author of books on art and literature; and her son, Henry Marion, an engineer and author of The Metallurgy of Steel.

It is quite clear that Higginson's friendship with Mrs. Howe, as this essay illustrates, was one which expanded his horizon socially and artistically. With her he came in contact with the most brilliant minds of the day which broadened (if they did not deepen) his perceptions and stimulated his public spirit and literary talents. The essay was intended as a tribute to such a friend. Without being sentimental, Higginson illustrates Mrs. Howe's light-heartedness, wit, sympathy for the oppressed, and enduring friendship. He intended the essay to be a sketch, not a complete memoir. As such it fulfills its purpose and possesses the added enrichment of Higginson's personal recollections of this woman who had lived through the "Flowering" and the "Indian Summer" of New England, and whose eyes, like Higginson's, had seen "the glory of the coming of the Lord."

Among Higginson's earliest literary essays to appear in the Atlantic Monthly, "Mademoiselle's Campaigns"[148] is significant for two reasons. The first and lesser in importance is the fact that this essay was the first of Higginson's serious attempts at narrating history. The style is that which Higginson developed successfully in later years in his History of the United States, which brought him renown as a historian. He had the ability to enliven his characters, to recreate their historical background, and to insert scholarly citations without becoming pedantic.

The essay, however, is significant principally because it treats of a woman. By 1858, Higginson's energies and views were centered on the "woman question," to which he was giving active support. With Mrs. Lucy Stone, he had compiled the propagandistic Woman's Rights Almanac for that year. He had also given an address in New York entitled, "Woman in Christian Civilization," later published in Religious Aspects of the Age. But "Mademoiselle's Campaigns" can be considered propaganda only indirectly, for in this essay Higginson aimed for literary quality which he sustained successfully throughout this his longest article.

The heroine of the essay is the long-forgotten Anne Marie Louise d'Orleans, better known to historians, Higginson says, as "La Grande Mademoiselle." She was born in 1627, while the slow tide of events was drawing Charles I toward his scaffold; while Sir John Eliot was awaiting in the Tower of London the summoning of the Third Parliament; while the troops of Buckingham lay dying, without an enemy, upon the

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148"Mademoiselle's Campaigns," Atlantic Monthly, II (July, 1858), pp. 193-206. Also reprinted in Studies in History and Letters, pp. 40-83.

Isle of Rhe.[149]

In a sentence, Higginson passes by the first twenty years of her life and with rapid strokes places her in the artificial, glittering setting of adult court life. Higginson, with a verve and delight in story-telling, permits the reader to catch the spangled glory of the French court of Mademoiselle--its dangers, insincerity, and frivolity.

Before the entrance of Madamoiselle on the stage of his narrative, Higginson deftly weaves into his background the names of spirited women who preceded her. Even though the small battles over which they exerted some influence were so minor that they were called "The Wars of the Ladies," their influence, Higginson shows, was nevertheless very real. "Educated far beyond the English women of their day," says the suffragist, "they took a controlling share, sometimes ignoble, often noble, always powerful, in the affairs of time."[150]

There was the Princess Palatine who "gave refuge to Mme. de Longueville in order to save her from sharing the imprisonment of her brothers Condé and Conti; then fled for her own life, by night, with Rochefoucald,"[151] and Madame de Chevreuse who fled from Richelieu, organized the French exiles in England and Holland, and later formed the faction of the Importants.[152] Other names, equally unimportant, but equally brave (Duchesse de Bouillon, Clemence de Maille, Anne of Austria, Margaret of Lorraine), who literally sprang into action and

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[149] Studies in History and Letters, p. 41.

[150] Ibid., p. 46.

[151] Ibid., p. 48.

[152] Ibid., p. 48.

created all sorts of political furors by which they became famous, are cited as typical examples of womanhood in France in the 17th century.

From Part II, "First Campaigns," to Part IV, "The Conclusion," Higginson follows Mademoiselle, this petted whirlwind, with racy descriptions that try to keep pace with her vivacious personality.

> A gay, fearless, flattered girl, she simply shared the fortunes of the court; laughed at the festivals in the Palace, laughed at the ominous insurrections in the streets; laughed when the people cheered her, their pet princess; and when the royal party fled from Paris, she adroitly secured for herself the best straw bed at St. Germain, and laughed louder than ever.[153]

The Madamoiselle had two opportunities to save Orleans against insurrectionists or "Frondes." On the first "campaign" she wrung from her weakling father a plenipotentiary power because "it was as easy for her to be strong as for him to be weak."[154] With his authority, she coolly rode to Orleans before the royal army arrived, had one of the city gates battered down and squeezed through the bars. "Torn, splashed, and dishevelled generally, she made a debonair entrance into the city,"[155] where she was received with great ovations and flattery by the inhabitants and recognized as head of all affairs, political and military.

The second "campaign"--the battle of Porte St. Antoine--was more serious. She actually saw bloodshed. This time, with real courage, she demanded the citizens be called to arms to relieve the Conde, and that his army be permitted free passage into the city of Paris, demands she was politely refused. Higginson, undoubtedly, was

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[153] Ibid., p. 52.

[154] Ibid., p. 54.

[155] Ibid., p. 58.

enjoying himself as he described the Mademoiselle's anger with the obstinate officials. He quotes Conrart as writing in his Memoirs that Madamoiselle said some strange things to these gentlemen: "as, for instance, that her attendants should threw them out of the window; that she would pluck off the Marshal's beard; that he should die by no hand but hers, and the like."[156]

The council naturally acquiesced to her conditions after this outburst, and Madamoiselle, arriving at the point of the Condé's extreme despair, turned the tide of the battle in his favor by having the cannons of the Bastille trained upon the enemy forces.

Madamoiselle later married a M. de Lauzon amid the snickers of the court and spent ten years trying to have him released from prison for an insult she had given the king. However, after his release, she soon parted with her ungrateful husband and ended her days querulously arguing over petty court protocol.

Although the treatment is a little theatrical and the subject matter of "Madamoiselle's Campaigns" hardly seems worthy of the space and literary effort and skill that Higginson put into it, the essay, nevertheless, gives an insight into a type of woman he admired. He suppresses indulgent chuckles over her escapades when he writes:

> What fascinates us in her is simply her daring, that inborn fire of the blood to which danger is its own exceeding great reward, a quality which always kindles enthusiasm, and justly, which is a thing of temperament, not necessarily joined with any other great qualities, and worthless when it stands alone.[157]

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[156] Ibid., p. 64.

[157] Ibid., p. 81.

"Greek Goddesses," an Atlantic Monthly essay which appeared in 1869, illustrates two facets of Higginson's many-sided interests: his concern for the elevation and advancement of woman, and his sincere fondness for classical literature. He combines the two interests by discovering in Greek literature and mythology an ideal of womanhood which, he says, has not been reached, before or since this period of civilization. He praises the goddesses for their noble freedom from restraint, their equality with the gods, and their dignity of bearing exemplified in Greek statuary. Around them he weaves an aura of loveliness with utmost delicacy and almost feminine sensitivity. He defends the reputations of the goddesses against the coarse mind which later projected their own vulgarity into what, he claims, was essentially pure and chaste. He was thus able to set up the goddesses as models, not only for the Greek women of ancient times, but also for the women of his own generation.

> An imaginative Greek girl [he wrote] had not an epoch nor an instant that was not ennobled. Every act of her existence was glorified in some temple; every dream of her silent hours took garlands and singing robes around it. In her yet childish freedom she was Artemis; 'in maiden meditation, fancy free,' she was Athena; when her life was bound in wedlock, she was Hera; when enriched by motherhood, she became Demeter, and she was thenceforth the Hestia of her own home, at last. Her life was like a revolving urn, upon which she could always see one great symbolic image sculptured, though each in its turn gave way to another.[158]

The essay is definitely a thrust at the nineteenth century attitude toward women. With a display of citations from the Greeks and Romans that is flashy, Higginson points up Plato's remark that Greek women were educated on a par with men and that Homer respected their intelligence

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[158]"Greek Goddesses," Studies in History and Letters, p. 150.

and judgment, believing that every eminent woman partook of the divine nature. The same regard for woman is found, Higginson asserts, in the Greek tragedies. "The Alcestis and Antigone are world-renown delineations of noble and tender womanhood, and there are many companion-pictures,"[159] as in Sophocles and Euripides. The love poetry of the Greeks he cites as another proof of the delicate appreciation of womanhood.

The burden of Higginson's essay is that the ideal of womanhood was reached when the world was young and it is now hard to reproduce it. Today, Higginson maintained, as no sculptor can produce more than a Greek profile, so no poet has yet produced more than a Greek woman. Attacking his own generation, he wrote:

> Modern life has not seemed to elevate the ideal, but the average. Common intelligence spread more widely, sweetness and purity protected, more respect for the humblest woman as woman, less faith in the sibyl and the saint,--this modern life.[160]

America, Higginson felt, had advanced in its sensitivity to wrong and was more comprehensive in its sympathy for the oppressed. Although common sense had been the gainer, as had common virtue, it was "only the ideal that had grown tame."[161] Optimistically he prophesied a new type of virgin womanhood which would join the unforgotten visions of Greek sublimity with the meeker graces of Christian tradition, so that there would rise nobler forms, "that shall eclipse

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[159] Ibid., p. 157.

[160] Ibid., p. 164.

[161] Ibid., p. 166.

these 'fair humanities of old religion'; as, when classic architecture had reached perfection, there rose the Gothic and made the Greek seem cold."[162]

This essay was probably written with Atlantic Monthly readers in mind, who, for the most part, were not as sympathetic to the "woman question" as the subscribers to the Woman's Journal. Always a preacher at heart, Higginson simply reversed the coin of his woman's rights arguments and approached the same topic from a cultivated and positive point of view. In the Woman's Rights Almanac he had compiled a picture of woman's degradation in distant Persia and in more recent England and America of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this essay on Greek goddesses, however, Higginson richly illustrated the qualities which an ancient civilization had possessed, and soundly challenged his country to attain that ideal again and surpass it in the future.

Because "Greek Goddesses" has such a propagandistic purpose, it loses in comparison with "Sappho," which is a much better essay. "Sappho" which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly in 1871 may be considered a literary critique, a biographical sketch, and an appeal for the cultural elevation of women.

Higginson places Sappho in her milieu among the well-trained women of Eresus, and later at Mitylene where she founded a school (comparable to Margaret Fuller's) and gathered around her intelligent women who became renowned for their proficiency in the fine and practical arts. The most intellectual fact about Sappho's life, Higginson

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[162]Ibid., pp. 166-167.

asserts, was her relation to her townsman Alcaeus with whom she is united in fame "as the joint founders of the lyric poetry of Greece, and therefore of the world."[163] As such, her influence extended to Anacreon and Pindar and, five or six centuries later, to Horace and Catullus.

That her reputation has suffered at the hands of dramatists, poets, and critics is due to two causes. First, as in the case of the Greek goddesses, Higginson says, the fact can be traced to an essential coarseness of mind in writers--like that of Voltaire in his treatment of Joan of Arc. Secondly, Sappho stood at a transition period in history, and, "in a contest between two social systems, represented an unsuccessful effort to combine the merits of both."[164] The Homeric period respected women; the advancing culture of Athens excluded them. Only the Aeolian colonies, such as Lesbos where Sappho lived, undertook to admit the culture and the women also. "The attempt was premature, and the reputation of Lesbos was crushed in the process."[165] Inevitably, Sappho's reputation also suffered.

Higginson examined the scholarship of Welcker and Felton who vindicated Sappho and placed her in historical perspective. He criticized Mure's hostility to Sappho and defended the poetess by comparing her school of women to that of Socrates and his pupils. The high intellectual standards of her academy, Higginson maintained, can be judged by the fragments of verse which have been left. Higginson

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[163] "Sappho," Studies in History and Letters, p. 174.

[164] Ibid., p. 178.

[165] Ibid.

then offers an original translation of a few of these lines and of the one complete poem of Sappho's, "Hymn to Aphrodite," all of which are creditable.[166] The essay closes with a reflection on the genius and ideal of woman, and, as in the "Greek Goddesses," Higginson urges modern nations "to create a civilization where the highest culture shall be extended to woman also. It is not enough that we should dream, with Plato, of a republic where man is free and woman but a serf. The aspirations of modern life culminate, like the greatest of modern poems, in the elevation of womanhood."[167]

Although the poetess Sappho is used to point out the level of intellectual achievement woman can attain, Higginson nevertheless places more emphasis on her poetry, her critics, and her historical background, all of which are well integrated into an essay that is scholarly, critical, and only incidentally propagandistic.

Higginson had also written much earlier (1862) a timely article for the Atlantic Monthly entitled, "The Health of Our Girls" in which he advocated sensible dress and physical exercise for young girls. In a similar article, "Saints and their Bodies,"[168] Higginson had strongly urged indoor exercise in formal classes and outdoor exercises through games for men and boys. Training in physical education, he maintained, is essential to good health, but should be reasonably limited in the case of girls. A physical exertion that could be

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[166] Van Wyck Brooks points out in New England: Indian Summer, p. 27, that the post-war years were an age of translation. The close of the romantic period in America was marked by translations: Longfellow's and Norton's Dante, Bryant's Homer, Cranch's Vergil, Higginson's Epictetus, George Herbert Palmer's Odyssey and Bayard Taylor's Faust.

[167] "Sappho," Studies in History and Letters, p. 199.

[168] Atlantic Monthly, I (March, 1858), pp. 582-595.

enjoyed by boys and help strengthen their muscles, would be enough to ruin a girl's health for life. Both "The Health of Our Girls" and "Saints and their Bodies" were written at a time when physical education in schools was coming into vogue. Higginson added a note to the latter essay in his collected works,[169] saying that this article was credited with having had, perhaps, some small share in that movement, which (one might add) has taken on greater proportions than Higginson could have anticipated.

A much larger literary venture which gave Higginson much pleasure and satisfaction was his only novel, Malbone, published serially in the Atlantic Monthly from January to June, 1869. After a few months work on the book, he noted:

> I do not think that anything except putting on uniform and going into camp has ever given me such a sense of new strange fascinating life, as the thought that I can actually construct a novel. It is as if I had learned to fly.[170]

The setting of the story is Newport, a place Higginson knew intimately. It is here Aunt Jane lives surrounded by her nieces and nephews, among whom are Hope, Harry, Emilia, their cousin Kate, and Philip Malbone. Philip has just returned from Europe with Hope's half-sister Emilia whom he rescued from an undesirable love affair with a Swiss servant, by winning her affections for himself. The handsome Malbone, who had "a refinement instead of principles, and a heart instead of a conscience,"[171] had been betrothed to Hope for

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[169]"Saints and their Bodies," Outdoor Studies, p. 28.

[170]Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 279.

[171]"Malbone," Studies in Romance, The Works of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, V (Boston, 1900), p. 45.

for more than a year. After meeting Emilia, his love became divided between Hope's wholesome loveliness and Emilia's passionate, rich nature. Complications set in when Emilia learns of Malbone's betrothal to Hope. In an impulsive spirit of sacrifice for her sister Hope, Emilia marries John Lambert a widowed millionaire. Within a week Emilia realizes her mistake, meets Malbone, who takes her up to his room by means of a secret staircase. The clandestine meetings occur frequently during a period of time that Mr. Lambert is away on business. One night Hope follows Philip up the dark stairs and finds Emilia in a trance-like cataleptic fit. Shocked and heart-broken, she takes Emilia to her own room and sends her home. Emilia decides to leave Mr. Lambert and prepares the house and yacht for his return from his business trip. The next day a terrible storm arises and it is discovered that the Lambert yacht with Emilia on board is caught in its fury. The boat is lost and Emilia dies. Shortly after, it is found that Emilia was escaping with her Swiss lover, who claimed to have married her in Europe. Malbone leaves, a crushed man, whose weakness caused, he believed, the death of Emilia and the broken heart of Hope.

Although Emilia and Malbone take the center of the stage most of the story, Hope is the character Higginson portrays most sympathetically. The betrothed of Malbone, Hope is beautiful, loving, trusting, and refined. She resembles, somewhat, one of Higginson's Greek goddesses--an American Athena, and, one might add, she is almost as statuesque. She is distinctly American--healthy, athletic, a lover of the out-doors. That she succumbs to a sun-stroke while swimming across a half-mile lake was due only to the necessity of

the author to introduce a sailor to rescue her, who later turns out to be Emilia's Swiss lover. Furthermore, Hope is a school teacher, having attended a Normal school in order to earn her living. In this occupation, which Higginson highly respected, she becomes a "Woman of Influence," joining that great army of women teachers which (he wrote years later) were

> spreading their unseen and daily labors through every school district from Cape Cod to the Golden Gate; smoothing the waste places, equalizing all our civilization, doing the most for the poorest. . . . Compared with these lives, how petty seem the little struggles for position and etiquette?[172]

Hope's practicality of mind seems to give her a nobility and firmness with which she meets crises without swooning. In this respect, Higginson was closer to modern novelists than to the sentimental novelists of the 1850's and 1860's. Another touch of modernity is that the author leaves the fate of Hope to the imagination of the readers, asking, "Must all novels end with an earthly marriage. . . ?"[173] However, to salve his conscience for leaving her so, he assures us that the happiness she could not attain on earth would be given her in heaven. Deftly slipping in his belief in immortality, Higginson tells the reader confidentially:

> If, as I doubt not, there be another sphere, then that which is unfulfilled in this must yet find completion, nothing omitted, nothing denied. And though a thousand oracles should pronounce this thought an idle dream, neither Hope nor I would believe them.[174]

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[172] "Women of Influence," Women and Men, pp. 20-21.

[173] Malbone," Studies in Romance, pp. 228-229.

[174] Ibid., p. 231.

In spite of Hope's disappointment in Malbone and her sorrow at her sister's tragic death, she never completely comes alive. What she possesses in physical stamina and practicality, she loses in emotional depth. A certain Puritan primness and stoicism follow her which will not permit her to give way to great sorrow for her sister or hatred of Malbone. In this respect she is a strong contrast to her half-sister Emilia.

Emilia, with the "gypsy taste," the beautiful eyes and the "silky hair of darkest chestnut," always wore a look that was irresistible--- "a certain wild, entangled look she wore, as of some untamed out-door thing, and a kind of pathetic lost sweetness in her voice."[175] Taken to France as a child, Emilia had been educated there and returned to America, sixteen-years old, and already a lost soul. Although Higginson does not explicitly blame her European education for Emilia's character, the resulting temperament seems to have justified an attack he made in one of his woman suffrage essays on the education of girls in Europe. He wrote:

> No young girls are so poorly prepared for American life as those whose years are passed in Europe. Some of the worst imprudences, the most unmaidenly and offensive actions, that I have ever heard of in decent society, have been on the part of young women abroad, who have launched into American life without its early training,-- have been treated as children until they suddenly awakened to the freedom of women.[176]

Prompted by her passionate nature, Emilia commits the gravest of imprudences when in a mood of impulsive self-sacrifice she marries the millionaire John Lambert and then rushes off to her death with her Swiss sailor. Her actions remain merely "imprudences," however, for although

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[175] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[176] "The European Plan," Women and the Alphabet, p. 207.

Emilia faintly resembles Hawthorne's Zenobia and Hester Prynn, she lacks both the deep despair of the one and the capacity for suffering of the other. She dies, caught in her net, it is true, but rather as a petulant child who cannot have her way.

Perhaps one of Emilia's less serious imprudences had been her association with a class of "society" of which Mrs. Ingleside and her daughter Blanche were representatives. Higginson had particular contempt for the "foam of society," as has been seen, and therefore draws these very minor figures without mercy. Blanche is coarse, loud, and cheap--the social butterfly her mother has trained her to be, unsuccessfully angling for a husband.

Kate, the cousin of Emilia and Hope, also belongs to the society of Newport. Although she too represents to a certain extent the "foam," her gentility and lovable character save her from the mawkishness of Blanche and Mrs. Ingleside. Kate's function, besides that of being Harry's betrothed, seems to be that of a contrasting figure to Blanche. She represents well-bred society at its best. Kate also acts as a stimulant for Aunt Jane's witticisms.

Higginson's first wife, Mary Channing, was the living model from which Aunt Jane was drawn. Higginson says in his introduction that "the bright sayings of the lady . . . were the fruit of a long habit of jotting down her actual conversation."[177] Although an invalid most of her life, Mrs. Higginson had a clever tongue, for many of Higginson's letters to his family contain remarks about friends or acquaintances which he genuinely enjoyed. In the novel, however, Aunt

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[177] Studies in Romance, p. iv.

Jane, also an invalid, is an eccentric old maid. She reigns from an easy chair, finds fault with her maid, her relatives, and those who do not pet her. She is frankly outspoken in her dislike for Malbone and Emilia, yet affectionate toward her other nieces and nephews who confide in her. Her sprightly witticisms, however, are tiresome.

Although Malbone does not, strictly speaking, come under this study, he cannot be entirely omitted since he is the central figure of the novel. Higginson also drew Malbone from real life, He had formed an intimate friendship in his youth with a brilliant fellow student at Cambridge, W. H. Hurlbut. The friendship ended in bitter disappointment for Higginson, but he excused his friend by saying, "And yet all his crime is an utter moral weakness, joined with gifts too brilliant for anything but a strong moral nature to carry steadily."[178]

Malbone possessed Hurlbut's gifts and personal attractiveness. He went to Europe for Emilia to save her from a marriage with a Swiss servant, and found himself entangled inextricably in the affections of the young girl. Neither he nor Emilia had the moral courage to break off the ties of affection which had grown between them. Only after Emilia's death did Malbone realize his spinelessness. His character, like Emilia's remains static throughout the story. The author, however, incidentally drops the remark that after this experience Malbone spent " a man-hood of self-denying usefulness. . . to show that even he could learn something of life's retribution."[179] How he did this the reader is never told.

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[178] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 127.

[179] Malbone, p. 229.

The novel falls short of being good literature. The characters are stiff; the plot is melodramatic; and the coincidences too perfectly timed. The chapters are strung together like a series of essays. Even though they are related to one another, the chapters shift abruptly and sometimes awkwardly. The descriptions of the sea-coast and of natural scenery are vivid, however, and are the saving grace of the book. Higginson's field of writing was the essay, history, and biography, not fiction. He admitted in his preface to his collection of stories that the faults were obvious and that "the recognition of them has kept the author from again risking himself in the realm of fiction."[180]

He had however written a few short stories or tales. One of these is a piece of fiction which is interesting because of its delineation of a woman. "An Artist's Creation," first published under the title, "An Artist's Dream," appeared in the Atlantic Monthly, 1867. It is the story of a young man and his wife who exclude their little daughter from their all-absorbing love for one another. Written from the point of view of the author, a guest at their house, the story develops around Marian the child, Laura, and Kenmure, the artist husband, who tries unsuccessfully to paint an exact likeness of his wife. After a time, Laura dies and the husband discovers her likeness in their child.

Higginson describes Laura, the wife, as possessing a "torrent from the tropics in her veins."[181] She was, unlike Emilia, the most equable and sensible person he had ever seen. The author found her one evening beside the bed of her child whom she had ignored all day. At that time, he realized Laura's true love for the child, but also her unreasonable

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[180] Studies in Romance, p. iv.

[181] "An Artist's Creation," Studies in Romance, p. 339.

willingness to forego it for that of her husband. Higginson draws a portrait of these unnatural parents which lacks probability. Laura is ethereal rather than human, and, stifled by the possessive demands made upon her time and energy by her husband, she succumbs and dies. The child, Marian, however, is well drawn and reflects Higginson's own fondness for children.

In another short story, Higginson tells of the unusual character, Madame Delia, the snake charmer. Madame Delia owned a dirty, patched tent and two equally dirty and patched little girls, Gertie and Anne, the acrobats of her show. One day Gertie falls from a trapeze, is hurt, and is nursed back to health by two Quaker spinsters who wish to adopt her, thinking she belongs to "quality." Lonesome for the show and Madame Delia, Gertie returns and confesses that Anne is really from the upper class in society. Anne grows up in the fashionable house of the sisters. Gertie stays with Madame Delia who eventually becomes a brevet-grandmother, "a glory that quite surpassed her expectations,"[182] whatever they were.

The story is an amusing attempt at local color and dialect. The slang and bad grammar of Madame Delia, Gertie, and other show people, as well as the "thee" and "thou" of the refined Quaker ladies, though stilted, give a liveliness to the characters, not found in Higginson's more serious attempts at fiction. The plot, again, is improbable, but Madame Delia with her snakes and Gertie on her trapeze are more human than Aunt Jane and Hope in Malbone.

To conclude this study, mention should be made of a plan Higginson had in mind for the writing of his "magnum opus," a book entitled,

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182"Madame Delia's Expectations," Atlantic Monthly, XXVII (January, 1871), pp. 40-50. Also reprinted in Oldport Days (Boston, 1873), p. 197.

The Intellectual History of Woman. For its preparation he collected all the books on the subject he could find for a number of years, but the task was never begun. In 1896 he gave the books, which amounted to a collection of almost one thousand, to the Boston Public Library, entitling it the "Galatea Collection," a name suggested by the fable Pygmalion and Galatea. His biographer states that through a fund supplied by Mr. Carnegie, Higginson continued adding to the collection for a number of years afterward.[183] According to Higginson's letter to the library, he desired the collection to be kept together because he believed it to be unlike any yet organized in the country. The listing of the Boston Public Library[184] shows a wide selection of books on many subjects and in several languages, and is indicative of the time, money, and energy he devoted to the movement for the advancement of women.

This devotion, as has been pointed out in this chapter, found expression in several ways: through woman suffrage tracts and essays

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[183] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, p. 284.

[184] Monthly Bulletin of the Books Added to the Boston Public Library, III (January, 1898), pp. 68-102. The following are the headings of the divisions: Biographies; Characteristics of Women; Delineations of women in literature and art; History and condition of women; Education: domestic education; ethical education; religious education; college education; co-education; colleges for women; social ethics; health and hygiene; health in education and occupation; physiology; diseases of women; personal beauty and dress; relations and comparisons of the sexes; love, marriage; divorce, prostitution; rights of women; legal status of women; laws concerning women; woman suffrage; work and influence of women; women as ministers; women as artists and musicians; women as physicians; literature; bibliography; women as editors and translators; women as authors and compilers; English prose: women as authors; English poetry; women as authors; American prose; American poetry; French; German; other languages; periodicals.

for the Woman's Journal; through essays on society for Harper's Bazar; through literary essays on various phases of womanhood; and through fiction portraying certain types of women. Lastly, Higginson's personal interest and encouragement were responsible for the immediate recognition of Helen Hunt Jackson and Harriet Prescott Spofford and the tardy acclaim of Emily Dickinson. It is understandable, therefore, that a versifier should express admiration for this gallant reformer in lines which summarize adequately the spirit with which Higginson attacked this problem of women's rights in his day.

Ladies, Honor to Your Knight
T. W. H.

Ladies all of high degree,
Who weave charms of poesy,
Or romances fair indite,
Rise, and honor do your knight;
Who so gallantly in field
Bears your token on his shield,
Championing your royal worth
In the full lists of the earth,
Caitiffs and false knights undoing,
Overriding and pursuing,
Pricking in his doughty heat
Many a bubble of conceit,
With a point as keen as fate,
To your honor dedicate;
And amid the babbling court
Of the world makes brave report,
Open-browed and without shame,
Of the glory of your fame
In the inviolate demesne
Where heavenly Sappho reigns the queen.

Never champion sound and hale,
Never errant pure and strong,
Searching earth for Holy Grail,
Searching earth, redressing wrong,--
Galahad or Red-Cross Knight,--
Entered lists in ladies' right,
Bearing truer blade than he,
Knight of modern chivalry!

Call for Sappho! garlands wind,
Honor him in conclave fall,
Daughters of the courts of mind,—
Kingdoms intellectual![185]

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[185] O. C. Auringer, The Critic, XX (February 13, 1892), pp. 104-105.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

As an ardent abolitionist and reformer, Higginson was active in his assistance of the fugitive slave and took a prominent part in the Thomas Sims and Anthony Burns affairs. He protested vigorously against the Missouri Compromise, the Fugitive Slave Law and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. He fought the Kansas Bill by encouraging emigrants to enter Kansas and settle as anti-slavery citizens. He himself accompanied a group and met Governor Geary and James H. Lane. He took Lane to his heart as the "Marion" of Kansas, but professed an open dislike for Governor Geary, which was probably based upon the fact that Geary supported President Pierce's pro-slavery administration.

Higginson was also strongly opposed to the Democrat government and supported Fremont as presidential candidate of the 1856 election. He was radically Disunionist, believing Disunion to be the only answer to the slavery question. He was instrumental in assisting John Brown in the Harper's Ferry incident and held that such "treason" was preferable to acquiescence to a government which denied human rights.

By 1861, the secession of the Southern States and the outbreak of the War caused Higginson to change his views. He supported the

Northern states in their effort to preserve the Union and within another year he entered military service as a colonel of a regiment of freed slaves.

His literary work pertaining to this early period includes his essays on insurrectionists and the memorials of leading abolitionists, among whom were William Lloyd Garrison, John Greeleaf Whittier, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner, and Theodore Parker.

During his two years of military service, Higginson kept a camp diary of his adventures and of his impressions of his Negro soldiers. These he later revamped into numerous essays for magazines which he collected into his Army Life in a Black Regiment. The book is considered the finest of this genre. In it he relates the expeditions into Confederate territory and the skirmishes involved. In one of these he was wounded.

Upon his return to civilian life, he took up a literary career as his profession. He edited the Harvard Memorial Biographies, translated Epitectus, and became State Historian of Massachusetts with the five-year task of editing in two volumes, Massachusetts in the Army and Navy in the War of 1861-1865.

In 1850 Higginson joined the ranks of the woman suffragists by signing a "Call" for a National Woman Rights Convention. For the decade before the Civil War, he contributed to the short-lived suffrage organ, The Una, and acted as officer, chairman, and lecturer at the yearly conventions. In 1853 he spoke for Woman Suffrage before the Massachusetts Legislature and throughout these years published suffrage tracts and a woman suffrage Almanac.

After the Civil War the former abolitionists joined the suffragists in advocating woman suffrage, but soon became entangled in the "Negro question" which eventually became the burning issue. The abolitionists, including Higginson, gave Negro enfranchisement precedence over woman suffrage which caused a split in the then active Equal Rights Association.

Higginson, with other Eastern suffragists, disapproved of the policies and associates of Susan B. Anthony and Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who were aided by George Francis Train to launch the suffrage paper, The Revolution. Higginson's silence regarding Miss Anthony and Mrs. Stanton is eloquent. Realizing that she could not depend on her former friends to support her suffrage activities, Susan B. Anthony, in desperation, formed a National Woman Suffrage Association in New York. Soon after, the Eastern suffragists also formed an association with the same name. Higginson supported this association, which was later called the American Woman Suffrage Association, and wrote for its organ, the Woman's Journal.

After the 1870's, Higginson appeared infrequently as speaker for fairs, bazaars, and conventions, but not in the capacity of officer. His work for the suffrage movement was recognized and honored in his declining years by the National American Suffrage Association.

From Higginson's essays on the "woman question" which deal with the "other half of the population," one may formulate his social theory. The essays on woman suffrage, which appeared in the Woman's Journal reveal his enthusiasm and zeal for a movement which would contribute to the advancement of women. In these early articles, Higginson disregarded any restricting qualifications regarding suffrage

and wholeheartedly espoused immediate enfranchisement for all women. He opposed Francis Parkman's federalism which objected to increasing the number of ignorant voters. Instead, Higginson placed an idealistic faith in the masses which he believed could take care of the evils of society and use the ballot for self-protection and self-respect. Later, he modified his views by expressing certain apprehensions over the probable evils which would be likely to develop with the granting of the ballot to women.

During the 1880's when Higginson began a column for Harper's Bazar, he was asked to avoid the controversial suffrage issues. He therefore touched on the manners and morals of society and frequently contrasted the ideal of American classless society with the petrified caste system of aristocracy in Europe. He believed that the environment of the country and the institution of democracy was responsible for the unique American temperament. He attributed the energy and vitality of the American to the fact that the American is able to govern himself and has a sense of equality with others. Although he feared that this freedom was letting slip the reins of good manners, he defended the vulgarity of which Americans were accused by pointing out that this fault is common in all countries.

At the turn of the century, when Socialism was breaking ground among labor parties, Higginson felt that the movement was "a leaning in the right direction," but protested vigorously when he was accused of being a Socialist. His few remarks on property and labor in which he refers to Edward Bellamy's and Henry George's theories, are too trivial in content to be taken seriously. Rather, they indicate the

fact that he was interested in the events occurring about him, but did not have a clear grasp of the movement or its implications, as he had in former years of the major reform movements of the nineteenth century.

Closely connected with Higginson's advocacy of suffrage for women was his belief that they should advance educationally, socially, and politically. For this reason he assisted several women and brought before the public the achievements of many more through his biographies.

In his efforts to assist women writers, Higginson set down some advice in a few essays which attracted the attention of feminine neophytes, especially Emily Dickinson. He also frequently commented on the new trend toward realism in which women figured. He believed that the realistic movement was originally impelled by the emphasis of Transcendentalists on the individual's worth. This emphasis had much to do with theoretic American democracy from which was springing a new school of local-color writers who were bringing to the fore the common, average American in his local environment. Even though Higginson approved of the use of dialect and colloquialisms so characteristic of this school, he cautioned against writing about subjects which were essentially worthless. He saw that modern writers did away with the "moral tag," which he applauded as an improvement in literature, but he warned against the use of undesirable materials such as that used by the rising school of naturalists.

Higginson's interest in women as writers and reformers led him to assist some of them materially. He was the literary adviser of

Harriet Prescott, Helen Hunt Jackson, and Emily Dickinson. He wrote several biographical memorials of women who had been his contemporaries. Among them were Lydia Maria Child and Julia Ward Howe. And he wrote an admirable book-length biography of Margaret Fuller. He also wrote a few essays for the Atlantic Monthly extolling the audacity and bravery of women in "Mademoiselle's Campaigns," and urged the practice of physical education and sensible dress in "Health of Our Girls." The ideal of womanhood he portrayed in "Greek Goddesses" and "Sappho." In his attempts at fiction he drew women characters who were essentially wooden and uninteresting. But these women reflect the types he had often discussed in his essays for the Woman's Journal and Harper's Bazar.

It is quite evident from this study that Higginson's life was diverse and full and that his contribution to American society was not small. It has seemed to this writer from the outset that Higginson was prompted by high altruistic and humanitarian motives. A closer examination of his life and writings has well confirmed that impression.

Although Higginson is rightfully looked upon today as a minor essayist, it must be remembered that the times in which he lived played an important part in shaping his literary career. In summarizing that career it may be truly said of him what a reviewer of the collected edition of his works remarked, "Colonel Higginson is one of the most venerable representatives of a type which is practically indigenous to the United States--the man of letters who also plays a serious part in public affairs."[186]

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[186]"Man of Letters as Reformer," Littell's Living Age, CCXXXIII (May 10, 1902), p. 373.

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"Waterlilies." Atlantic Monthly, September. Def. VI.

"Physical Courage." Atlantic Monthly, November.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

"Romance of History." Liberty Bell.

Woman's Rights Almanac for 1858. Comp. with Mrs. Lucy Stone.

1859 (Worcester)

"The Rationale of Spiritualism": a discourse, New York, March 6. Pph.

"Ought Women to learn the Alphabet?" Atlantic Monthly, February. Def. IV. Also published as a tract, Boston, 1870, and Manchester, England, 1873, and as Woman's Suffrage Tracts, No. 4, Boston, 1871.

"Letter to a Dyspeptic." Atlantic Monthly, April.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

"A Charge with Prince Rupert." Atlantic Monthly, June. Def. VII.

"Murder of the Innocents." Atlantic Monthly, September.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

1860 (Worcester)

"A Visit to John Brown's Household in 1859." Redpath, Public Life of Captain John Brown. Def. II.

"Maroons of Jamaica." Atlantic Monthly, February.
Same. Travellers and Outlaws, 1889.

"Maroons of Surinam." Atlantic Monthly, May.
Same. Travellers and Outlaws, 1889.

"Theodore Parker." Atlantic Monthly, Ocotober, Def. II.

"Fayal and the Portuguese." Atlantic Monthly, November. Def. VI.

1861 (Worcester)

"Barbarism and Civilization." Atlantic Monthly, January.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

"Gymnastics." Atlantic Monthly, March.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

"April Days." Atlantic Monthly, April. Def. VI.

"Denmark Vesey." Atlantic Monthly, June.
Same. Travellers and Outlaws, 1889.

"Ordeal by Battle." Atlantic Monthly, July.

"Nat Turner's Insurrection." Atlantic Monthly, August. Same.
Same. Travellers and Outlaws, 1889.

"My Outdoor Study." Atlantic Monthly, September.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

"A New Counterblast." Atlantic Monthly, December.
Same. Outdoor Papers, 1863.

1862 (Worcester, enlisted in September)

"Worcester Public Library, Second Annual Report." Pph.

"Snow." Atlantic Monthly, February. Def. VI.

"Letter to a Young Contributor." Atlantic Monthly, April.
Same. Atlantic Essays, 1871.
Same. Hints on Writing and Speech-Making, 1887.

"Health of Our Girls." Atlantic Monthly, June.

"Gabriel's Defeat." Atlantic Monthly, September.
Same. Travellers and Outlaws, 1889.

"Life of Birds." Atlantic Monthly, September. Def. VI.

"Procession of the Flowers." Atlantic Monthly, December. Def. VI.

1863 (War)

Outdoor Papers.

"The Puritan Minister." Atlantic Monthly, September.
Same. Atlantic Essays, 1871.

1864 (War, Newport)

"Regular and Volunteer Officers." Atlantic Monthly, September.

"A Night in the Water." Atlantic Monthly, October. Def. III.

"Leaves from an Officer's Journal." Atlantic Monthly, November and December.

"Book Notices." Atlantic Monthly; Friend of Progress.

1865 (Newport)

"Leaves from an Officer's Journal." Atlantic Monthly, January.

"Bequest of Spiritualism." Friend of Progress, February.

"Herbert Spencer." Friend of Progress, March.

"Up the St. Mary's." Atlantic Monthly, April. Def. III.

"Fair Play the Best Policy." Atlantic Monthly, May.

"Frances Power Cobbe." Friend of Progress, July.

"Up the St. John's." Atlantic Monthly, September. Def. III.

"Our Future Militia System." Atlantic Monthly, September.

Works of Epictetus. (tr.)
Same. Revised. 2 volumes, 1890. Same. Cambridge Classics.

"The Rhyme of the Master's Mate." Atlantic Monthly, XVI, 519.

Book notices and editorials. Atlantic Monthly, Commonwealth, Friend of Progress, Independent.

1866 (Newport)

"Children's Books of the Year." North American Review, January.

Harvard Memorial Biographies, 2 volumes, (ed.).

Same. Another edition. 2 volumes, 1867. Thirteen of these biographies were written by Higginson.

Book notices and editorials. Atlantic Monthly; Independent.

1867 (Newport)

"Newport Free Public Library." (Circular calling the attention of the community to its history, needs, etc.) Pph.

"Nonsense of It." Leaflet. Replies to arguments against woman suffrage.

"A Plea for Culture." Atlantic Monthly, January.
Same. Atlantic Essays, 1871.

"Charlotte P. Hawes." Radical, January.

"A Driftwood Fire." Atlantic Monthly, February. Def. V.

"Out on Picket." Atlantic Monthly, March. Def. III.

"The Haunted Window." Atlantic Monthly, April.
Same. Oldport Days, 1873.

"Oldport in Winter." Atlantic Monthly, May. Def. V.

"Negro Spirituals." Atlantic Monthly, June. Def. III.

"An Artist's Dream." Atlantic Monthly, July. Def. V, under the title "An Artist's Creation."

"Up the Edisto." Atlantic Monthly, August. Def. III.

"Sunshine and Petrarch." Atlantic Monthly, Sept. Def. V.

"Literature as an Art." Atlantic Monthly, December.
Same. Atlantic Essays, 1871.

Articles. Independent; Nation.

1868 (Newport)

"Newport Free Library, President's Report, 1867-68." Pph.

"Lydia Maria Child;" "Margaret Fuller Ossoli." Eminent Women of the Age by various authors.

"Oldport Wharves." Atlantic Monthly, January. Def. V.

"The Pedigree of Liberalism." Radical, March.

"The American Lecture System." Macmillan's Magazine, May.
Same. Littell's Living Age, June 6.

Child Pictures from Dickens. Adapted.

Book notices and editorials. Independent. The book notices include a series, Live Americans, giving accounts of Longfellow, Lowell, and others.

1869 (Newport)

Malbone. Same, Atlantic Monthly, January-June.

Ought Women To Vote?

"Memoir of Dr. Thaddeus William Harris." Pph. Def. II. Reprinted from Harris's Entomological Correspondence.

Preface. Erckmann-Chatrian. Mme. Therese. Translated by C. L. Forten.

"Immortality." Address (Boston), February 21, 1869. Radical, March.

"Greek Goddesses." Atlantic Monthly, July. Def. VII. Translated into French in the Revue Britannique, October, 1869, and also into modern Greek.

"Letters to Country Boys." Hearth and Home.

Book notices and editorials. Atlantic Monthly; Independent; New York Tribune.

1870 (Newport)

Army Life in a Black Regiment. Def. III. Same. translated into French under the title Vie militaire dans un regiment noir. Paris, 1884.

Decoration Day Address, Mount Auburn, May 30. Broadside.
Same. Reed and others (eds.), Modern Eloquence, Vol. 8. 1901.

"Americanism in Literature." Atlantic Monthly, January.
Same. Atlantic Essays, 1871.

"A Shadow." Atlantic Monthly, July. Def. VI.

"Footpaths." Atlantic Monthly, November. Def. VI.

"Our Menagerie." Our Young Folks.

"Swimming." Atlantic Almanac.

Book notices and editorials. Atlantic Monthly; Independent; Index; New York Tribune; Woman's Journal.

1871 (Newport)

Atlantic Essays.

"Madam Delia's Expectations." Atlantic Monthly, January.
Same. Oldport Days, 1873.

"The Sympathy of Religions." Radical, February. Def. VII.
Published as a pamphlet, Boston, 1871; reprinted, London, 1872, and Boston, enlarged, 1876; reprinted in Unity Church-Door Pulpit, Chicago, June 16, 1885; reprinted in World's Parliament of Religions, Vol. 1, Chicago, 1893; translated under the title, L'affinite des religions, by Mrs. Maria E. MacKaye, Paris, 1898.

"Plutarch's Morals." Radical, March.

"Unpublished Letters from Theodore Parker." Radical, May.

"Buddhist Path of Virtue." Radical, June.

"Sappho." Atlantic Monthly, July. Def. VII.

"An Evening with Mrs. Hawthorne." Atlantic Monthly, October. Def. II.

"On an Old Latin Textbook." Atlantic Monthly, October. Def. VII.

Book notice of Verses, by "H.H." Atlantic Monthly, Recent Literature.

Editorials. Independent; Index; New York Tribune (including letters from Newport and from Harvard College); Woman's Journal.

1872 (Newport)

"A Day of Scottish Games." Scribner's Monthly, January.

"In a Wherry." Atlantic Monthly, February. Def. V.

"Character of Buddha." Index, March 16.

"Hawthorne's Last Bequest." Scribner's Monthly, November.

Editorials. Index; Woman's Journal.

1873 (Newport)

Oldport Days.

"Are You a Christian?" Pph. Same. Index, January 25.

"Higher Education of Woman": A paper before the Social Science Convention, May 14. Pph.

"Intercollegiate Scholarships." Scribner's Monthly, January.

Editorials. Index; Woman's Journal.

1874 (Newport)

"The Baby of the Regiment." Whittier (comp.), Child Life in Prose. Reprinted from Army Life in a Black Regiment, 1870.

"How the American Revolution Opened." Oliver Optic's Magazine. Same. Young Folks' History of the United States, 1875.

"Charles Dudley Warner." Scribner's Monthly, January.

"Decoration." (Poem.) Scribner's Monthly, June. Def. VI.

"Old Dutch Times in New York." St. Nicholas, September. Same. Young Folks' History of the United States, 1875.

Editorials. Independent, Woman's Journal.

1875 (Newport)

English Statesmen. Brief Biographies of European Public Men Series. Edited the three other volumes in this series.

Young Folks' History of the United States. Translated into French (two editions), Paris, 1875; into German, Stuttgart, 1876; into Italian, 1888.

Questions on Higginson's Young Folks' History of the United States. For the use of teachers. Pph.

"Life of Emerson." Johnson's Universal Cyclopedia.

"The Word Philanthropy." Free Religious Association, Freedom and Fellowship in Religion. Def. VI.

Introductory Address. Free Religious Association. Pph.

"The Gymnasium and Gymnastics in Harvard College. Vaille and Clark (comp.), Harvard Book, Vol. II.

1876 (Newport)

"History of the Public School System in Rhode Island." History of Public Education in Rhode Island, 1636-1876.

"A Moonglade." Laurel Leaves. Published by W. F. Gill. Def. V.

Speech at memorial service for Dr. S. G. Howe. Howe, Mrs. Julia Ward. Memoir of Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe. Def. II.

With Thomas H. Clarke. "A Sketch of the Public Schools in the City of Newport." History of Public Education in Rhode Island.

"Childhood's Fancies." Scribner's Monthly, January.

"Lowell's Among My Books." Second Series. Scribner's Monthly, March. Culture and Progress.

"Story of the Signing." /Declaration of Independence./ Scribner's Monthly, July.

1877 (Newport)

/Education in/ Rhode Island. Kiddle and Schem. Cyclopaedia of Education.

"Intercollegiate Literary Association Report." Pph.

(Comp.) A Book of American Explorers. Young Folks' Series.

Book notices and editorials. Nation, Woman's Journal.
A portion of the book notices in the Nation were called Poetry of the Month, later entitled Recent Poetry. The reviews were continued to Feb., 1904.

1878 (Cambridge - Trip to Europe)

"Speech at Conference of Liberal Thinkers," London, June 13. Pph.

"Letter on Physical and Intellectual Habits." Holbrook. Hygiene of the Brain Nerves.

"R. G. White." Atlantic Monthly, May. Contributors' Club.

"Some War Scenes Revisited." Atlantic Monthly, July.
Reprinted in Def. III under the title "Fourteen Years After."

"Saxe Holm's Botany." Atlantic Monthly, July. Contributors' Club.

"An Irish Heart." Scribner's Monthly, December.

Editorials. Woman's Journal.

1879 (Cambridge, from this time)

Short Studies of American Authors. First published in Literary World.

"Intercollegiate Literary Association: Its History, Aims, and Results." Pph.

"Speech at Frothingham Festival, New York," April 22. Pph.

"Joseph Cook." Atlantic Monthly, March. Contributors' Club.

"New England Life." Atlantic Monthly, June. Contributors' Club.

"Recent Essays." North American Review, July.

"Speech at Library Convention in Boston, June-July." Library Journal, September-October.

With others. "Other Side of the Woman Question." North American Review, November.

Editorials. Woman's Journal.

1880 (In Legislature)

"From the Death of Winthrop to Philip's War." Winsor, ed. Memorial History of Boston, vol. I.

"A Revolutionary Congressman on Horseback." Scribner's Monthly, January. Same. Travellers and Outlaws, 1889.

"Dwelling-Places."(Poem.) Scribner's Monthly, March. Def. VI.

"The Reed Immortal." (Poem.) Atlantic Monthly, August. Def. VI.

"Two Anti-Slavery Leaders." [William Lloyd Garrison and Levi Coffin.] International Review, August.

"Howells's Undiscovered Country." Scribner's Monthly, September.

"A Search for the Pleiades." Atlantic Monthly, November. Def. VI.

Editorials. Harvard Register, Woman's Journal.

1881

Common Sense About Women. Reprinted in London, 1890, 4th ed., with some omissions. Tr. into German from the English ed. under the title Die Frauenfrage un der gesunde Menschenverstand, by Eugenie Jacobi, 1895.

Young Folks' History of the United States. 2d ed. Printed in raised type by the Howe Memorial Press, Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind.

"French and Indian Wars." Winsor, ed. Memorial History of Boston, vol. II.

"Address at the Celebration of the Battle of Cowpens, Spartanburg, South Carolina," May 11. Pph.

Same. In Reed and others, eds. Modern Eloquence, vol. 8. 1901.

"Oration." Exercises in Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the Settlement of Cambridge, December 28, 1880.

"French Radical Eloquence." Reed, ed. The City and the Sea, with other Cambridge Contributions in aid of the Hospital Fund.

"Memorial Ode /May 30/." With Long's Oration. Pph. Def. VI. Also printed separately.

"Notice of Benjamin Peirce." King, comp. Memorial Collection.

"Carlyle's Laugh." Atlantic Monthly, October. Reprinted in Carlyle's Laugh and Other Surprises, 1909.

"Sellar's Roman Poets of the Republic." Atlantic Monthly, October.

"Short March with the Guard." /Verses./ Sword and Pen, December 9.

Book Notices and Editorials. Christian Register, Literary World, Woman's Journal.

1882

Young Folks' History of the United States. New ed., with additional chapters.

"Speech at Rev. Samuel Johnson's funeral." Samuel Johnson: A Memorial. Pph.

With others. "Testimony on Charles River Railroad, Feb. 13." Pph.

"The Brook Farm Period." Demorest's Monthly, July.

"First Americans." Harper's Monthly Magazine, August.

"Visit of the Vikings." Harper's Monthly Magazine, September.

"Spanish Discoverers." Harper's Monthly Magazine, October.
The last three articles were published later in Higginson's Larger History of the United States (1885), and in Higginson and Mac Donald's History of the United States (1905).

"The Baby Sorceress." /Sonnet./ Century Magazine, November. Def. VI.

Editorials and other articles. Index, Nation, Woman's Journal.

1883

"Dedicatory Address at unveiling of the statue of John Bridge," September 20, 1882. Cambridge City Document, 1883.

"Why do Children dislike History?" Methods of Teaching History. Hall's Pedagogical Library, vol. I.

"Report on the Parker Library." Boston Public Library. 31st Annual Report. Pph.

"Old English Seamen." Harper's Monthly Magazine, January.

"French Voyageurs." Harper's Monthly Magazine, March.

"Negro Race in America." Atlantic Monthly, April.

"Conway's Emerson at Home and Abroad." Century Magazine, April.

"An English Nation." Harper's Monthly Magazine, April.

"The Hundred Years' War." Harper's Monthly Magazine, June.

"Second Generation of English in America." Harper's Monthly Magazine, July.

"The British Yoke." Harper's Monthly Magazine, August.

"Dawning of Independence." Harper's Monthly Magazine, October.
The foregoing articles in Harper's Magazine were published later in Higginson's Larger History of the United States (1885), and in Higginson's and MacDonald's History of the United States (1905).

"Lodge's Webster." Atlantic Monthly, October.

Book notices and articles. Nation.

1884

/Life of/ Margaret Fuller Ossoli. American Men of Letters.

"Wendell Phillips." Pph. Def. II. Reprinted from the Nation, February 7, 1884.

"Young Men's Party." Pph. Reprinted from the New York Evening Post, October 4, 1884.

Palmer's Odyssey." Atlantic Monthly, October.

1885

Larger History of the United States.

"Oration." Memorial Services in the City of Cambridge on the Day of the Funeral of General Grant, August 8. Pph.

"Julian Hawthorne's Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife." Atlantic Monthly, February.

"American Flash Language in 1793." Science, May 8.

"Lowell in England." Literary World, June 27.

"H. H." Critic, August 22.

"Mrs. Helen Jackson, 'H. H.'" Century Magazine, December. Def. II.

With others. "Is Boston losing its Literary Prestige?" Brooklyn Magazine, December.

Began a series of articles, entitled Women and Men, Harper's Bazar.

1886

"The Monarch of Dreams." Def. V.
A German translation of this story appeared in the New York Freie Zeitung of August 18, 1889, the translator being Louis Wagele and the title Der Monarch seiner Traume. It is said to have also appeared in French, but no particulars are known.

"William Lloyd Garrison." Atlantic Monthly, January. Def. II.

"Grant." Atlantic Monthly, March, September. Def. II.

"How I Was Educated." Forum, April.
Same. Pph. Republished in 1887 in a volume entitled The College and the Church.

"To the Memory of 'H. H.'" /Sonnet./ Century Magazine, May. Def. VI.

"Reminiscences of Helen Jackson." New Princeton Review, July.

"Old Salem Sea-Captains." Harper's Monthly Magazine, September.
Same. Travellers and Outlaws. 1889.

"E. P. Whipple." Atlantic Monthly, September.
Same. Short Studies of American Authors.

"Mr. Hamerton on Literature in a Republic." Harvard Monthly, December.

Articles. Critic, Independent, Good Cheer, Harper's Bazar, Nation.

1887

Hints on Writing and Speech-making.

Women and Men. Reprinted from Harper's Bazar.

"For Self-Respect and Self-Protection: Speech at the Annual Meeting of the American Woman Suffrage Association," Philadelphia, November 1. Pph. and leaflet.

Preface. Stevens. Around the World on a Bicycle.

Speeches, letters, etc., 1853-87. Stanton and others, eds. History of Woman Suffrage. 4 vols.

"Unsolved Problems in Woman Suffrage." Forum, January. Reprinted later as a pamphlet.

"Mr. Hamerton on Literature in a Republic." Harvard Monthly, January.

"Hayne, Paul Hamilton." Chautauquan, January.

"Lanier, Sidney." Chautauquan, April.

"A Missent Letter." Strawbridge and Clothier's Quarterly, vol. 6, no. 2. Summer no. Same. Woman's Journal, August 27.

"Sub Pondere Crescit." [Sonnet.] Century Magazine, September. Def. VI.

"A June Migration." Appalachia, December.

Articles. Harper's Bazar, Independent.

1888

Short Studies of American Authors. Rev. and enl.

"Address." Reunion of the Free-Soilers of 1848-1852, Boston, June 28. Pph.

"John Brown." Appletons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography.

"English Sources of American Dialect." American Antiquarian Society. Proceedings. New series, vol. 4.

"Howell's Modern Italian Poets." Nation, January 5.

"A Precursor of Hawthorne [William Austin]." Independent. March 29.

"Speech." Protest against the Majority Report on the Employment and Schooling of Children, and against any Legislative Interference with Private Schools, Massachusetts House Document, No. 19. Pph.

"A Jar of Rose Leaves." [Poem.] Scribner's Magazine, March.

"The Snowing of the Pines." [Poem.] Scribner's Magazine, July.

1889

The Afternoon Landscape: Poems and Translations.

Travellers and Outlaws.

"Three Outdoor Papers." Riverside Literature Series. Pph.

"Lowell in Cambridge." Critic, February 23.

"Vestis Angelica." [Poem.] Scribner's Magazine, March. Def. VI

"Nils's Garden." [A story.] Century Magazine, July.

"Ode to a Butterfly." [Poem.] Century Magazine, November. Def. VI.

1890

In a Fair Country: Essays from Outdoor Papers. Illustrated by Irene E. Jerome.

"Cambridge Public Library: Plan reported to the Book Committee." Pph.

"Cambridge: Literature." Hurd, comp. History of Middlesex County, vol. I.

"Opening Address." Browning Society of Boston. Memorial to Robert Browning, January 28.

"A World Literature." Century Magazine, January.

"Letter Relating to the Cambridge Public Library." Cambridge Tribune, March 15.

"Richard Henry Dana." Cambridge Tribune, December 20.

Ed. with Mrs. Ellen H. Bigelow. American Sonnets. Preface by Higginson.

Ed. with Mrs. Mabel L. Todd. Poems, by Emily Dickinson. Preface by Higginson.

"Do Americans Hate England?" North American Review, October.

1891

"Life of Francis Higginson." Makers of America.

"On the Steps of the Hall (University Hall, August 28, 1837)." Privately printed. Leaflet.
Poem inscribed to the class of 1841, Harvard University.

"Address at the 100th Anniversary, January 24." Massachusetts Historical Society. Proceedings.

"Landmarks of Progress." Address at the 40th Anniversary of the National Woman's Rights Convention. Woman's Journal, February 14.

"Rabiah's Defence." [Poem.] Atlantic Monthly, September. Def. VI.

"Emily Dickinson's Letters." Atlantic Monthly, October.

"The Two Lessons." [Sonnet.] Century Magazine, December. Def. VI.

"Glimpses of Authors." Brains, October 15-January 1, 1892.

Ed. with Mrs. Mabel L. Todd. Poems, by Emily Dickinson. 2d series.

Ed. in part. The Rindge Gifts to Cambridge. [City publication.]

Articles. Harper's Bazar, Independent.

1892

Concerning All of Us.

"The New World and the New Book." An Address delivered before the Nineteenth Century Club of New York City, January 15, 1891, with kindred essays.

"Literature in a Republic: A Lecture." Reed and others, eds. Modern Eloquence, vol. 5.

"Tribute to Lowell." Massachusetts Commandery of the Loyal Legion. In Memoriam. Pph. Same. Cambridge Tribune, February 20.

"Youth and Literary Life." Lectures to Young Men, New York. Pph.

"English Ancestry of the Higginson Family." New England Historical and Genealogical Register, April.

"An Egyptian Banquet." [Sonnet.] Scribner's Magazine, April. Def. VI.

"The Sleeping Car." [Poem.] Century Magazine, May. Def. VI.

"School, College, Library." Cosmopolitan Magazine, May.

"A World Outside of Science." New World, December.
Same. Pph.
Same. Book and Heart. 1897.

With Mrs. Florence W. Jaques. "List of Battles and casualties of Massachusetts regiments during the war of the Rebellion." New England Historical and Genealogical Register, January.

Articles. Nation.

1893

"Cambridge Public Library Report." Pph.

"Straight Lines or Oblique Lines?" Woman Suffrage Leaflet, November.

With Mrs. Mary T. Higginson. Such as They Are: Poems.

With Edward Channing. English History for American Readers.

"Speech on the Turning-Point in the History of the Parliament of Religions." World's Parliament of Religions, vol. I.

"On Boston." St. Nicholas, January.

1894

"Cambridge Public Library Report." Pph.

"Note /to/ Books and Reading, by Sir John Lubbock." Woman's Book, vol. 2.

"Introduction." Speeches and Addresses of William E. Russell.

"How to Use a Public Library." Golden Rule, September 27.

"The Prospect Union and the Public Library." Prospect Union Review, October 24.

"How to Read Magazines." Golden Rule, November 15.

1895

Massachusetts in the Army and Navy during the War of 1861-65. Vol. 2.

"The Fairy Coursers." /Poem./ Cambridge Sketches, by Cambridge authors.

"The Woman Who Most Influenced Me." Ladies' Home Journal, October.

"A Young Girl's Library." Ladies' Home Journal, November.

Articles. Boston Evening Transcript, Harper's Bazar, Nation.

1896

Massachusetts in the Army and Navy during the War of 1861-65. Vol. I.

Prefatory Note. Aspinwall. Short Stories for Short People.

"The School of Jingoes." Essays from the Chap-Book.

"Life in Cambridge Town." Gilman, ed. Cambridge of 1896.

"Octavius Brooks Frothingham." New World, March.

"A Keats Manuscript." Forum, June.
Same. Book and Heart. 1897.

"The Romance of a Brown-Paper Parcel." Century Magazine, August.

"A Bookshelf in the Kitchen." Ladies' Home Journal, November.

"Cheerful Yesterdays." Atlantic Monthly, November-December. Def. I.

"Early Free Churches." Free Church Record, April.

(Comp.) Rough list in manuscript of his Galatea collection of books, in the Boston Public Library, relating to women. With newspaper scraps, printed titles, and a supplementary accessions catalogue. A comment on the Galatea collection may be found in the Boston Evening Transcript, February 18, 1896.

(Comp.) Scrapbook of periodical articles, newspaper cuttings, and portraits relating to James Russell Lowell. Presented to the Cambridge Public Library, 1896.

Articles. Boston Evening Transcript, Harper's Bazar, Harper's Weekly, Independent, Nation, Outlook, Youth's Companion.

1897

Book and Heart.

Procession of the Flowers, and kindred papers. Def. VI.

"The Biography of Browning's Fame." Browning Society of Boston. Papers.

"Educational Conditions and Problems." [Speech at the Annual Meeting of the Harvard Teachers' Association, March 6.] Educational Review, May.

"Cheerful Yesterdays." Atlantic Monthly, January-May. Def. I.

"Colored Troops under Fire." Century Magazine, June.

"Gottingen and Harvard Eighty Years Ago." Harvard Graduates' Magazine, September.

"Literary London Twenty Years Ago." Atlantic Monthly, December.

"The Shaw Memorial and the Sculptor, St. Gaudens," Century Magazine, June.

"Such Stuff as Dreams are Made of." [Poem.] Century Magazine, July.

1898

Cheerful Yesterdays. Def. I.

"Cambridge Public Library Report." Pph.

Tales of the Enchanted Islands of the Atlantic.

With Edward Channing. English History for Americans. New edition of their English History for American Readers. 1893.

"Harriet Beecher Stowe." [Preface.] Stowe. Uncle Tom's Cabin. New edition.

[Sketches of] Brown, Cooper, and Thoreau." Carpenter, ed. American Prose.

"Literary Paris Twenty Years Ago." Atlantic Monthly, January.

"On the Outskirts of Public Life." Atlantic Monthly, February.

"The First Black Regiment." Outlook, July 2.

"Anti-Slavery Days." Outlook, September 3.

Articles. Nation, Outlook.

1899

Contemporaries. Def. II.
Contents:
Ralph Waldo Emerson.
Theodore Parker.

Amos Bronson Alcott.
John Greenleaf Whittier.
Walt Whitman.
Sidney Lanier.
An Evening with Mrs. Hawthorne.
Lydia Maria Child.
Helen Hunt Jackson ("H. H.").
John Holmes.
Thaddeus William Harris.
A Visit to John Brown's Household in 1859.
William Lloyd Garrison.
Wendell Phillips.
Charles Sumner.
Dr. Howe's Anti-Slavery Career.
Ulysses Simpson Grant.
The Eccentricities of Reformers.
The Road to England.

Old Cambridge.
Contents:
I. Old Cambridge.
II. Old Cambridge in Three Literary Epochs.
III. Holmes.
IV. Longfellow.
V. Lowell.

"Where Liberty is Not, there is My Country." Anti-Imperialist Leaflet, no. 19. Reprinted from Harper's Bazar, August 12, 1899.

With William Taggard Piper. "Cambridge Public Library Report." Pph.

"Wendell Phillips." Encyclopaedia Britannica.

"My Literary Neighbors." Outlook, February 4.

"His Brother's Brother [John Holmes]." Atlantic Monthly, August.

"The Road to England." Atlantic Monthly, October.

Articles. Nation, Outlook.

1900

Writings. Definitive edition, 7 volumes.
Vol. 1. Cheerful Yesterdays. Chapters first printed in Atlantic Monthly.
2. Contemporaries. Most of the sketches previously printed.
3. AArmy Life in a Black Regiment. Previously printed.
4. WWomen and the Alphabet. Chiefly articles printed in Harper's Bazar.
5. Studies in Romance. Includes Malbone, The Monarch of Dreams, Oldport Days [part of].

6. Outdoor Studies. Mostly previously printed essays and poems.
7. Studies in History and Letters. Most of these essays previously printed.

"The Alliance between Pilgrim and Puritan in Massachusetts." An Address delivered before the Old Planters' Society, Salem, June 9, 1900. Pph.

"Reasons for Voting for Bryan." Leaflet. Reprinted from the Springfield Daily Republican, September, 1900.

With W. L. Garrison and G. S. Boutwell. "How Should a Colored Man Vote in 1900?" Leaflet. Reprinted from the Boston Herald, October 11, 1900.

"The Reoccupation of Jacksonville in 1893." Massachusetts Commandery of the Loyal Legion. Civil War Papers, vol. 2.

"Addresses and Remarks." Free Religious Association. Proceedings, 1867-1900.

"Octavius Brooks Frothingham." Prophets of Liberalism: Six Addresses before the Free Religious Association of America. Pph.

"Education and the Public Library." /Typewritten/ Boston Public Library. Free Lectures, 1900.

"English and American Phrases." Independent, February 15,

"New England Type." Outlook, March 17.

Articles. Independent, Outlook.

1901

"American Orators and Oratory: Being a Report of Lectures delivered at Western Reserve University."

With William J. Rolfe. "Cambridge Public Library Report." Pph.

"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came." Poet-Lore, April-June.

Articles. Boston Evening Transcript, Independent, Outlook.

1902

/Life of/ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. American Men of Letters.

/Life of/ John Greenleaf Whittier. English Men of Letters.

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1904

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1906

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"Massasoit." Massasoit Memorial. Pph.

"Julia Ward Howe." Outlook, January 26.

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