

as a respectable approach to the Ideal? Or, alas, is it not such an amorphous brazen sooterkin, bred of prurient heat and darkness, as falls, if well seen into, far below the Real? The Real, if you will stand by it, is respectable. The coarsest hob-nailed pair of shoes, if honestly made according to the laws of fact and leather, are not ugly: they are honest, and fit for their object; the highest eye may look on them without displeasure, nay with a kind of satisfaction. This rude packing-case, it is faithfully made; square to the rule, and formed with rough and ready strength against injury; - fit for its use; not a pretentious *hypocrisy*, but a modest serviceable *fact*; whoever pleases to look upon it, will find the image of a humble manfulness in it, and will pass on with some infinitesimal impulse to thank the gods.

But this your "Ideal," my misguided fellow-citizens? Good Heavens, are you in the least aware what damage, in the very sources of their existence, men get from Cockney Sooterkins saluting, them publicly as models of Beauty? I charitably feel you have not the smallest notion of it, or you would shriek at the proposal! Can you, my misguided friends, think it humane to set up,

names in the Newspapers at the cheap price of five pounds, are very prompt with, - another question, not nearly so easy of solution. Namely, this quite preliminary question: Will it permanently profit mankind to have such a Hero as this of yours set up for their admiration, for their imitation and emulation; or will it, so far as they do not reject and with success disregard it altogether, unspeakably tend to damage and disprofit them? In a word, does this Hero's memory deserve a high column; are you sure it does not deserve a deep coalshaft rather? This is an entirely fundamental question! Till this question be answered well in the affirmative, there ought to be a total stop of progress; the misguided citizens ought to be admonished, and even gently constrained, to take back their five-pound notes; to desist from their rash deleterious enterprise, and retire to their affairs, a repentant body of misguided citizens.

But farther still, and supposing the first question perfectly disposed of, there comes a second, grave too, though much less peremptory: Is this Statue of yours a worthy commemoration of a sacred man? Is it so excellent in point of Art that we can, with credit, set it up in our market-places

As to the Statues, I know they are but symptoms of Anarchy; it is not they, it is the Anarchy, that one is anxious to see abated. Remedy for the Statues will be possible; and, as a small help, undoubtedly it too, in the mean time, is desirable. Every symptom you drive-in being a curtailment of the malady, by all means cure this Statue-building if you can! It will be one folly and misery less.

Government is loth to interfere with the pursuits of any class of citizens; and ofttest looks on in silence while follies are committed. But Government does interfere to prevent afflictive accumulations on the streets, malodorous or other unsanitary public procedures of an extensive sort; regulates gullydrains, cesspools; prohibits the piling-up of dunghheaps, and is especially strict on the matter of indecent exposures. Wherever the health of the citizens is concerned, much more where their souls' health, and as it were their very salvation, is concerned, all Governments that are not chimerical make haste to interfere.

Now if dunghheaps laid on the streets, afflictive to the mere nostrils, are a subject for interference, what, we ask, are high columns, raised by

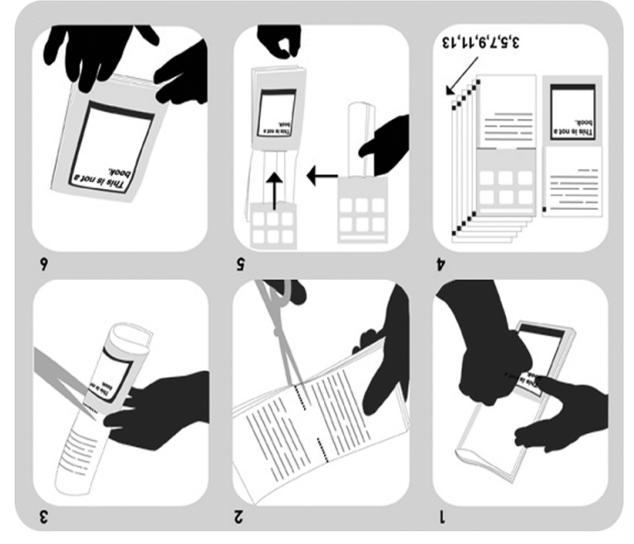
# Hudson's Statue Part 4

Thomas Carlyle

of doing business; the time has run out, the debt it appears is due." Will the law of gravitation "abate" for you? Gravitation acts at the rate of sixteen feet per second, in spite of sll prayer. Were it the crash of a Solar System, or the fall of a Yarmouth Herring, all one to gravitation. Is the fall of a stone certain; and the fruit of an un wisdom doubtful? You unfortunate beings! Have you forgotten it; in this immense improvement of machinery, cheapening of cotton, and general astonishing progress of the species lately? With such extension of journals, human cultures, universities, periodic and other literatures, mechanics' institutes, reform of prison-discipline, abolition of capital punishment, enfranchisement by ballot, report of parliamentary speeches, and singing for the million? You did not know that the Universe had laws of right and wrong; you fancied the Universe was an oblivious greedy blockhead, like one of yourselves; attentive to scrip mainly; and willing, where there was no practical scrip, to forget and forgive? And so, amid such universal blossoming-forth of useful knowledges, miraculous to the thinking editor everywhere, - the soul of all "knowledge," not knowing which a

To this extent, I think the Woods-and-Forests might reasonably interfere.

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prurient stupidity and public delusion, to blockheads whose memory does in eternal fact deserve the sinking of a coal shaft rather? Give to every one what he deserves, what really is his: in all scenes and situations thou shalt do that, - or in very truth woe will betide thee, as sure as thou art living, and as thy Maker lives. Blockhead, this big adventurer swollen to the edge of bursting, he is not "great" and honourable; he is huge and abominable! Thou shalt honour the right man, and not honour the wrong, under penalties of an alarming nature. Honour Barabbas the Robber, thou shalt sell old-clothes through the cities of the world; shalt accumulate sordid moneys, with a curse on every coin of them, and be spit upon for eighteen hundred years. Raise statues to the swollen adventurer as if he were great, sacrifice oblations to the King of Scrip, - unfortunate mortals, you will dearly pay for it yet. Quiet as Nature's countinghouse and scrip-ledgers are, no faintest item is ever blotted out from them, for or against; and to the last doit that account too will have to be settled. Rigorous as Destiny; - she *is* Destiny. Chancery or Fetter Lane is soft to her, when the day of settlement comes. With her. in the way of abatement, of oblivion, neither gods nor man prevail. "Abatement? That is not our way

authority, - cannot some of them, in the name of sense and common decency, interfere at least thus far? Namely, to admonish the misguided citizens, subscribers to the next Brazen Monster, or sad sculptural solecism, the emblem of far sadder moral ones and exhort them, three successive times, to make warming-pans of it and repent; - or failing that, finding them obstinate, to say with authority

*Well then, persist; set up your Brazen Calf, ye misguided citizens, and worship it, you, since you will and can. But observe, let it be done in secret: not in public; we say, in secret, at your peril! You have pleased to create a new Monster into this world; but to make him patent to public view, we for our part beg not to please. Observe, therefore. Build a high enough brick case or joss-house for your Brazen calf; with undiaphanous walls, and lighted by sky-windows only: put your Monster into that, and keep him there. Thither go at your pleasure, there assemble yourselves, and worship your bellyful, you absurd idolaters; ruin your own souls only. and leave the poor Population alone; the poor speechless unconscious Population whom we are bound to protect, and will!*

man is dark and reduced to the condition of a beaver, has been omitted by you? You have omitted it, and you should have included it! The thinking editor never missed it, so busy wondering and worshiping elsewhere; but it is not here.

And alas, apart from editors, are there not men appointed specially keep you in mind of it; solemnly set apart for that object, thousands of years ago! Crabbe, descanting "on the so-called Christian Clerus, has this wild passage:

*Legions of them, in their black or other gowns, I still meet in every country; masquerading, in strange costume of body, and still stranger of soul; mumming, primming, grimacing, - poor devils, shamming, and endeavouring not to sham: that is the sad fact. Brave men many of them, after their sort; and in a position which we may, admit to be wonderful and dreadful! On the outside of their heads some singular head gear, tulip-mitre, felt coalscuttle, purple hat; and in the inside, - I must say, such a Theory of God Almighty's Universe as I, for my share, am right thankful to have no concern with at all! I think, on the whole, as broken-winged, self-strangled, monstrous a mass of incoherent incredibilities, as ever dwelt in the human brain before. O God,*

in its present uncomfortable form, this blotch of mismolten copper and zinc, out of which good warming-pans might be made? That all men should see this; innocent young creatures, still in arms, be taught to think this beautiful; - and perhaps women in an interesting situation look up to it as they pass? I put it to your religious feeling. to your principles as men and fathers of families!

These questions the Woods-and-Forests, or some other Public Tribunal constituted for the purpose, really ought to ask, in a deliberate speaking manner, on the part of the speechless suffering Populations: it is the preliminary of all useful Statue-building. Till both these questions are well answered, the Woods-and-Forests should refuse permission; advise the misguided citizens to go home and repent. Really, if this Statue-humour go on, and grow as it has lately done, there will be such a Public-Statue Board requisite; or the Woods-and-Forests will have to interfere with such imperfect law as now is.

The Woods-and-Forests, or if not they, then the Commissioners of Sewers, Sanitary Board, Scavenger Board, Cleansing Committee, or whoever holds or call usurp a little of the aedile

*giver of Light, hater of Darkness, of Hypocrisy and Cowardice, how long, how long!*

For two centuries now it lasts. The men whom God has made, whole nations and generations of them, are steeped in Hypocrisy from their birth upwards; taught that external varnish is the chief duty of man, that the vice which is the deepest in Gehenna is the virtue highest in Heaven. Out of which, do you ask what follows? Look round on a world all bristling with insurrectionary pikes; Kings and Papas flying like detected coiners; and in their stead Icaria, Red Republic, new religion of the Anti-Virgin, Literature of Desperation curiously conjoined with Phallus-Worship, too clearly heralding centuries of bottomless Anarchy: hitherto one in the million looking with mournful recognition on it, silently with sad thoughts too unutterable; and to help in healing it not one anywhere hitherto. -

But as to Statues, I really think the Woods-and-Forests ought to interfere. When a company of persons have determined to set up a Brazen Image, there decidedly arises, besides the question of their own five-pound subscriptions, which men of spirit and money-capital without employment, and with a prospect of seeing their