
_Den Haag._

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**CAPTAIN SWORD AND CAPTAIN PEN BY LEIGH HUNT.**

In Henry Morley's _Of English Literature in the Reign of Victoria, With a Glance at the Past_, Tauchnitz Ed., p. 235, it is said of Leigh Hunt: "In 1835 he published a poem, condemning the War Spirit. It was entitled 'Captain Sword and Captain Pen' and had Milton's lines from Paradise Regained for its motto:

"If there be in glory ought of good,  
It may by means far different be attained,  
Without ambition, war, or violence."

In this spirit Leigh Hunt passed into the reign of Victoria. Years had sweetened a temper always gentle, and the civilizing touch of his genius was to be felt even in the weakest of his works."

Let us hear what Leigh Hunt, the poet, essayist and public journalist, a man close in touch with the public life of the first half of the 19th cent, felt urged to publish against that spirit of war, once more rampant among the nations now. The volume of his _Poetical Works_ of 1860, finally collected and revised by himself, edited by his son Thornton Hunt, with illustrations by Corbould, contains a preface in prose to the poem, "On the Duty of Considering the Horrors and the Alleged Necessity of War", originally published in a Postscript to the First Edition; then follows the Poem, one illustration, and, at the end of the volume, twenty-two Notes; but the motto, mentioned by Morley, is wanting. For reasons given in the Preface the Notes were added in the 1860 edition. They contain quotations from the following authorities:

_Booth, Accounts of Waterloo._  
The poet Campbell.  
_John Shipp, Memoirs of John Shipp._  
" " _Military Career of John Shipp._  
_Southey, Remarks on War._  
_Cooke, Peninsular War._  
" _Peninsular Campaign._

_Journal of a Subaltern during the Campaign in the Punjab._ (Extracted into _the Manchester Examiner and the Times)._  
Extract from the _Journal of a Subaltern of the 2nd Europeans, in the Battle of Goojerat._ (From _the Times._)
Details from these quotations are worked up into the Poem. To us the Preface and the Notes are of equal interest with the Poem. In the Preface Leigh Hunt explains why he thinks it wrong to "throw a veil over" the horrors accompanying and following war.

After the great impression made upon him by some horrible details heard in youth, he could never after be blinded into an admiration of war by the dazzle of victory; and he expects the same influence on society, if the latter were not "spared the recital" of these details, as the phrase runs.

He successively disputes the statement that War is of God; confutes the objections of metaphysicians who urge the impossibility in general of a change for the better, caused by Man and of those who fear an effeminate world without war; reproves doubters of advancement — luckless prophets of the impossibilities of steamboats and steam-carriages — as he calls them; and refutes the idea that wars and other evils are necessary to keep down super-abundances of population. He refers to the abolished fashion of "the good old time" to settle arguments with the knife, and pronounces settling disputes between nations by fighting just as boyish, vulgar and ridiculous as it is now considered to be in private life. He draws the attention to a case of arbitration by a King of Holland in a dispute between England and the United States, and urges the desirability of every dispute being treated in like manner.

He concludes his arguments with three quotations from representatives of the three classes of the leaders of knowledge, viz.:

* Bentham* for the Utilitarians, or those who are all for the tangible and material.

* Carlyle* for the Metaphysical, or those who recognise in addition the spiritual and imaginative wants of mankind.

* Major Sir Francis Head* for the Men of the World (in no offensive sense) and a soldier to boot.

The Quotations are taken from Bentham's *Deontology*, from an article by Carlyle in one of the Reviews and from Head's *Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau*.

These men, differing in like manner as Bertha von Suttner and Norman Angell differ, are shown to be one in their opinion that war is wrong, that an advancement to other and better ideas is sure to come, that printed thought will cause the education of one country by another from despotism to liberty, and will lead to a universal European commonweal; that this will not be brought about by force of arms, but by the *Penny Magazine*, or as Leigh Hunt explains: cheaply-diffused knowledge; in general: all the tranquil and enlightening deeds of 'Captain Pen', which will be the only army necessary.

"The solution of the problem," says Hunt in the final words of the Preface, "is co-operation, the means of solving it is the Press."

The Poem is subdivided into six parts, with the following titles:

1. How Captain Sword marched to war.
2. How Captain Sword won a great victory.
3. Of the Ball that was given to Captain Sword.
4. On what took place on the field of Battle the night after the victory.