

**THE GLORY AND THE  
SHAME OF ENGLAND; IN  
TWO VOLUMES; VOL. I**

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The Glory and the Shame of England; In Two Volumes; Vol. I by C. Edwards Lester

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**C. EDWARDS LESTER**

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THE

GLORY AND THE SHAME

OF

ENGLAND.

"In England, those who till the earth, and make it lovely and fruitful by their labours, are only allowed the slave's share of the many blessings they produce."

BY C. EDWARDS LESTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1842.

Bu, 3512.7



*W. R. Sears*

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TO THE REV. JOEL TYLER HEADLY.

WHAT I have here written, my dear Headly, I inscribe to you : would it were more worthy of being dedicated to one of my early, one of my best friends. But I am persuaded you will generously overlook its faults, as you have my own. In a treacherous world, you have never deceived me. In my reverses of fortune I have ever been cheered by your sympathy ; in my prosperity you have ever rejoiced.

Since first we met on the peaceful shores of Oneida, we have gone forth to mingle with the world—to be deceived by its flattery and wounded by its selfishness ; to struggle with its stormy passions, and meet its stern realities. How often, amid the duties of a profession subject to greater trials than any other, have we grown weary in contemplating the sorrows of earth and the perfidy of professing friends ; how often wished to forget the present, and travel back among the quiet groves where we

once loved to wander; to recall the images of the kind and the beautiful with whom we then worshipped around the magic altars of boyhood's love.

But one word about my book. In publishing these Letters, I have yielded to the counsel of those in whose judgment I confide more than in my own. I do not flatter myself that in all points I shall be favoured with the sympathy or the concurrence of the reader. Many, perhaps, will think I have drawn too dark a picture of the oppressions and wrongs of the English government; of the sufferings and sorrows of the mass of the British people. To such I can only say, I have described things as they appeared to me, and endeavoured to write with candour.

X The pleasure of visiting our Father-Land; of wandering among its venerable monuments; of conversing with its illustrious men, was all sadly marred by the sight of the misery, ignorance, oppression, and want I met on every side.

X I well know the dreadful meaning of the words, but I would sooner see the children of my love born to the heritage of Southern slavery, than to see them subjected to the blighting bondage of the poor English operative's life. England is a proud and wicked nation. In her insatiate love of gain and boundless ambition for conquest; in her unjust treatment of her



dependant colonies and foreign nations; and, above all, in her oppression of her own poor but generous people, she is without a parallel in ancient or modern times. England has laid up for herself a sure store of vengeance; and God will yet visit her for her pride and wrong-doing.

I know these are strong assertions; but they can be sustained. Nor need we resort to any hostile record of her transactions to warrant this condemnation: by the testimony of her own writers and statesmen these heavy charges can be abundantly substantiated; and from these sources, so free from all objection, I have presented evidence that must convince the most incredulous.

In writing this work I have thought I might render some service to my country, by diffusing among its citizens a more correct knowledge of the spirit and condition of the nation with whom, at no distant day, they may be brought into collision; and by inspiring them, if possible, with a warmer regard and love for their own free institutions, and more devout gratitude to Heaven for the blessings they dispense.

I am prepared for abuse from Englishmen on both sides the Atlantic—I expect it. They will ask, with no slight manifestation of astonishment, “What

does the author mean by the SHAME of England? Who ever heard of the SHAME of England?" Already have several educated and highly respectable young men, engaged (with unprecedented success) in procuring subscribers for this work, been rudely driven from the houses of Englishmen, for crossing their threshold with the prospectus. And I blush (but not for myself or country), to say that one of our celebrated authors, whose partiality for Republicanism has been more than doubted, threatened to kick one of these young men out of his house (castle), if he did not instantly leave it; exclaiming, "Why, have you the impudence to hand me that prospectus? I understand what the GLORY of England means; but, as for the SHAME of England, there is no such thing. The shame is all in that base Democracy, which makes you presume to enter a gentleman's house to ask him to subscribe for such a book."

There are thousands of Englishmen in our land, driven from their own country by its intolerable oppressions, who yet deny, when they get here, that there is any such thing. They have little sympathy with our institutions; and no love for the country which has adopted them. How different all this from the enthusiastic attachment of the generous-

hearted Irishman, who has "dashed from his lips the poisoned cup of European servitude," for a home in this New Free World.

But I ought, and I do say, with pleasure, that there are many Englishmen in America worthy of a home among us; that there is, too, a numerous band of noble Reformers in England, not afraid to proclaim the injustice of their government. In their breasts the fires of the Puritans still burn; they know the truth, and *feel* it; they love humanity—liberty. May God bless them.

Nor have I forgotten that I found many noble hearts in England: they took me by the hand, and gave me a generous welcome; and since my return I have had occasion to know that by some of them, at least, I am still remembered. Not a day passes that I do not think of their cheerful homes in "Green Albion." For all this unexpected, unsought, and unmerited kindness to a stranger, they have his gratitude; and his prayers for the blessing of the "stranger's God."

When I stepped upon my native soil again, my eyes had been so wearied with the sight of oppression and suffering, I felt from my heart that I could embrace every green hill-top of our own free land—I thanked God I was an American.