

**THE MAN WITHOUT
A COUNTRY AND
ITS HISTORY**

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The Man Without A Country and its history by Edward Everett Hale

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By

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This One



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The publisher of this edition of

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

Asks me to give some account of the circumstances and incidents of its publication. I do this with a certain reluctance, lest it should seem that I think they are more important than they are. It is true, however, that a series of curious coincidences accompanied the history of the story. Persons who are interested in the Curiosities of Literature, then, may read this preface,—and other persons are under no compulsion to do so.

The Civil War has taught its lesson so well that the average American of the year 1896 hardly understands that any such lesson was ever needed. The United States *is* a nation, now. And there is not left any one, living in the Northern, Middle, Western, or Pacific States, who ever thinks that the United States *are* a confederacy. The War settled that. But in 1862 men were obliged to make

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speeches,—to write pamphlets and books,—to show what now seems of course. And any lesson was well received by persons of conscience and patriotism, which showed either positively or negatively what the word "Patriotism" means,—or what one's Country is.

Among other persons who did not seem to know was an Ohio politician named Vallandigham. Perhaps he is living still. The general reader of to-day would not know his name, but that in some address he said that he did not want to live in a country which did something or other which the National Administration, under Lincoln, had done. General Ambrose Everett Burnside was then in command of the Military Department in which Mr. Vallandigham lived. With a certain delicate wit and readiness which were characteristic of the man, Burnside marked his sense of the treasonable speech by sending Mr. Vallandigham with his compliments to the Rebel general on the other side of the Ohio, and saying that we wanted no such people, and that the Rebel States were welcome to him.

The letter and the present which went with it of course engaged public attention in the region where the transfer was made. The Copperhead faction in Ohio, boldly and with

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good political shrewdness, as it seems to me, accepted the issue, and named Mr. Vallandigham, — who was a martyr on their theory, — as their candidate for governor in the next election. He was exactly the fit candidate on the issue then before the people.

I was, at this time, furnishing political articles for the *Atlantic Monthly*. I had already conceived the idea of the "Man without a Country." I pressed the necessary work on it so that it might be published in the October number of the *Atlantic*, as my contribution to the Ohio canvass, as the election was to take place in October. But with a certain languor which attends the publication of most monthly journals, — a languor which seems to me an infelicity, — the publication was delayed until December, 1863, when Mr. Vallandigham had been beaten six weeks before by a majority of more than one hundred thousand, — and forgotten, till now, as long.

I say the idea had been conceived many months before, not to say many years before.

Napoleon the Great always had an idea that he had surrendered himself at Rochefort to Captain Maitland of the ship "Bellerophon," which ship received him after his overthrow. He sometimes undertook to maintain the

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absurd proposition that he was Maitland's personal captive, as in the Middle Ages one knight might have yielded himself as personal captive to another. This theory appears more than once in his invectives against the cruelty of the English Government in holding him at St. Helena.

The proposition seems to me absurd. It seemed so to the English Government, to the Prince Regent whom Napoleon addressed as "the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies." This was, by the way, the best thing the first gentleman in England ever had said of him — if only by good fortune it had been true. But whether absurd or not, it seems to me that it would have been good policy for the English Cabinet to have taken the fallen Emperor at his word. "Oh! you thought you were a guest on the 'Bellerophon'?" We did not understand it so, but a guest on the 'Bellerophon' you shall be.

"Joiners, — upholsterers, — plumbers, — painters, — all of you, — fly round, — quick there, — make ready a fine cabin, — with sleeping rooms adjacent, — for our distinguished guest General Buonaparte. From this time he is the guest of the British people. He has come 'like Themistocles to seat himself by its hearth.' He has elected

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the 'Bellerophon' as the place. So let it be." Then from cruise to cruise,—of the "Bellerophon,"—our distinguished guest would have been heard from thus:—

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

Sept. 30. H. M. Ship Bellerophon touched at the Cape, for water and mails. Our distinguished guest was in good health.

And then, six months after

June 11. Macao. H. M. Ship Bellerophon arrived for repairs, having lost a topmast in the typhoon. Our distinguished guest, Gen. Buonaparte, seemed to be well.

And, six months later

Botany Bay, Dec. 11. The corvette, Capt. Bell, reports that she spoke at sea H. M. S. Bellerophon. The Bellerophon made signal that all were well.

And so on, and so on. The "British people" could have stood it as long as the Emperor could.

What the British Government did was to consecrate St. Helena as a shrine for the worship of France for the next six years. It won for itself a general odium, such as it does not dislike, among all the nations of Europe. But if the Cabinet had happened to hear my plan, and had executed it, many apologies for its cruelty would have been unnecessary. They could say, "We did just