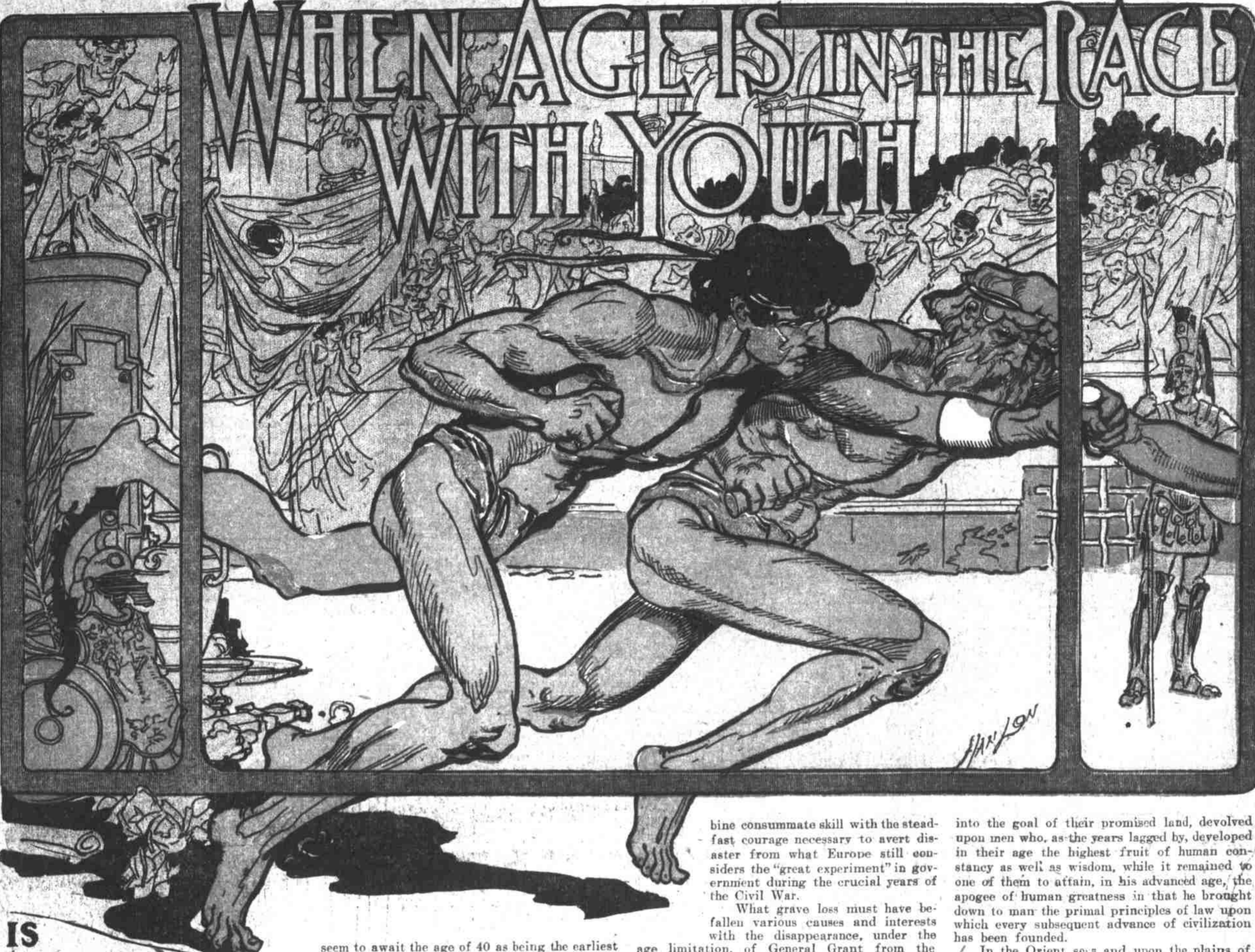


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WHEN AGE IS IN THE RACE WITH YOUTH



IS THERE HOPE OF SUCCESS FOR THE MAN OVER FORTY?

THEY tell it of Michelangelo that, in his ninetieth year, some friends came upon him seated amid the ruins of the Coliseum at Rome, gazing with profound attention at the broken relics of the ancient empire's art.

"What do you here, O master?" they asked him. "You, the splendor of whose achievements leaves these old ruins fit only for neglect."

"I?" rejoined the world's most revered artist, "I am come here to study my profession."

That surpassing genius, meek in his humility before the monuments of an earlier day, may well serve to typify the ceaseless race with youth's superabundant vitality which life's pitiless Marathon demands of age so endlessly and so remorselessly.

In this era, when all the nation's activities have declared their need for the energies of the man under 40, and when a Carnegie fosters boys for partnership at the beginnings of their manhood, is there any hope of great achievement for the man who is past the twoscore years that mark his middle life? Does history, recent and remote, afford him any refuge whither than the hopeless eutanasia so bitterly suggested by Osler?

IF WE come to review what men over 40 have given to the world, there seem to be but few youthful Alexanders and Napoleons left in history to claim glories in achievement beyond the din of war.

A very little and very empty world this of today, if all that has been done by the men past 40 were wiped off the slow slate of history—and the current epoch is no exception to the rule of the ages as they have swept onward, from the dawn of chronicles among mankind.

In Europe, both Great Britain and the continent look with confidence upon the king who attained his throne only as an old man and has been signaling his reign by triumphs of diplomacy that shame the ruinous impetuosity of his nephew in Germany and leave grotesque the callow futility in war and statesmanship of the emperor of the Russians.

In America, the fortunes of the two great parties have been entrusted to men whose ripe maturity has developed energies seldom equaled by the youngest of their adherents, while finance and trade, industry and the professions, would

seem to await the age of 40 as being the earliest at which the Harrimans and the Hills, the Schwabs and the Rootes can be expected to have constructed the foundations for their greatest usefulness.

As for America, there would have been no Western Hemisphere, for the daring genius of the great Columbus must have been debarred from the supreme triumph of adventure which the flower of chivalry did not dare essay. If another and a later adventurer had haled the continent forth from the mists of fable and the blackness of prejudiced learning, the great events that have shaped its destinies must have been greatly altered in their time and scope, if not wholly inhibited, by reason of the absence of the master hands that have rough-hewed them to their ends.

WHAT HISTORY TELLS

When the spirit of independence was abroad in the colonies, no Washington could have been called upon to lead to the desperate revolt the high distinction and the unflinching constancy of purpose which alone sufficed to transform it into the Revolution, even as, later, his pure patriotism was required to perfect the republic which might so readily have degenerated into a monarchy.

Indeed, that epochal period, forfeiting its men past 40, might well be conceived as never having come at all, for Richard Henry Lee could not have proposed the Continental Congress which cradled the Revolution; Morris, its financier, must have failed to provide the sinews so desperately needed for the government; Franklin, that archdiplomat, could not have dazzled, in his old age, the French monarchy into the active alliance which turned the scale of the war.

Pursuing the years backward, the eye of history would discern no trace of the one bright spot of honor in the white man's dealings with the Indian, for William Penn, who made the one treaty which was conceived in honesty and kept in good faith, would have been aged beyond the limit of all initiative; and without him, what other white man has history shown who would have chosen to thrive by simple honesty?

In the years that lie on our own side of the Revolution, it is needless only to recall the names that stand for the nation's great men to identify those who, under an age limit of 40, must have forfeited the opportunities for their highest life work. For weal or woe, of this nation and the world, the deeds these men past 40 did have been the axe blows of our destiny.

President Monroe must have failed to proclaim the doctrine which has ever since been the bulwark of the hemisphere's liberties, while a John Hay must have been absent from the momentous international arena when, a few years ago, enormous China lay helpless to spoliation and the future of the United States in the Pacific was being shuttled between interminable progress and humiliating shame.

The statesmanship of Daniel Webster must have been lost to Congress and the nation, even as John Adams and all the men who have guided the nation as its executives must have been missing from the roll of the Presidents.

There would have been no Lincoln to com-

bine consummate skill with the steadfast courage necessary to avert disaster from what Europe still considers the "great experiment" in government during the crucial years of the Civil War.

What grave loss must have befallen various causes and interests with the disappearance, under the age limitation, of General Grant from the armies of the Union and General Robert E. Lee from the command of the forces of the Confederacy. Jefferson would not have founded the Democratic party. John Adams' "Defense of the Constitution" must have been lacking among the safeguards of human liberty. Monroe could not have exercised the prescience which consummated the Louisiana Purchase. Dewey would have been missing from Manila and Schley from Santiago.

In American letters, Emerson's inspiring work would have scarcely been begun, while James Russell Lowell's "Fireside Travels" and the second volume of his "Biglow Papers" must have remained unseen, with the best known and best loved poems of Longfellow, much of the finest work of William Cullen Bryant, and thirty years of the "Bob Acres" and "Rip Van Winkle" that gave happiness to millions in the finished art of Joseph Jefferson.

There would have been no "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," for there would have been no Oliver Wendell Holmes to write it. The greatest paintings of Benjamin West, including his "Christ Rejected," could not have seen the light. Franklin's "Autobiography," so delightful to the mind, could have been hardly half lived, much less written and published.

We must have missed such works of Washington Irving as "Wolfert's Roost" and his "Life of Washington," and must have lost the inspiration of Audubon, that one man who alone, during long years of slaughter utterly cruel and wasteful, preserved alive some thought of the usefulness, as well as the beauty, inherent in the wild things that inherit our earth and air.

Such men touch us most nearly home, for their names are among our household words, bound up—a Lee with a Grant—among our heritages of national pride. Yet, for all our present greatness and our past struggles, we are very new to the makings of the world, even yet.

GIANTS OF THE RACE

But, for the present, our roll of honor, and especially those names upon it that, writ large enough to be described across the seas, cannot prove very impressive as compared with all the giants who have lived during the history of the race. Among those giants—men who have made and moulded man, ourselves but fractions in the mighty scheme—we shall still find figures that loom as largely to our eyes as the great ones we claim for our very own; and we shall find, for every one our short history can furnish, ten and twenty others abroad whose deeds have been plain destiny's handmaids. And most of them, if not all, have been the labors of giants slow of maturity, all the more gigantic for their slowness.

It is curiously enlightening, with an illumination that searches deeply into the heart of this controversy over the age limit of man's usefulness, that to the old men, to the men well beyond this newly allotted trivial span of forty years, are due the salvation of two peoples who still most mightily move the destinies of the race, one at history's dim beginnings, the other in its latest, most portentous unfolding of the fateful scroll.

The exodus of the Jews, and their guidance

into the goal of their promised land, devolved upon men who, as the years lagged by, developed in their age the highest fruit of human constancy as well as wisdom, while it remained to one of them to attain, in his advanced age, the apogee of human greatness in that he brought down to man the primal principles of law upon which every subsequent advance of civilization has been founded.

In the Orient seas and upon the plains of Manchuria, only a little while ago, amid quaintly different conditions and under strangely different stress, the elder statesmen of Japan and the veteran, trained leaders of her armies—the generals like Oyama, who could look back on forty years as the ending of their immaturity—led another nation, another race, to conquests that thrall the world with awe.

Seventy years of achievement lay behind the labors of Gladstone as England's "Grand Old Man" when he entered upon his final decade of strength as Great Britain's premier; as many had prepared Thiers for his splendid part in the giant's task of laying the foundations of the French Republic; as many were behind Verdi's "Otello" and his "Falstaff," his "Stabat Mater" and other compositions the world could ill lose; as many behind Tintoretto's marvelous painting, "Paradise," Titian's "Christ Crowned with Thorns," and Victor Hugo's "93."

AFTER SIXTY YEARS

Sixty years and more of life were past when Confucius gave to China his remarkable system of ethics; when the great Bismarck's genius discerned in colonization the guarantee of domestic peace in Germany; when the world-changing Darwin produced his "Descent of Man"; when Michelangelo frescoed the Sistine Chapel and painted that "Last Judgment" which represents the most famous achievement in the painter's art; when Cervantes finished "Don Quixote"; and when Ruskin wrote "The Art of England" and "The Arrows of the Chase."

To have denied initiative to the man of 50 would have forfeited the protectorate in England by Cromwell, as it would have lost, here, Morse's invention of the telegraphic alphabet; Talleyrand could not have accomplished the overthrow of Napoleonic rule; some of Herbert Spencer's most valuable work must have been wanting; the best-loved creations of George Du Maurier would not have been born; Sir Richard Burton's preliminary work for the monumental translation of the "Arabian Nights" would have but begun; Goethe, Lord Beaconsfield, Ibsen, Dickens, Dean Swift, John Bunyan, Wagner, Beethoven—a host of the world's benefactors must have been deprived of opportunities for usefulness for which the world is now most grateful.

And after 40—why, the careers of most of the leaders of mankind seem to have merely begun. Such men as Von Moltke in the one extreme of war and Max Muller in the other of philology; Tennyson in the creation of ideal verse and Charles Reade in literature so militant that it swept a nation clear of its chronic cruelties; Wellington in his balking of the ambitions of Napoleon and Leonardo Da Vinci in the painting of the "Last Supper"—these are but names astray in a list of men and their works that, missing, would leave the world cold and gray and desolate, a world of the hapless, helpless ruck of men who, if they are fit to be discarded after 40, may fairly be said to have never had any initiative to begin with.

There, if any one were to ask him, would probably be found the grain of truth which underlies the cynicism of an Osler.



Field Marshal Cavour



Bismarck



Richard Wagner



Victor Hugo



Michelangelo



Napoleon



Lord Beaconsfield



Henry W. Conkling



George Du Maurier



Joseph de Maistre



William Cullen Bryant



Gen. Robert Lee



Verdi



Max Muller