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CLASSICS SERIES CL185

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

and OTHER STORIES

Introduction by **Francis R. Gemme**

Complete and Unabridged

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

and other stories

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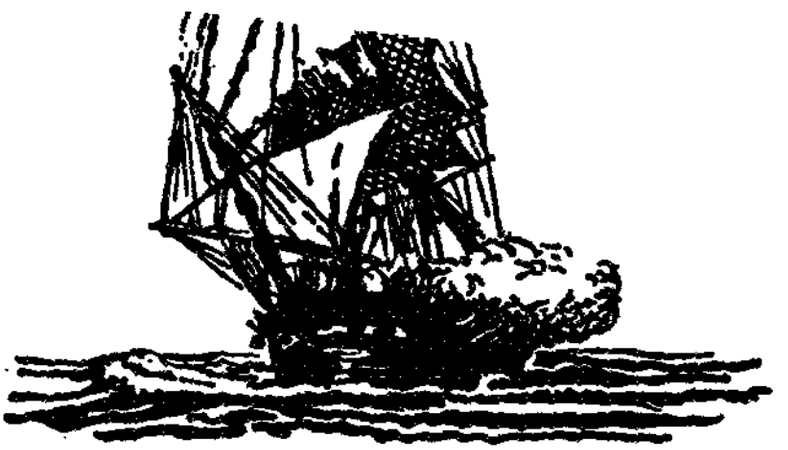
THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

and other

stories



INTRODUCTION

The short story is one of the most popular kinds of literature. From its romantic beginnings early in the last century, with the sketches of Washington Irving and the tales of Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne, to the realistic stories of Henry James, Stephen Crane, O. Henry, and Jack London at the turn of the century, it has been a form in which American writers have excelled. Nearly every major American prose writer has written significant short fiction; as a result, the artistic maturation from short stories to novels is now an accepted progression in the literary process.

The present collection of classic American short stories includes six representative works of short fiction, five written by well-known American authors and one written by a lesser known American writer.

The five familiar authors are Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), Mark Twain (1835-1910), O. Henry (1862-1910), and Jack London (1876-1916). Their stories range from Poe's "The Purloined Letter," a tale of ratiocination featuring the celebrated detective, C. Auguste Dupin, to Mark Twain's

"The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," a satire of disillusionment written during the author's later somber years. Two other stories deal with extremes of love. Jack London's "Love of Life" is a portrayal of one man's instinctive drive for survival; the story is set in the bleak landscape of the "Canadian Barrens." Love in the more conventional sense of sacrifice and selflessness is the theme of O. Henry's "Gift of the Magi." Finally there is Hawthorne's sketch of the White Mountains of New Hampshire, "The Great Stone Face." In folklore fashion, Hawthorne weaves his theme of the value of domesticity around the natural phenomenon of the Great Stone Face which still peers majestically over Franconia Notch.

The least familiar figure in this collection is Edward Everett Hale, author of "The Man Without a Country." Unlike the other writers, Hale's life is obscured by the fame of this single story. In spite of its heavy handed didacticism, "The Man Without a Country" is a story which has become a part of the folklore of the American character.

On one level the story can be interpreted as an endorsement of the jingoist, "My country, right or wrong," position in nationalism. On another level, the story is a homily on loyalty and patriotism. But on the symbolic level, the story underscores man's psychological need for identity and involvement with institutions. In this sense the story is in the traditional social view that began with Aristotle's observation, "man is by nature a political animal," and is reflected in John Donne's famous line, "No man is an island," and is dramatically stated in the story by Sir Walter Scott's familiar quotation:

> *"Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,*
> *Who never to himself hath said—*
> *This is my own, my native land!"*

Edward Everett Hale was born in Boston, Massachusetts, April 3, 1822. The fourth of several children, he was named for his maternal uncle, Edward Everett. On his father's side he was a descendant of Nathan Hale, the

Revolutionary War martyr-spy. While he was always conscious of and rightfully proud of his long standing New England genealogical heritage, he needed only to look to his parents and his uncle to see family successes. His parents were both literary people and his father was owner and editor of the Boston *Daily Advertiser.*

Edward Everett (1794-1865), twenty-eight years his namesake's senior, was one of the most active figures of nineteenth-century America. At the time of his nephew's birth, Everett was editor of the *North American Review.* An 1811 graduate of Harvard, Everett became a Unitarian minister. After a year of service, however, he entered upon a career which better suited his passions for humanitarian reform. His accomplishments speak for themselves: first professor of Greek at Harvard, 1819-1824, U.S. Congressman, 1825-1835, Governor of Massachusetts, 1835-1839, minister to the Court of St. James, 1841-1845, President of Harvard, 1846-1849, and finally U.S. Senator from Massachusetts. He resigned his senate seat after fifteen months in office. His later years were dedicated to humanitarian causes. Oratory became his forte, and during one lecture series he delivered an address on George Washington 129 times in various sections of the country. The proceeds went toward the purchase of Washington's Mount Vernon home.

On November 19, 1893, Edward Everett delivered a two hour oration at the dedication ceremony of the battlefield memorial at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The next speaker delivered a 266 word speech. The classical oration of Edward Everett is long forgotten, but the brief statement of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is not only the model *par excellence* of the economy of language but is also one of the most inspirational messages in American history. In the same year, for a similar love of country but for different reasons, Edward Everett Hale published his parable of patriotism, "The Man Without a Country."

Edward Everett Hale graduated from Harvard in 1839, the youngest member of his class. After a few years of studying theology, teaching, and journalism, he accepted

a call to the Unitarian Church in Worcester. It was the beginning of a life-long ministerial career. He served his second calling, the South Congregational Church in Boston, for forty-five years (1856–1901). During these years, he was happily occupied with clerical duties and scores of humanitarian causes. Yet he found time to write on a variety of topics ranging from sermons to fiction, from poetry to social manners, from boys' books to travel books and from histories to biographies. In later life he mused on how his principal activity had been obscured by his literary efforts: "It is not a little curious . . . that when a man has worked sixty years in the hope of bringing in the kingdom, and has been in twenty or thirty states on that business, still nineteen persons out of twenty should think of him as the author of one, two, or three stories." Edward Everett Hale died in 1909 and today is remembered for only one story.

"The Man Without a Country" was written in 1863 to help bolster the waning morale of the Union. In a prefatory note to a later edition, Hale clearly reveals his purpose in writing the story:

> This story was written in the summer of 1863, as a contribution, however humble, towards the formation of a just and true national sentiment, a sentiment of love to the nation. It was at the time that Mr. Vallandingham had been sent across the border. It was my wish, indeed that the story might be printed before the autumn elections of that year as my "testimony" regarding the principles involved in them, but circumstances delayed its publication till the December number of the *Atlantic* appeared.

The allusion of C. L. Vallandingham is to an Ohio politician who denounced the Lincoln administration in strong terms. General A. E. Burnside, the military governor of Ohio, had Vallandingham arrested and sent to the South. When the exile was nominated for governor of the state of Ohio, Hale decided to write his story hoping to discredit the disloyal nominee. Vallandingham was soundly defeated even though the story did not appear until after the election.

The attribute of the story which has sustained it is its plausibility. Hale chose his details well! Many people believed there was really a Philip Nolan, the man who "loved his country as no other man has loved her." Hale himself once said about the tale: "It was forged in fire, and I think its great popularity is due to its subject." The popularity of the story has led to its production as an opera, a movie, a television show, and a play. Its theme is still highly relevant in this modern age in which questions of legal and moral dissent abound.

FRANCIS R. GEMME

East Haddam, Connecticut

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THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

Edward Everett Hale

1882-1909

I suppose that very few casual readers of the *New York Herald* of August 13th observed, in an obscure corner, among the *Deaths*, the announcement:

"Nolan: Died, on board U. S. Corvette *Levant*, Lat. 2° 11′ S., Long. 131° W., on the 11th of May, Philip Nolan."

I happened to observe it, because I was stranded at the old Misson-House in Mackinac, waiting for a Lake Superior steamer which did not choose to come, and I was devouring, to the very stubble, all the current literature I could get hold of, even down to the deaths and marriages in the *Herald*. My memory for names and people is good, and the reader will see, as he goes on, that I had reason enough to remember Philip Nolan. There are hundreds of readers who would have paused at that announcement, if the officer of the *Levant* who reported it had chosen to make it thus: "Died, May 11th, 'The Man Without a Country'." For it was as "The Man Without a Country" that poor Philip Nolan had generally been known by the officers who had him in charge during some fifty years, as, indeed, by all the men who sailed under them. I dare say there is many a man who has taken wine with him once a fortnight, in a three years' cruise, who never knew that his name was "Nolan," or whether the poor wretch had any name at all.

There can now be no possible harm in telling this poor

creature's story. Reason enough there has been until now, ever since Madison's Administration went out in 1817, for very strict secrecy, the secrecy of honor itself, among the gentlemen of the navy who have had Nolan in successive charge. And certainly it speaks well for the esprit de corps of the profession and the personal honor of its members, that to the press this man's story has been wholly unknown—and, I think, to the country at large also. I have reason to think, from some investigations I made in the Naval Archives when I was attached to the Bureau of Construction, that every official report relating to him was burned when Ross burned the public buildings at Washington. One of the Tuckers, or possibly one of the Watsons, had Nolan in charge at the end of the war; and when, on returning from his cruise, he reported at Washington to one of the Crowninshields—who was in the Navy Department when he came home—he found that the department ignored the whole business. Whether they really knew nothing about it, or whether it was a *Non mi ricordo*, determined on as a piece of policy, I do not know. But this I do know, that since 1817, and possibly before, no naval officer has mentioned Nolan in his report of a cruise.

But, as I say, there is no need for secrecy any longer. And now the poor creature is dead, it seems to me worth while to tell a little of his story, by way of showing young Americans of today what it is to be

A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

Philip Nolan was as fine a young officer as there was in the "Legion of the West," as the Western division of our army was then called. When Aaron Burr made his first dashing expedition down to New Orleans in 1805, at Fort Massac, or somewhere above on the river, he met, as the devil would have it, this gay, dashing, bright young fellow, at some dinner-party, I think. Burr marked him, talked to him, walked with him, took him a day or two's voyage in his flat-boat, and, in short, fas-

cinated him. For the next year barrack-life was very tame to poor Nolan. He occasionally availed of the permission the great man had given him to write to him. Long, high-worded, stilted letters the poor boy wrote and rewrote and copied. But never a line did he have in reply from the gay deceiver. The other boys in the garrison sneered at him, because he sacrificed in this unrequited affection for a politician the time which they devoted to Monongahela, sledge, and high-low-jack. Bourbon, euchre and poker were still unknown. But one day Nolan had his revenge. This time Burr came down the river not as an attorney seeking a place for his office, but as a disguised conqueror. He had defeated I know not how many district attorneys; he had dined at I know not how many public dinners; he had been heralded in I know not how many *Weekly Arguses;* and it was rumored that he had an army behind him and an empire before him. It was a great day—his arrival—to poor Nolan. Burr had not been at the fort an hour before he sent for him. That evening he asked Nolan to take him out in his skiff, to show him a cane-brake or a cotton-wood tree, as he said—really to seduce him; and by the time the sail was over, Nolan was enlisted body and soul. From that time, though he did not know it, he lived as "A Man Without a Country."

What Burr meant to do I know no more than you, dear reader. It is none of our business just now. Only, when the grand catastrophe came, and Jefferson and the House of Virginia of that day undertook to break on the wheel all the possible Clarences of the then House of York, by the great treason-trial at Richmond, some of the lesser fry in that distant Mississippi Valley, which was farther from us than Puget's Sound is today, introduced the like novelty on their provincial stage, and, to while away the monotony of the summer at Fort Adams, got up, for *spectacles*, a string of court-martials on the officers there. One and another of the colonels and majors were tried, and, to fill out the list, little Nolan, against whom, heaven knows, there was evidence enough

—that he was sick of the service, had been willing to be false to it, and would have obeyed any order to march any whither with any one who should follow him, had the order only been signed, "By command of His Exc. A. Burr." The courts dragged on. The big flies escaped—rightly, for all I know. Nolan was proved guilty enough, as I say; yet you and I would never have heard of him, reader, but that, when the president of the court asked him at the close whether he wished to say anything to show that he had always been faithful to the United States, he cried out, in a fit of frenzy:

"D—n the United States! I wish I may never hear of the United States again!"

I suppose he did not know how the words shocked Colonel Morgan, who was holding the court. Half the officers who sat in it had served through the Revolution, and their lives, not to say their necks, had been risked for the very idea which he so cavalierly cursed in his madness. He, on his part, had grown up in the West of those days, in the midst of "Spanish plot," "Orleans plot," and all the rest. He had been educated on a plantation, where the finest company was a Spanish officer or a French merchant from Orleans. His education, such as it was, had been perfected in commercial expeditions to Vera Cruz, and I think he told me his father once hired an Englishman to be a private tutor for a winter on the plantation. He had spent half his youth with an older brother, hunting horses in Texas; and, in a word, to him "United States" was scarcely a reality. Yet he had been fed by "United States" for all the years since he had been in the army. He had sworn on his faith as a Christian to be true to "United States." It was "United States" which gave him the uniform he wore, and the sword by his side. Nay, my poor Nolan, it was only because "United States" had picked you out first as one of her own confidential men of honor that "A. Burr" cared for you a straw more than for the flat-boat men who sailed his ark for him. I do not excuse Nolan; I only ex-

plain to the reader why he damned his country, and wished he might never hear her name again.

He never did hear her name but once again. From that moment, September 23, 1807, till the day he died, May 11, 1863, he never heard her name again. For that half-century and more he was a man without a country.

Old Morgan, as I said, was terribly shocked. If Nolan had compared George Washington to Benedict Arnold, or had cried, "God save King George," Morgan would not have felt worse. He called the court into his private room, and returned in fifteen minutes, with a face like a sheet, to say:

"Prisoner, hear the sentence of the Court. The Court decides, subject to the approval of the President, that you never hear the name of the United States again."

Nolan laughed. But nobody else laughed. Old Morgan was too solemn, and the whole room was hushed dead as night for a minute. Even Nolan lost his swagger in a moment. Then Morgan added: "Mr. Marshal, take the prisoner to Orleans in an armed boat, and deliver him to the naval commander there."

The marshal gave his orders, and the prisoner was taken out of court.

"Mr. Marshal," continued old Morgan, "see that no one mentions the United States to the prisoner. Mr. Marshal, make my respects to Lieutenant Mitchell at Orleans, and request him to order that no one shall mention the United States to the prisoner while he is on board ship. You will receive your written orders from the officer on duty here this evening. The Court is adjourned without delay."

I have always supposed that Colonel Morgan himself took the proceedings of the court to Washington City, and explained them to Mr. Jefferson. Certain it is that the President approved them—certain, that is, if I may believe the men who say they have seen his signature. Before the *Nautilus* got round from New Orleans to the Northern Atlantic coast with the prisoner on board, the

sentence had been approved, and he was a man without a country.

The plan then adopted was substantially the same which was necessarily followed ever after. Perhaps it was suggested by the necessity of sending him by water from Fort Adams and Orleans. The Secretary of the Navy—it must have been the first Crowninshield, though he is a man I do not remember—was requested to put Nolan on board a government vessel bound on a long cruise, and to direct that he should be only so far confined there as to make it certain that he never saw or heard of the country. We had few long cruises then, and the navy was very much out of favor; and as almost all of this story is traditional, as I have explained, I do not know certainly what his first cruise was. But the commander to whom he was entrusted—perhaps it was Tingey or Shaw, though I think it was one of the younger men—we are all old enough now—regulated the etiquette and the precautions of the affair, and according to his scheme they were carried out, I suppose, till Nolan died.

When I was second officer of the *Intrepid*, some thirty years after, I saw the original paper of instructions. I have been sorry ever since that I did not copy the whole of it. It ran, however, much in this way:

"WASHINGTON (with the date, which must have been late in 1807).

"SIR—You will receive from Lt. Neal the person of Philip Nolan, late a lieutenant in the United States Army.

"This person on his trial by court-martial expressed with an oath the wish that he might 'never hear of the United States again.'

"The court sentenced him to have his wish fulfilled.

"For the present, the execution of the order is entrusted by the President to this department.

"You will take the prisoner on board your ship, and keep him there with such precautions as shall prevent his escape.

"You will provide him with such quarters, rations, and

clothing as would be proper for an officer of his late rank, if he were a passenger on your vessel on the business of his Government.

"The gentlemen on board will make any arrangements agreeable to themselves regarding his society. He is to be exposed to no indignity of any kind, nor is he ever unnecessarily to be reminded that he is a prisoner.

"But under no circumstances is he ever to hear of his country or to see any information regarding it; and you will specially caution all the officers under your command to take care that, in the various indulgences which may be granted, this rule, in which his punishment is involved, shall not be broken.

"It is the intention of the Government that he shall never again see the country which he has disowned. Before the end of your cruise you will receive orders which will give effect to this intention.

"Resp'y yours,
"W. SOUTHARD, *for the*
"*Sec'y of the Navy.*"

If I had only preserved the whole of this paper, there would be no break in the beginning of my sketch of this story. For Captain Shaw, if it was he, handed it to his successor in the charge, and he to his, and I suppose the commander of the *Levant* has it to-day as his authority for keeping this man in this mild custody.

The rule adopted on board the ships on which I have met "The Man Without a Country" was, I think, transmitted from the beginning. No mess liked to have him permanently, because his presence cut off all talk of home or of the prospect of return, of politics or letters, of peace or of war—cut off more than half the talk men like to have at sea. But it was always thought too hard that he should never meet the rest of us, except to touch hats, and we finally sank into one system. He was not permitted to talk with the men unless an officer was by. With officers he had unrestrained intercourse, as far as they and he chose. But he grew shy, though he had fa-

vorites: I was one. Then the captain always asked him to dinner on Monday. Every mess in succession took up the invitation in its turn. According to the size of the ship, you had him at your mess more or less often at dinner. His breakfast he ate in his own state-room—he always had a state-room—which was where a sentinel, or somebody on the watch, could see the door. And whatever else he ate or drank he ate or drank alone. Sometimes, when the marines or sailors had any special jollification, they were permitted to invite "Plain-Buttons," as they called him. Then Nolan was sent with some officer, and the men were forbidden to speak of home while he was there. I believe the theory was, that the sight of his punishment did them good. They called him "Plain-Buttons," because, while he always chose to wear a regulation army-uniform, he was not permitted to wear the army-button, for the reason that it bore either the initials or the insignia of the country he had disowned.

I remember, soon after I joined the navy, I was on shore with some of the older officers from our ship and from the *Brandywine*, which we had met at Alexandria. We had leave to make a party and go up to Cairo and the Pyramids. As we jogged along (you went on donkeys then) some of the gentlemen (we boys called them "dons," but the phrase was long since changed) fell to talking about Nolan, and some one told the system which was adopted from the first about his books and other reading. As he was almost never permitted to go on shore, even though the vessel lay in port for months, his time, at the best, hung heavy; and everybody was permitted to lend him books, if they were not published in America and made no allusion to it. These were common enough in the old days, when people in the other hemisphere talked of the United States as little as we do of Paraguay. He had almost all the foreign papers that came into the ship, sooner or later; only somebody must go over them first, and cut out any advertisement or stray paragraph that alluded to America. This was a little cruel sometimes, when the back of what was cut out might be