

BYGONE DAYS RECALLED

AN OLD TIMER'S REMINISCENCES OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS.

The Old Time Elections which Lasted a Fortnight—An Incident of the Days when Jordan and Partelow were Candidates—Snudge and his Theory.

XVII. In speaking of the old times fourteen days elections, many curious recollections of incidents pass through my mind in connection therewith. During one of those political campaigns, there were four of us, full of party strife and fight, on the side of the strongest battalions of course; for at this time, before the agitation for Responsible Government commenced, young beginners in business had to mind their p's and q's, or run their heads butt against the great officials and their hangers-on, and come off second best. There was no ballot—it was all bullet; for when you voted you were a marked man, if you didn't vote against your conscience, if you had one, and in favor of the candidate you perhaps despised. We four then hired a conveyance at our own expense—we wished to be independent—and at about the end of the first week in the election, drove out as far as Loch Lomond to "see what was going on"—in other words to talk politics and draw the wool over the darkies' eyes, and such white folks as would deign to listen; and we flattered ourselves that we made some converts to the side of John Jordan and J. R. Partelow, both on the county ticket. Their politics were of minor importance, as we had none ourselves at that time. On going out we discussed a variety of subjects, some of them very erudite, while the occult sciences were not neglected—what none of us knew anything about, we made it up in pretence, and so the loudest and most earnest talker gained his point in the argument. Mr. Snudge, for example, laid down a deep metaphysical proposition for our cogitation, to the effect that a live fish placed in a tub of water, would not add anything to the weight of tub and water combined, because, said Snudge, he, the fish, being in his native element, was light and buoyant, and like a bird flying, not touching the earth there was no gravitation and no friction. He further elucidated himself by saying that this fact was predicated upon the principle that a man weighs heavier before he eats his dinner than he does afterwards, no matter how much he stows away. As there was no pudding, we could have no proof of the truth of this doctrine. None of us having tried the experiment, or expected to encounter any such learned dogma at election time, but naturally thought that as Snudge had studied the whole thing out, he must be right, especially as the question had no bearing upon the pending election, one way or another, with the exception of our friend Jenkins who declared he was not going to admit any such trash as that without further evidence. Snudge was willing to bet any amount he was right. Jenkins replied that he was a poor man (in fact we were all poor alike) and not in the habit of betting, but he was willing to bet the price of the dinner for the whole company, his dander having got pretty well up by this time, that what Snudge had stated was an impossibility, and in order to test the thing satisfactorily he proposed that when we arrived at the Inn we should each weigh himself before sitting down to dinner, on the big hay scales just outside the door, and after dinner repeat the operation. The bet was accepted, so that three of us were sure of a good dinner at the expense of the fourth, the loser. A memorandum book was brought into service—each party took his stand upon the platform, was weighed and his avoirdupois noted down. So much before dinner—after dinner was to come the proof, as these were to turn out to be the veritable "scales of justice" we hear so much about, and the verdict would go in favor of Snudge or Jenkins. The rest of the company were all safe.

Before I state the result of the bet as determined by the irrefragible evidence adduced after dinner, I wish to interpolate an incident which seems to fit in here parenthetically, and as part of the story. The inn we put up at was an old affair, built and fashioned in the Loyalist days, the headquarters of all parties, without favoring anyone in particular. Everybody was welcome who had money to pay his way. There was a barroom at the end of the entrance hall, which was always well patronized even on other than election occasions. On the left side of the hall on entering the house, there was a long room extending fore and aft, the whole length of the building, divided into two apartments by means of a temporary wooden partition which served the purpose of folding doors, in order that private parties of a dozen or more might be kept separate, whether for dining or caucusing, or what not. One of these large rooms was already occupied by a number of boisterous and bumptious politicians, made up of vinegar and sweet oil, when our little party sought to obtain quarters and something to eat—for by this time, 3 p. m., we were all pretty well attenuated. In due time dinner was on the table, and we fell to with a will. In the next room John Barleycorn seemed to be in the ascendant, for there was noise enough made for twenty persons, though probably there may not have been a dozen, even less than the Tam

O'Shanter crowd, ere Tam had mounted his old grey mare Meg, and his encounter with the witches on approaching the old brig of Doon a little on this side of the old roofless Alloway Kirk. As the time wore on the noise increased, the momentum being derived from the distillation of the old rye imbibed. Our little company was on the last piece of mince pie, and therefore ready for flight at a moment's notice, should danger threaten. Our neighbors it was quite evident had fallen out about something. The Partelow men and the Jordan men it appeared had got into a tangle, or snarl, and as family quarrels are always the worst, this happy family a short time before had now become rancorous opponents. The denunciations and imprecations grated harshly upon the innocent ears of our little coterie, all good temperance men, as understood in those days. At length blows were struck among and between the belligerents—each doing his utmost, as far as the exuberant liquor would allow him, to damage his neighbor's eyes; and, just at this moment, while our company was getting ready to retreat, down came the wooden partition with a crash, the noise of which was equal to the falling of the walls of Jericho, and we should have all, drunk and sober, been of one party and guilty alike of breaking the peace of Her Majesty the Queen, her crown and dignity. We did not stand a moment upon the order of our going, when the partition came about our ears, but with one common impulse all made for the barn and got our horses harnessed quicker than ever before, and were on the road again, homeward bound, faster than it has taken me to write this.

I now return to the scientific part of the story. In less than half an hour after our dinner, each found himself on the scales once more when nearer town, to find the truth or falsity of Snudge's theory, and to settle the bet who was to pay for the dinners. And it must be here added—for the truth should always be told—instead of each one weighing less, the weight was three and four pounds added, according to the appetite and quantity consumed at dinner respectively. Snudge gave in and paid the bet, and declared he would never bet again unless he was thoroughly "posted up" scientifically; and he wound up by requesting that we would not say anything about it to anybody. All my companions have long since passed away, and I am the first to tell the story. AN OLD TIMER.

THYCKKE FOGGE PAPERS.

An Old Friend Returns to St. John after an Absence of Several Years.

One bright day recently some of us were aimlessly strolling up King Street, and mentally wondering as we neared the portals of the Royal, which of us had a quarter, when our attention was speedily arrested and concentrated on an approaching figure. It was that of an elderly gentleman, not very tall, but rather stout, with a cheery bright face, clean shaven save for a slight gray side-whisker, and wearing a pair of gold rimmed spectacles; benevolence beamed from every feature, good nature and good humor, too, shone and sparkled from behind the bright pebbles that adorned his nasal organ, determination spoke in his brisk step, and his dress showed that poverty and he were wide and far apart.

"Great Scott," said First of Us, "if it ain't the Senator." The Senator it was, sure enough, and in a few moments he was shaking hands with All of Us, enquiring after our separate and individual healths and so on.

"Come round to my place boys," said he, "and join me in the usual."

We wheeled into the avenue, and in a short time were comfortably installed in easy chairs and in the old familiar style were taking the oath in the old familiar way—with a dash of lemon. The Hon. Fogge in answer to an enquiry from Third of Us, as to where he had been for the last year or two, said that he had been on the wing but had been home for some little time.

"Why, then, have we not seen you, or heard of or from you," demanded a Lot of Us, in a breath.

"Because," answered the sage, "I have been reading up. Ever since I went away I have had the papers left here for me, so you may imagine that I had a task when I returned. By-the-way, I noticed a new paper in the pile, and one that appears to me as very necessary in our or any community. Progress strikes me as a paper that has come to stay, and it it retains its present independent status, there is no reason that it should not succeed. The local election came off just before I returned, and as far as I can make out from a perusal of the papers, and from conversations with different people, His Holiness the Pope was a very important factor on that day. Funny things, these elections, who would ever think of the Fox of Northumberland and the Lion of York companionably gnawing the same bone, and my friend Dr. Stockton running on the same team with Mr. James Rourke—well, enough of politics, I want All of You to remember that I am at home again, and will look for you, as in the old days once a week."

We all thanked the Senator, bade him good day, stopping on our way to pick of Third of Us upon whom the House of Commons had a soothing effect, and filed out into the avenue, congratulating ourselves that our old friend was back, and that we were sure of one place where an officious dispenser would not ask us for coin of the realm in exchange for liquid refreshment.

DEAR RESTFUL ASHURST.

A MEDLEY OF LIFE BY CONCORD'S CLASSIC STREAM.

Where to be is Living, not Existing—A Spot where the Poet, Philosopher and Lover of the Good to be Got out of Life may Rest and be Content.

Sweet inn from pain and wearisome turmoil.—Spencer. The place.—It is a suburb of Elysium, which it would not suit our purpose more definitely to locate. Listen to this account of it in rhyme:

Ashurst has a restful quiet, And I seek it oft; Few the feet that e'er pass by it, And their tread is soft;— Shadows of the ash trees tall On the mossy dooryard fall. Ashurst has a cosy study Just above the door; You may see the windows ruddy Ere the day is o'er; When the thrush is in the wood, And the west is rosey hued. Ashurst has a singer living In its pleasant shade; One to whom is Nature giving Evermore her aid;— Simple is the life he leads— Few his wants as are his needs. Ashurst, it is vocal ever, With his tuneful words, Sung so easily that never More so sing the birds; All its leafy door-yard trees Catch his airy melodies. Ashurst for me ever gladly Hangs its latchstring out;— May I never come and sadly Looking all about, Find no latchstring in the door, And a shadow all things o'er.

The Owner.—He was not long there; he is not tall; he does not wear— "I became acquainted with him in the summer of 18—, and have known him as a lover of poetry and poets, of the woods and fields, and have passed with him many of the happiest moments of my life. I know almost nothing of his history prior to—

"I must ask my friend . . . if he has his essays, With Rod and Creel, in the mailable form. I would like you to read them, for I feel sure you would like them. He and I are frequently together." Our New England Walton is fond of his quiet life, and loves choice society, who can follow up a "trotting burn" all day and hold such sweet talk as—

That man of heavenly memory, Who with his Bryan and a book, Loitered long days near Shawford-brook, In pleasant discourse, wherein we His singleness of heart can see, Inviting us to love the good, The meek and quiet habitude. The Company.—"You must come . . . for I went to see you. When you do come we will go to Ashurst—about six miles distant—and, if the season be winter, we will toast our toes before the great wood fire in the quaint study; while if it be summer, we will sit under the tall ash trees by the gateway, or wander in the woods along the Concord, which has become a classic stream, but it has lost nothing of its sluggishness. It is as "easy" as the Scheldt; but its banks at B—are picturesque. . . . You have in me a friend that enjoys a smoke occasionally; but he avoids a clay pipe and "mungus dungus." He is not proud of the habit, neither is he ashamed of it. . . .

"If your ears should burn some night this week do not be surprised, for I expect R—and M— here to tarry over night, and doubt not that we shall talk of you while we toast our toes by my venerable fire-place and extract the smoke from the fragrant 'bacy. We hope for your presence sometime, and 'we three' will have a symposium, truly. . . I assure you that you will be welcome here, and that 'the latch string is always out' for you. . . .

"If you could come in and chat with me now. . . Here lies my dog (Guy, by name, and an English beagle by birth) before the blazing fire, on a hearth well nigh two hundred years old; and there is an easy-chair waiting for you. Through my western window streams the light of the setting sun,—and all (including myself and my books) are waiting to welcome you. I hope our mutual friend R—and his wife will be here this week, and then we will talk of you, but not as gossip mongers. . . .

"—Well, here I am, at Ashurst, with M—, having come hither yesterday afternoon. I am now in the 'quaint study'; a wood fire (a drift-wood fire) is crackling . . . the sunlight lies pleasantly on the carpet; and Guy—the beagle—stretches himself on the comfortable rug. M— is at my right engaged in looking through a very interesting scrap-book. W—, a comer to this fair place, is toasting his toes before the rosy fire; and the lord of the manor is sitting back to me, enjoying an early pipe. We are living now, not existing, to use the expressive phraseology of O. W. A. We wish you were here; and if you were we should feel as if Ashurst were the world, and we the only people in it; for gathered in this secluded, quiet place, our wishes would forget to stray. . . .

Post-Scriptum.—(In another hand.) "If wishes were horses' here you would be, enjoying with us this quaint retreat, and the comfort which we think is enjoyable, and conducive to a thankful spirit. . . . A pause here for breakfast; and now I have nothing more, only to send you the greetings which our hearts dictate. With loving duty, etc." "As you know, Ralph was here, . . .

*It is called, in the Indian tongue, Mosquitoquit, or dead water.

and we had a supper and soul-society together, and then a pipe before my venerable hearth, and you may be sure you were not forgotten in our talk. Would that you could come, and make a pleasant trio!" . . . "I wrote to R— last evening, upon the inspiration of a joint letter from Ashurst. Am I not human to be envious of such delights, who must be here, 'uneasy and confined at home,' when I have a peep into such a circle? My imagination is full, 'My heart is strangely stirred!' And those books! Take down the well-worn copy of your Burns, and turn to the page where it reads"—

Roll, ye wild win's, an' drive the snow! Ye rudest tempests, wrathfu' blow! Ye do but brighten mair the glow— The festive gleam That Ashurst's cordial evenings know, By Concord's stream.

Roll, ye wild win's, e'en as ye please, Thro' our mild Hermit's shel'ring trees! Sweeter the calm within, if breeze Without may blow: The frere wha hears your music sees His hearth-fire glow.

And haply R—and M— there, Make the bright scene mair bright an' fair; An' the assembled Muses rare, Complete the joy That angry Winter's utmost blare Can ne'er destroy.

Then, while the drift-wood sparklin' burns, The steaming tea he deftly turns, Wha fifty tents a' stic concerns Close by himsel'; An' hantles washboards, besoms, ains, An' pens, as well.

An' while the cakes gae roun' the board, An' this is praised, or that preferred, Slipped in is mony a frien'ly word, Ilk charm to hear O sang and story—mony a hoard O' wisdom rare.

Roll, ye wild win's!—the drifts pile higher Round this delightful warblin' choir! Our Walton weel shall feed the fire, To light up clear; An' wi' his sunny face inspire The e'enin's cheer.

Then to the pipes; an' while the reek Curis fragrant o'er each poet-check, —Whist! . . . let name be sae bold as speak Till's words be warm! Let rattan run, or mouse squeak— Break not the charm.

But when the bole lemes clear, an' glows, E & L And like a pawkie furnace laves, An' the soft incense greets your nose, A' ripe an' rare,— Oh, then, discourse maist freely flows Frae chair to chair.

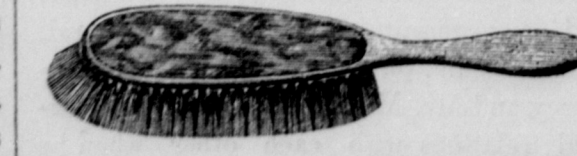
An' haply R—will syke, an' say,— "The night is joust as gude as day, An' oor December's maist like May, [La Grippe—a—ch—choo:] I wish that F—x cam' this way, To stap, the noo!"

An' saft the Hermit will reply,— "I'd gie my lugs were he but uigh, Wad this sweet pipe enraptured ply, An' no' think' lang, Unless he slept a sarnin' slay, Until his sang."

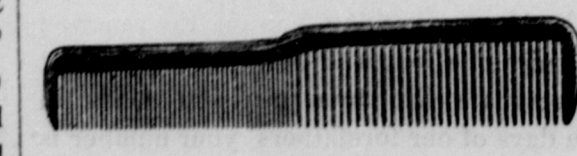
Roll, ye wild win's in rude affray, From chilliest eve to dewy gray! Dear frien's, in social concord stay By Ashurst's hearth. There's one who lo'es ye, though away, An' joys i' y'r mirth. Shall not I go to Ashurst straightway, while the latch string is out, the fire burns, and the guests are waiting? PASTOR FELIX.

Why They Want Legs. I remember once having some conversation with the purveyor of "fleshings" He explained to me how the "fleshings"—in which ballet girls incase their legs, or, perhaps, I should say how the legs—are made. The artist fits on a tricot. He then marks where the legs are defective, and he has the tricot thickened at these places. "Calves," he said, "give us the greatest trouble. Nature generally makes them wrong. They are either too high or too low, and we have to work in the calves so as to remedy this and to make the ankles appear small." The artist told me that he made legs for many ladies in society. "What can they want your legs for?" I said. "Well," he replied, you see that their dresses might catch getting out of their carriages, and they like to be prepared for any accident of this kind." He further told me that he had a large practice in arms for gentlemen. It seems that those who have mere sticks wear stuffed tricots under their coats to give themselves a manly and muscular look.—London Truth.

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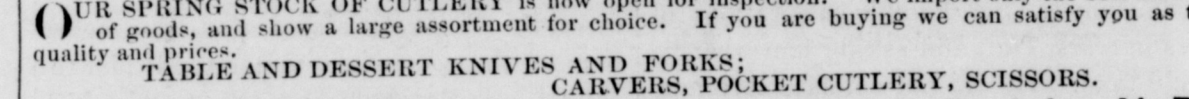


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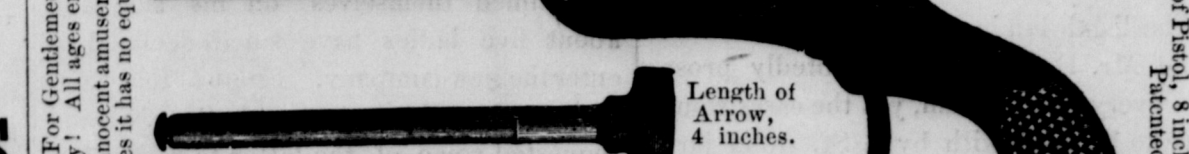
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