

IN THE LAKE DISTRICTS.

GLIMPSES OF REAL LIFE AMONG THE ENGLISH PEASANTRY.

They are living as their forefathers lived Centuries Ago—Ancient Stone Built Habitations and their Attractive Interiors—Some Odd Characters.

KESWICK, England, July 10, 1893.—My friend had to do with the railway service; took me to the Annan station-yard; secured a huge shunting engine with stoker and driver for our use; we were soon reeling and crashing across the great Annan bridge connecting Scotland with England; and our strange conveyance for sight-seeing among peasantry at last halted with hoarse challenges beneath the gray and echoing crags where, on the English side of the Solway, tiny, stone-built Bowness looks out upon Scotland and the Firth, just where, nearly 2,000 years ago, the great wall of Roman Servius came to an end because of the unconquerable Gaelic hordes of the wild, barbaric North.

At one window we saw the face of a hardy man passed middle aged, and we straightway knocked at his wide, low door and were bidden to enter. Among these humble folk the coming of strangers at any time or hour is not reckoned an intrusion, but rather a pleasure; and there are no bolts and locks upon the doors of any peasant's habitation in all this English Alpine country. They are trustful and simple and good in the face of all friendly approaches, but hard and dreadful as their own mountain scaws and fells where wrong is found beneath friendly addresses.

This man was a universal type of the lake district peasantry. He was much more than six feet in height, and as he moved about the large, low rooms, his head just escaped the huge oaken beams of the ceiling. His hair was soft, silken and bountiful; flaxen where the silver had not yet come; and with his full, fine beard suggested a strain of the old Norse blood. His forehead was high, wide, white. His eyebrows were bushy, but fine and glossy, above large eyes of lustrous light, blue, deep set, steady and almost mournful in their gaze. The nose was strongly-cut, truly classic, and the mouth was large, but characterful and firm. The sort of a head set upon a huge and perfect frame, stout as the timbers of his centuries-old habitation, gave a man who looked straight at you and made you, despite yourself, look straight at him in return.

The interior of this Cumbrian peasant's home was as characteristic and fine as the appearance of its sturdy old possessor. The large room where we sat was the "fire-house" or living-room of the habitation. It was fully eighteen feet wide and twenty-five feet long. All the door and window casements, the ceiling beams and the timbers about the fireplace had been hewn out of solid oak. The floor was of the same huge slate slabs as the roof, and these were so clean from scrubbing that they shone like dusky mirrors beneath your feet. There were many windows, no two in range, all little and splayed inwardly, the sides of each of their stone apertures as white as snow, and the sash of each was half hidden by milk-white muslin. Huge settles of oak with fleecy or chintz-encased covers were ranged along the low white walls. In one corner, its face yellow with age, solemnly ticked an eight-day clock, its clumsy frame built into the two abutting walls. In the centre of the room was a long, strong table, with huge legs, cross-pieces and braces, worn and polished from use; and its great age was plainly told in one-half its length being provided, as I have found entire tables in the peasant homes of Brittany, with square, oval and circular depressions, in which the food of the children and hinds was served perhaps an hundred years ago, when even pottery was a luxury, and only the peasant master, his wife and the elder sons and daughters knew the use of the rudest dell.

More curious than all else was the entire side of the "fire-room" containing the fireplace, in which, though our visit was in midsummer, there was a cheery, comforting blaze. A huge arch sustained the bowed cottage wall. This stone arch was really the base of the chimney. In its center was the open fireplace hung about with chains, hooks and cranes, and at each side was a narrow splayed window, like those of a castle turret—tiny outlooks from this peasant fortalice of a snugger; and the dark mouth of the chimney above must have been nearly six feet across. I have found the same odd arrangement in the cottages of old clachans in the Hebrides, in the Scottish Highlands, and in the ancient half-deserted weavers' village of Gattonside, near Melrose, beside the Tweed. The slabs of the floor in front of this fireplace were decorated with grotesque figures and designs, one of Noah's dove, and scroll work in ochre and vermilion chalk, an universal home-side custom among the lake district peasantry.

The chairs were huge and high and of oak. The bureaus and dressers, quaintly decorated with shining pewter and strange old bits of china-ware, were high, narrow and sprawling-legged, and all of mahogany. The beds—for one for the house master occupied the corner of the room—were high, huge and strong enough for the repose of giants and were of strangely carved oak. Out from this ample living-room extended inviting vistas through low-ceilinged "lean-tos," each one doubtless built in a different century, and each provided with many tiny windows with deep casements, through which could be caught a glint of blossom, a spray of foliage, or the lichenized gray of some ancient structure; the whole a dream of sweet old age, centuries-old rooting to the very rocks of the hills, endless content and unbroken repose. No wonder it is that the heart of the wanderer, when coming upon scenes like this, for the moment thrills with longing to end his pilgrimings, and bide for aye where the bitter struggle of life may no more come within such winsome, storm-defying walls!

This picture of a single peasant home at ancient Bowness-on-Solway is one of even tone with thousands of others, from the

Scottish border down through the mountain dales and passes of the grand lake district, across Cumberland and Westmoreland, past Morecambe Bay, almost to the River Lune in Lancashire. Its peasant owner was a "statesman." That one word is the key to his splendid self-poise, his simple, strong nature, and to the ample comfort and fixedness of his environment. It is true of them all. These "statesmen" are peasants absolutely possessing the soil which they till. There is no tuft-pulling, head-ducking or knee-cringing among such as these in England or any other country. In the ancient feudal times the barons were often in sore stress to repel the Scottish border incursions, or to make equally barbarous forays of their own. To provide retainers who would fight to the death for these barons as well as for their own mountain-side, tock-hewn cabins, it was found a wise thing to parcel out the lands in tiny bits to hirelings; and these villain retainers were in time enfranchised. They were only bound to their liege lords for military service in defense. When feudalism passed away the villain land-owners remained freemen and possessors in fee of the little "estates," hence "statesmen," the noblest peasantry of all Europe, and a wondrous though singularly unneeded example to the remainder of Britain in its endlessly perplexing agrarian problems.

You will seldom find a detached and isolated habitation. From a half a dozen to a score will croudle together in some pocket dell, huddle beneath the frowning height of a dreary scaw, nestle along the side of foaming ghyll, crouch closely together in the verdure of some narrow pass, or stand like a clump of mossy rocks beside some shadowy upland tarn. Wherever found, many of their peculiarities are common to all. You will always find them beneath the shade of lofty sycamore trees; and when the leaves of these are gone, there is always near the cottage the green of the fir-tree to gladden the eyes in winter. I do not believe there is a peasant's home in the entire lake district where the wimpy sound of near running water is not endlessly heard. The orchards are large and bountiful. The stout-walled gardens are splendidly kept and fruitful. There are always comfortable outbuildings for cattle; walked and covered sheep folds to withstand the most pitiless mountain tempests; invariably a tidy stone shed for the many lives of bees which distill from the mountain heath the sweetest "henny" in England; and in summer time every cottage wall is a mass of flaming roses. Every one of these habitations is a museum of ancient house utensils. The oldest one known to man, the quern, is here; all implements of the hand weaver and spinner are here; the antique "fulling" boards are here; and I have as often found in these habitations the *melier*, that most ancient of Gaelic and Celtic drinking vessels, as I have come upon them in the cabins of the Hebrides or the west of Ireland.

When folk have stood still so long and have so steadily tended all change, they usually furnish most interesting studies in their daily lives, customs and folk-lore; and yet these people are singularly lacking in any strongly-marked picturesque quality aside from that found in their unyielding tenacity to the home and actual ownership of the soil, their universal thrift and integrity, and their almost sordidness of calm and repose. They were never a boisterous, roystering folk, and to this day the dalesmen of one valley may have no acquaintance with or knowledge of those of another valley, unless the huddled homes of the latter happen to lie along the mountain road leading to the nearest market town. Partly accounting for this is the unbroken custom of never "hiving off." People of the same blood and family name occupy entire districts, and are sufficient unto themselves. These occasions grotesque nomenclature of identification. One is known as Jack o' t' Scaw; another, Jem o' t' Rigg; another, Myles o' t' Beck; another, Barrow-back't (bent-backed) Boab; another, Fratchin (quarrelsome) Ned; and still another, Byspel (mischievous) Billy. These are likely to be heads of families and grave old men. The names come along with them from boyhood and every one accepts his neighborhood designation as he does his increase of children or flocks and herds, in dignified though prideful content.

Some other distinctive ancient customs are still found in the remotest districts. The "watching" of the dead, almost identical in manner with the Irish wake, is universal. Courting is facilitated by the household retiring, after putting out the lights, and leaving the "font" or lovesick couple upon the "long-settle" of the "fire room" to their hearts' content, at which modern delicacy may stand aghast; but this manner of matings proves sturdy and true. Funerals furnish heroic feasts. At a few of the mountain towns "hiring" still survives, when the maidens who wish to engage at service stand in groups at the market-places; but they will no longer hold in their hands the wisp of straw, which was the olden badge of servitude. On Shrove Tuesday the boys still ferociously play "Beggary Scot," a game based on the forays of the old-time borderers. "Shaking-bottle," containing a decoction of licorice and water, is common with all children on May day. Kurn-winning, or the Harvest Home festivity, continues general. Youthful "pace-eggers" appear a fortnight before Easter, sometimes in grotesque costumes and carol demands for colored eggs, which are never refused. The smiths of the district will not heat iron or strike nail on Good Friday, in memory of the nails used in the Crucifixion; and that beautiful old custom of "rushbearing" or strewing the church with flowers on its patron saint's day, survives only in this almost idyllic and wholly pastoral region.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

Must Tumble Over Each Other.

The following is a list of servants usually kept by Britons holding high positions in Indian cities, viz: A khansamah, a kind of butler; an abdar, or butler of the liquor department; a khitmutgar, or table servant; a choka, or page-boy; a musselschee, or torch-bearer; a mug, or cook; a coachman; a syce, or groom; a bheestee, or water-carrier; a house-cooler; a mollie or gardener; a dhoobie, or washerman; a durzee, or tailor; an ayah, or nurse; a sirdar, or valet; a furrash-bearer, who takes care of the lamps; punkah-pullers, who pull the punkahs for supplying fresh air; a durwan, or porter who lives in the lodge at the entrance gate; a jamadar, or footman; and several chuprassies, or messengers.

A HALIFAX MIRACLE.

INTERESTING STORY OF A LADY WELL KNOWN IN THIS CITY.

After Two Years of Suffering She Has fully Regained Her Health, and Tells Her Story That Others May be Benefited—The Testimony of a Leading Druggist.

(Halifax Critic.)

Camille Flammarion, the great French astronomer, in his new story "Omega; or The Last Days of the World," which is now being published in the Cosmopolitan Magazine, gives the press of the future a very hard hit. Whether or not the great astronomer may be right in his view of the press of the 24th century, one thing is certain, the world of today is more largely indebted to the press for efforts to promote the highest civilization, than to any other human agency. Great discoveries in all branches of scientific research are chronicled with a faithfulness that enables the multitudes to enjoy to the greatest extent the benefits accruing therefrom. The newspapers of our land have for many months past contained accounts of marvellous cures effected through the agency of that marvellous medicine known to the world as Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. A large number of these stories have been published in the columns of the Critic, and have no doubt been read by the majority of our readers with full assurance of the truthfulness thereof, and yet we imagine there have been a few who have doubted, and who have not been so much interested in the experiences of people miles away from Nova Scotia as in those of their own province. Now, however, The Critic can give an account of a perfect cure, the facts of which we can guarantee as being true in every particular.

One day some time ago, some members of the Critic's staff were discussing in the editorial sanctum the merits of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, of which so much is being heard nowadays, when one of the company said, "By the way, did you ever hear of a cure anyway approaching the miracles being effected by Pink Pills in Halifax?" "No," confessed the others, "we never did. Of course there have been many cases in which the medicine has undoubtedly been very beneficial, but hardly marvellous." "Well," said the first speaker, "you know Robert Ainslie of this city, do you not? His wife was one of the sickliest women in Halifax at one time, and is now hale and hearty and gives all the credit to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills." Keeping this conversation in mind, one of our reporters having a little leisure time one afternoon last week, called upon Mrs. Robert Ainslie at her home 26 Blowers street, and after making known his errand, was invited into the comfortable sitting room and was cordially welcomed by Mrs. Ainslie, who said she was only too happy to make known to others the wonderful properties of the medicine which had done her so much good.

"How long were you ill, Mrs. Ainslie?" asked the reporter.

"I was taken with a severe attack of pneumonia, some two years ago," said the lady, "which lasted for about three months, and left me a wreck of my former self. Just seventeen weeks from the time I was first prostrated until I could put my foot on the floor, and even after I was able to walk about I was but the shadow of the woman I had been. 'Death of the nerves' was the name the doctors gave the disease from which I was then suffering, and indeed it seemed at one time that I would not be long for this world. Pale, thin, weak and emaciated, I was but an object of pity to all who saw me, and a source of much anxiety to my family and friends. While in this condition I travelled throughout the province, hoping thereby to regain my health. I visited the Spa springs at Middleton, drank the mineral water and took the baths, but all to no effect. Finally I was advised by a friend, who herself had been greatly benefited by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, to try this wonderful remedy. Although I confess, I had little faith in this or any other medicine, I purchased a box of the celebrated Pink Pills and began taking them according to directions, and took box after box, until I had taken eight, when I found I was becoming fat, and as I was then in excellent health I took no more, and have since then been well and strong."

Mrs. Ainslie's story although given in her own words, conveys but a faint idea of the faith she has in Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to which she feels she owes her present excellent health. Mrs. Ainslie informed the Critic representative that she had recommended Pink Pills to some twenty-five or thirty of her friends throughout the province (in which she has an extensive acquaintance), and in some cases had purchased several boxes of the Pills in Halifax for people living in country places.

"I understand, Mrs. Ainslie, that you yourself manufacture a medicine which is highly spoken of?"

"Yes," said the lady. "I do. My dyspepsia cordial is well known in Nova Scotia and even further away." This struck us as a case in which "physician heal thyself" might have been applied, but it goes to prove that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have a power to strike at the root of disease that other medicines, be they ever so good in their place, have not. After thanking Mrs. Ainslie for her kindness in giving us the above hearty recommendation of the medicine, we proceeded to interview Mr. Hamilton, of Messrs. Brown Bros. & Co., druggists, of this city, from whom Mrs. Ainslie had purchased the Pink Pills. This course was taken not that we in the least doubted the statements made by Mrs. Ainslie, but simply to satisfy any sceptical ones among the readers of The Critic, who not being acquainted with the lady, might feel that they would like assurance made doubly sure. Mrs. Hamilton said she remembered Mrs. Ainslie when she purchased the first box of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. She was then much debilitated and had been very ill. He also remembered her coming to him when she had taken a half dozen boxes and testifying both by her words and appearance to the good they had accomplished in her case. Mr. Hamilton stated that there was more of Dr. Williams' famous Pink Pills sold by his firm than any other medicine, and that they were frequently hearing from their customers of the wonderful beneficial results of the treatment.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People are manufactured by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., of Brockville, Ont., and Schenectady, N. Y., a firm of unquestioned reliability. Pink Pills are not looked on as a patent medicine but rather

as a prescription. An analysis of their properties show that these pills are an un-failing specific for all diseases arising from an impoverished condition of the blood, or from an impairment of the nervous system, such as loss of appetite, depression of spirits, anæmia, chlorosis or green sickness, general muscular weakness, dizziness, loss of memory, locomotor ataxia, paralysis, sciatica, rheumatism, St. Vitus' dance after effects of la grippe, all diseases depending upon a vitiated condition of the blood, such as scrofula, chronic erysipelas, etc. They are also a specific for troubles peculiar to the female system, correcting irregularities, suppressions and all forms of female weakness, building anew the blood and restoring the glow of health to pale and sallow cheeks. In the case of men they effect a radical cure in all cases arising from mental worry, overwork or excesses of any nature. These pills are not a purgative medicine. They contain only life-giving properties, and nothing that could injure the most delicate system. They act directly on the blood, supplying its life giving qualities, by assisting it to absorb oxygen, the great supporter of all organic life. In this way, the blood becoming "built up," and being supplied with its lacking constituents, becomes rich and red, nourishes the various organs, stimulating them to activity in the performance of their functions and thus eliminates diseases from the system.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are sold only in boxes bearing the firm's trade mark and wrapper (printed in red ink.) Bear in mind that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are never sold in bulk, or by the dozen or hundred, and any dealer who offers substitutes in this form is trying to defraud you and should be avoided. The public are also cautioned against all other so-called blood builders and nerve tonics, put up in similar form intended to deceive. They are all imitations, whose makers hope to reap a pecuniary advantage from the wonderful reputation achieved by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Ask your dealer for Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People and refuse all imitations and substitutes.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills may be had of all druggists, or direct by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine Company from either address at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50. The price at which these pills are sold makes a course of treatment comparatively inexpensive as compared with other remedies or medical treatment.

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