

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1896.

NOTCHES ON THE STICK.

PATERFEX TALKS ON MANY VERY INTERESTING SUBJECTS.

Edgar Allan Poe and his melancholy life discussed—A Bicycle Sermon—Judge D. J. Donahoe as a Jurist and Literateur—Some of his Poems.

July. Now o'er the land the hot breath of the south Wafts lightly, bearing from the meads away The bleeding perfume of the new-mown hay...

The wind on the upland falls Fell keen from a cloudless blue, It leaped along the mountains And murmured the woodland through...

There are many things of equal excellence,—tender lays of love, spirited patriotic lyrics, and delicate pencilings of nature.

We have before us the report of a Sabbath evening discourse, preached at the State street Methodist Episcopal church, Springfield Mass., by our good brother, Dr. T. Corwin Watkins, on the Columbia Bicycle.

"They don't know everythin', down in Judex;" but we fancy the amazement and indignation of a fervid Methodist congregation in Springfield, or anywhere else, should a Dr. Watkins have come before them with a lecture on horse-back riding, and its relation to health and morals, slightly tinged with religious sentiment, as it should be, of course, on Sunday evening, but very practical and up to date; a discourse extraordinary, in which the principal references to Christ should be an appeal to him in justification of the speaker's course.

"I believe in illustrating truth by the things that are about us, and by the events of to-day as well as by the things that transpired 1000 years ago. When Jesus was by the sea He talked about the fishermen's net; when on the wooded hillside He spoke of the lily and the sparrow; and I feel sure that were He to mingle with the throngs who glide through our broad streets and country roads, He too, would preach to-day upon the bicycle instead of Babylon."

When Christ was beside the sea, or upon the mountain-side, or in Sychem's vale, or wherever He might be, he spake not primarily of the fishermen and their nets, or the sower who went forth to sow, or of the rose or lily, but of the great eternal spiritual things of his Father, and of the duties and destinies of man. All these things upon which emphasis has here been

laid were mere passing incidents and illustrations, marvellous in their appropriateness to His purpose, as is seen after He has used them. He never uttered a detailed discourse upon the lily; He was never fantastic; He selected local objects, but the well-known objects of universal nature; and, above all, he never felt it his duty, in order to swell his congregation to humor a craze, or patronize a fad. We conceive that a discourse on the hygiene and morality of the bicycle is suitable enough to the Lyceum platform, but not to the pulpit and the Sabbath evening service. We take no exception to any allusion the preacher may there wisely make to that or any other instrument, by way of illustration; but his theme is wide enough—God, and the human soul; Time, and Eternity; Salvation, and man's consent. There the minister is in a peculiar realm, is face to face with important duties and responsibilities. Therefore, let him not look to the follies of the time, but listen to the Spirit, and to his higher reason. "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Since our last notes were penned the arrival at our sanctum of The Poe Memorial Association document "To the legislature and governor of the State of New York," as well as some correspondence, makes occasion for farther comment. The aim of this association has been the creation of a "Poe's park," in which the summit of Fordham hill, and the Poe cottage, on its proper site, should be included. This "Poe's park," it was hoped, might be so beautified by the gardener's art, and adorned by statues, as to become, ultimately, to the lovers of genius in America, what "poet's corner" in Westminster Abbey is in England. Instead of this, it may be expected, the hill will be graded down, and the site and surroundings of Poe's last home in this world, out of which she was carried to her burial who still lives, as "Lenore" and "Annabel Lee"—quite obliterated. This is Mammon's unpatriotic decree. "It does seek," declares the Memorial, "to run the public highway over the last home of Edgar Allan Poe, and because the city has spent \$25,000 upon a survey which should never have been dreamed of, we are told that the survey must stand. God forbid that this great state of 'Homes' should be party to such cynical sacrilege! Miss Frances Willard writes: "The room in which Poe wrote the Chiming 'Bells' and the piteous 'Annabel Lee' ought to be sacredly guarded as an altar-fire of genius."

The melancholy circumstances of Poe's life at Fordham may be briefly given. "It was in the summer of 1846 that he removed his wife, then dying with consumption, to the quiet and repose of the Fordham cottage. There were then several acres of land leased with the modest dwelling.

"A celebrated writer, speaking of the cottage, says: 'Here he watched her failing breath in loneliness and privation, throughout many solitary moons, until on a desolate, dreary day of the ensuing winter, he saw her remains borne from beneath its lowly roof.'

"Another author, who visited Poe at Fordham, says: 'We found him and his wife, and his wife's mother, who was his aunt, living in a little cottage at the top of a hill. There was an acre or two of greenwood fenced in about the house, as grass-ward as velvet, and kept by the poet as clean as the best swept carpet. There were many flowers, and also some grand old cherry trees in the yard that threw a massive shade around them. The cottage had an air of taste and gentility that must have been lent to it by the presence of its inmates—so neat, so poor, so unfurnished, and yet so charming a dwelling I never saw.' Of Poe, he said: 'He was at this time greatly depressed. Their extreme poverty, the sickness of his wife, and his own inability to write, sufficiently accounted for this.'

"The same writer speaks of later visits, and says: 'The autumn came. Mrs. Poe sank rapidly in consumption, and I saw her in her bed-chamber. Everything was so neat, so purely clean, so scant and poverty-stricken. There was no clothing on the bed, which was only straw, but a snow-white spread and sheets. The weather was cold and the sick lady had the dreadful chills that accompany the hectic fever of consumption. She lay on this straw bed, wrapped in her husband's great coat, with a large tortoise shell cat on her bosom. The wonderful cat seemed conscious of her great usefulness. The coat and the cat were the sufferer's only means of warmth, except as her husband held her hands, and her mother her feet. Mrs. Clemm was passionately fond of her daughter, and her distress on account of her illness and misery was dreadful to see.'

what sacred memories the Poe cottage is hallowed. It was Poe's last home on earth, and where he lived from 1846 to 1849. The extraordinary genius of its former tenant is now acknowledged the world over; his fame has outlived the critics and calumniators of his day. His only aesthetic peer was the otherwise peerless Chopin. Almost the only American poet who interests Europeans is Edgar Allan Poe. This cottage has survived the elements and should be preserved from the vandals who would remove it to some unfamiliar place and obliterate the site on which it stands.

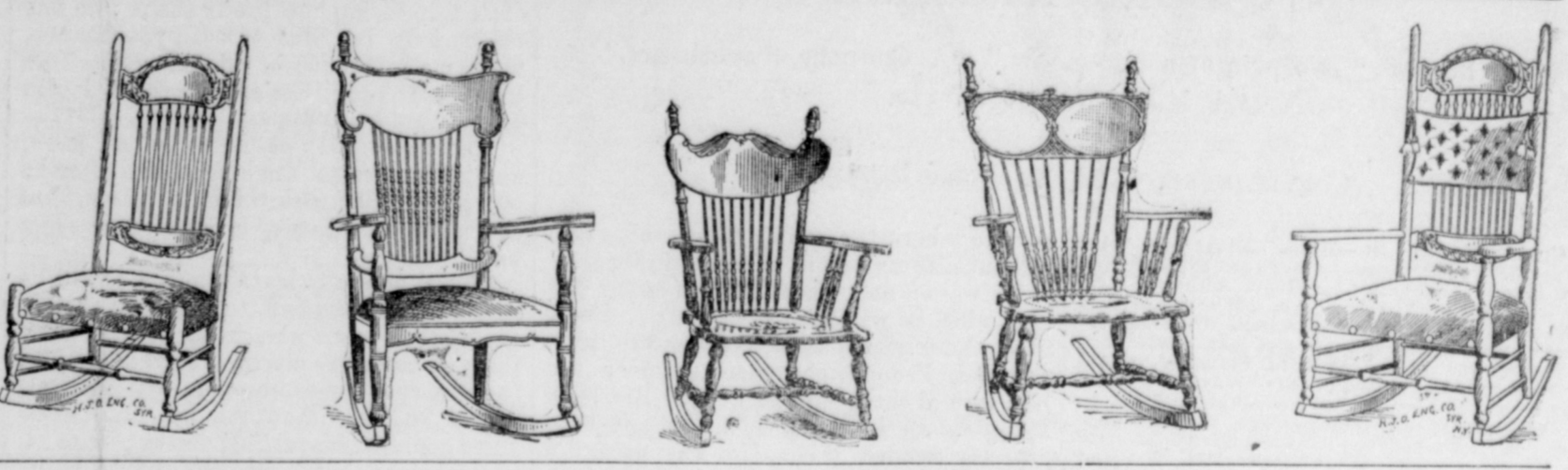
"A still stronger claim to its rescue, if possible, is the fact that after the death of Mrs. Poe, as his last and crowning legacy to the world which had starved them, the poet produced within it humble walls those thrilling and matchless works—"The Bells," "Ulaluma," "Annabel Lee," "To My Mother," "For Annie," "The Domain of Arnheim," "Londor's Cottage," and "Eureka." The tiny dwelling belongs, therefore, not to Fordham and New York to do as they will, but to the whole American people and to the whole poetry-loving world."

Our vivacious and versatile correspondent of Ohio, Hon. Charles H. Collins gives his encouragement to the scheme for the preservation of the Poe cottage, for he writes: "By all means print what Mrs. H.— suggests, as to Poe... I would not throw any obstacle in the way of refined ladies who desire to honor his memory as an American poet and prose writer. I have read all both enemies and friends have said of him, and, while holding his talents in high esteem as a prose writer, consider his few poems as purely mechanical. The best edition of his works is by A. C. Armstrong & Son, 714 Broadway, N. Y., and is complete in four volumes. It gives the best that can be said of him, and attacks Griswold's biography as unfair. "Once upon a time," like all boys, I had a mania for heroes. Poe was one, Byron another, and I tear, Jack Shepherd and The Pirate's Own Book, were also on the list. Poe's weird and horrible tales I read, just as I did those of Monk Lewis. For Poe's analytical mind, as a lawyer, I have respect. "The Gold Bug," "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," and others, are minor examples; but "The Murder in the Rue Morgue," "The Mystery of Marie Roget," and "The Purloined Letter," are the highest types of such reasoning. Conan Doyle has produced nothing to equal 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue.' However, I do not wish to revamp in a letter what you know so well I desire only to add that Horace Greeley, who was certainly one of the most charitable of men,—gives in his 'Recollections of a Busy Life,' the correspondence which passed between himself and a young man who applied to him for an autograph of Mr. Poe. Mr. Greeley says: 'A gushing youth once wrote to me to this effect: 'Dear Sir: Among your literary treasures you have doubtless preserved several autographs of our country's late lamented poet, Edgar Allan Poe. It is his note for \$50, with my endorsement across the back. It cost me exactly \$50.75, including post, and you may have for half the amount— Yours respectfully, Horace Greeley.'

"Mr. Greeley adds, with infinite quaintness: "That autograph, I regret to say, remains on my hands, and it is still for sale at the original price, despite the lapse of time and the depreciation of our country's currency."

Adverting to a subject somewhat foreign—for we delight in digression—we sent our friend a copy of Francis Blake Crofton's able monograph on Thomas Chandler Haliburton, which evoked this response: "What a fine face the judge had at sixty years." Wit, humor, good-fellowship, and intellectual force. I like that face. The character of the man is given in all its lights in this sketch. The author is master of his subject. I read it through before retiring last night. How many slang phrases we owe to Haliburton. We hear them every day. I was surprised to find so many credited to his Sam Slick, the immortal. I shall review Haliburton in our papers. I never read a more interesting sketch."

We can but observe that our friend seems to have escaped from the poetic spell of Poe, if once it may have enthralled him. To us Poe's verse, though mechanically unique, is far from the simply mechanical. There are wheels, but there is a spirit in the wheels. Walking in the shadow is always the spectre, darkly beautiful. That poem, "The Conqueror Worm," fascinates and makes us shudder. We want to look down into that splendid horror again! "The Haunted Palace" is the most wonderful picture of a noble and gifted but distraught mind, we ever met with. The whole seems to ring with manic song and laughter, awfully musical and sweet. Poe's account of the genesis of his "Raven" seems incredible. He describes a cool methodical artizanahip, where our youthful fancy suggested frenzy. Never mind, about the



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manner and method—there is the result! When boys were, how we did rave over that poem, and with what wonderful elation we rendered it. While yet in our teens we lectured on Poe at Lower Horton, and good Brother C.—then orator and mentor—shook his head doubtfully, and feared that Poe must have been a sad soubriquet, judging by the lame excuses made for him. A poor advocate we felt ourselves to be, for Poe had been our very ideal of an unhappy and ill-used poet.

We find ourselves in perfect accord with our friend's estimate of the prose of Poe. He is unquestionably master in the domain of the dreadful. He has a conjuring ichor that Conan Doyle cannot intuse, that raises the very dead. No one, we think of now, comes so near him in that power as the Scottish genius who lately died at Valima. And Bliss Carman, in his poetry, is more than a dabber at the same subtle business. "Behind the Arras" has quite that haunting spell. We read "The Red Wolf" at the breakfast table the other morning, and the youngest of the youngsters kept eye on the whistling till we were through. There were plenty of shivers. When we read this stanza, one of them gave a laugh of great satisfaction:

"That day I will arise, put my heel upon my throat, And quit his yellow blood upon the door; Then watch him dying there, like a spider in his jar, With a 'wof, wof, wof' at my door."

That is the sort of poetry that gets the boys, whatever the critics think of it! Of course, there is no need of interpretation. We all have our haunting delusions, of which we hope some day to be finally rid. There is one thing, we must say in favor of Carman,—if he does cry Boh! at us, there is a laugh under it. If he takes us to the haunted edge of the woods, he does not lead us in the black forest. If we go with him into the heart of the night, when he leaves us, there are the streaks of morning; He is no grim apostle of despair. There are very loving and gentle touches, as in "The Lodger." There is an undecurrent of hope and joy in him. There is a magnificent upburst of faith in his "Night Express!"

"For He at the sleepless hand Will drive till the night is done,— Will watch till morning springs from the sea, And the rails stand gold in the sun;

Then He will slow to a stop The tread of the driving-rod, When the night express rolls into the dawn; For the Driver's name is God."

But this is beside our subject. Referring again to the weird tales of Poe, we are reminded of the evening when sitting late in the old "Acadian" office, at Wolfville, we read for the first time, and by rather a dim light, "The Fall of The House of Usher." We pursued the theme of dread till we could positively endure the eerie solitude no longer; when, closing the book, with our nerves in a tremor, we extinguished the lamp, and fled the place.

To us the pathos of poor Poe's history has always appealed. We still feel that, under all his failings, there struggled a certain manfulness in the effort at right-doing and well-being. Read in the light of his sad history at Fordham, and the miseries that oppressed his life—however of his own procuring—it may be that the reason why Greeley hid that unfortunate document to disclose, was this—the poet never had the means to redeem himself. Such defaults are alleged of Goldsmith and Leigh Hunt, yet, for the good that was in them, we still give them reverence. Alas! that we cannot reverse Poe. But shall we, therefore, not pity and forgive? We must still take the part of one who has long been put before us as the renegade of literature,—the pitiful prodigal with the harp, who wasted his substance, and then died in the far country.

We learn from "The Week" that Mr. Bliss Carman has gone to Paris and to

Rome on business connected with his publishers; also that Mr. T. Arnold Haultain, whose articles are familiar to all readers of that able journal, has returned from England looking exceedingly well.

The Governor-General of Canada will do a generous thing in admitting the Ottawa railway men to the hospitalities of Rideau Hall, supposing him to mean the operatives as well as the magnates.

Just now the meeting of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, at Cleveland, Ohio, has led us to look up that chief city of Cuyahoga county in that comprehensive book, Howe's Memorials. We have the history of the place and its general configuration pretty well in mind. We expect it will be a memorable convention which our vast church will hold there, with its over six hundred delegates, lay and ministerial. The tinkers and revolutionists will be up, most of whom, we hope, will be decently laid to rest before adjournment; and as our Brother Dr. Berry, of "The Epworth Herald," humorously observes, after all is over, the Methodist church will look so much as it used to that you could tell it after dark. We expect Dr. Buckley, of the New York Advocate, will be at the front to lead the battle of the conservatives. PATERFEX.

THE COUNCILLOR WAS ANGRY. But Halifax Bicyclists Cleared the Bedford Road of Stones.

HALIFAX May 14.—who ever before heard of a club of bicyclists turning out to rake a public highway and clear it of loose stones. The Ramblers of this city have set an example for a custom which may become popular. On Saturday afternoon 25 of them raked a section of a mile or two between Sherwood and the Princes Lodge, on the Bedford road. Justly they worked and vastly they improved the appearance of the road. While in the midst of their labors Councillor Donaldson, that representative of Bedford in the municipal council, happened along and, strange to say, he became indignant the wheelmen were engaged as he found them to be. He particularly assailed Wm. Lithgow, president of the club's good roads committee, and reprimanded every one who had taken part in the novel undertaking. He considered, he said, that he should have been consulted before the club members were turned out, rake in hand upon the road. His permission should first have been secured. His dignity he said, had been offended, and he was highly displeased, even if the stones were disappearing. Councillor Donaldson should have been glad to see the road over which he has jurisdiction improving so radically, even if the method of its accomplishment were slightly irregular. But it was irregular only by accident. President Mr. Mylius had unavailingly sought Mr. Donaldson on Saturday morning, and there was none more sorry than he to see that this troubles had arisen. Saturday evening when the raking was over, Mr. Mylius wrote to the councillor fully explaining the whole situation. The hope and the prospect is, therefore, that councillor and club will yet be able to work harmoniously together making the Bedford road better and something like what it should be.

It has been estimated from the stamp duties paid by patent medicine-makers that 4,000,000 pills are taken by the inhabitants of the United Kingdom every week. Only about one million are taken by the people of Russia. The sea is infinitely more productive than the land. It is estimated that an acre of good fishing will yield more food in a week than an acre of the best land will yield in a year. The English newspaper correspondents who are to attend the czar's coronation have to supply the Russian authorities with three separate photographs of themselves.

coupled with very little exercise, makes him in reality a somewhat delicate man. In appearance he is impressive without being handsome, and his ordinary demeanor is one of apparent indifference and aristocratic hauteur. Like himself in character, his oratory is impressive, forcible and effective. At his famous seat in Hertfordshire—Hatfield House—Queen Victoria has been more than once entertained by Lord Salisbury, as in a past century his ancestors entertained Queen Elizabeth, and there he thoroughly enjoys, whether in or out of power, the generous country life and open hospitality of the historical and typical "fine old English gentleman."

Taken altogether the present British Premier is an extraordinary and interesting figure in the politics of this period. His patriotism is strong and sincere, but it rests upon the forms of the Constitution and upon loyalty to the Crown rather than upon the modern principle of loyalty to a popular democracy. And Lord Salisbury in this case undoubtedly embodies the natural, hereditary and inherent conversation of the English people. For that reason and none other he-to-day controls, for good or ill, for greatness or weakness, the destinies of the British Empire.

Will Wed a Prince. The engagement is announced, says the New York Herald, of Miss Chanta Milmo, a sister of Mrs. Eugene Kelly Jr., to Prince Albert Radzivil, a member of the famous family of that name, that has been identified for many generations with Poland. Miss Milmo is, on her mother's side, of a distinguished Spanish family, who many years ago went to live in Mexico. Her grandfather held a high position at the time of the ill-fated Maximilian. Prince Albert Radzivil is a young man of fortune and is related to some of the most famous families of Europe, among them the Talleyrand-Perigords and the Castellanes. His marriage to Miss Milmo will be celebrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, on June 3. Miss Milmo is in Mexico with her sister, Mrs. Kelly. Prince Radzivil is very well known in the best society of Paris and London and is generally at Bad Homburg for the season there. He arrived in New York six weeks ago and is now in Mexico.

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