

Notches on The Stick

There is scarce an author of the present day more notable than Zangwill,—the author of such absorbing novels as "The Master," "Children of the Chetto," "Ghetto Tragedies," etc.—for pithy, and memorable sentences. This is especially true of his late volume of essays, "Without Prejudice," in which a multitude of topics are dealt with, and all in a manner graceful, light, rapid, and sparkling. Of this book it is justly said that "A flashing fancy darts across its pages. A satire, which is like a keen, bright rapier thrust right and left, pierce many things." There is here the variety that current taste and haste require, whether it be of topics, or the style of treatment. His leaves are fragrant of the wildwood, and exhale the odors of birch and sassafras and wintergreen; but at the same time they regale you with scraps of a "divine philosophy" and of luminous criticism. Here is a remark or two worthy of consideration, in a time when so many of our fair ideals, that seemed to us impregnable, have been assaulted, if not overthrown. "A human being is born a bundle of prejudices, or instincts, and intuitions that precede judgment. Reason is only called in to justify the verdict of prejudice. Sentiment is prejudice touched with emotion. Patriotism is prejudice touched with pride, and politics is prejudice touched with spite. Philosophy is prejudice put into propositions, and art is prejudice put into paint or sound. Every man is born a Platonist or an Aristotelian, a Romanticist or a Realist or an Impressionist, and usually erects his own limitations into a creed. . . . Darwin, the Barry Pain of biology, asserted that man rose from the brutes, and that, instead of creatures being adapted to conditions, conditions adapted creatures. Berkeley, the Lewis Carroll of metaphysics, demonstrated that our bodies are in our minds; and Kant, the W. S. Gilbert of philosophy, showed that time and space live in us. In literature it is the same story. To credit the scholars, Homer is no longer a man [he might include Job, and some others,] nor the Bible a book. As for Zachariah, it was written before Exodus. This topsy turvydom is a valuable organon of scientific discovery. Take any proposition, invert it, and you get a new truth. Any historian who wishes to make a name [Take notice, Mr. Justin Winsor,] has but to state that Ahab was a saint and Elijah a Philistine; that Annahias was a realist and George Washington a liar; that Charles I. was a republican hampered by his official position, and that the Armada defeated Drake; that Socrates died of drinking, and that hemlock was what he gave X-ntippe." A hundred years of scientific invention seem to assent to this assertion! "The cocksure centuries are passed forever. In these hard times we have to work for our opinions; we cannot rely on inheriting them from our fathers." If Thackeray's spirit is still mindful of mundane ideas and why may he not pore over our books? may he not smile quietly at the following?—"What Professor Huxley has done for the cray fish, that Thackeray did for the snob. He studied him lovingly, he dissected him, he classified every variety of him." Zola is to Zangwill "that apostle of insufficient insight." He gave the world such beggarly things as he could see. Our epigrammatic author has some fine and just words to say of Walter Pater,—to whom he declares English prose is indebted for "harmonies and felicities unsurpassed and unsurpassable."

"This exquisite care for words has something of moral purity as well as physical daintiness in it. There is, indeed, something priestly in this consecration of language, in this reverent ablation of all the counters of thoughts, those poor counters so overcrusted with the dirt of travel, so loosely interchangeable among the vulgar; the figure of the stooping devotee shows sublime in a garrulous world." And again: "Prose is the highest of all literary forms, the most difficult to handle triumphantly. We get the music of it in Ruskin and in Pater."

Sir Wilfrid Laurier came to St. John, and exercised upon the people that charm of personality, which has everywhere prevailed, and with which the God of Nature has endowed him. We did not see him; but his gracious influence has penetrated lives remote and apart from the Canadian political arena. A generous praiser utters his dictum as follows from one of the States of the Great Republic: "Laurier, the Canadian Premier, is a good man, and a sensible one. He has won his way to the brains, as well as the hearts, of Canadians. I think his great reception well deserved. I like the man's methods,

and, indeed, admire his judgment." We give below a poem by George Martin of Montreal, which was published in "The Star" on the day of the premier's arrival in that city. A copy was sent to him, and from his hand the author received a handsome acknowledgement.

The Return of Laurier.
He comes, not as a warrior comes,
With stores of spoil from conquered lands,
With weapons wrenched from hostile hands,
And captured flags and blood stained drums;
But other trophies cheer his far
Than ever swelled the pomp of war,
He brings, from Europe's palace gates,
The gift of mighty potentates,
Surpassed by all, by all confessed
The wisest sovereign and the best,
Victoria the good.

He comes, the nation's chosen chief,
While oak and pine, and maple leaf,
And tasseled corn, and all things fair
In concert thrill, in concert share
The glad vibrations of the air.
The glad vibrations of the air.
The glad vibrations of the multitude.

With sun-browned face, and sun-browned hands
The habitant, delighted stands
Erect before his cabin door,
Removes his pipe, and waves his hat,
His spouse and children pleased thereat,
And cheers till he can cheer no more,
He feels that he can claim a part
Of Laurier's fame, of Laurier's name,
And hence the tumult of his heart.

The hilltops and the islands speak
With tongues of fire; on brow and cheek
Exultant pride and homage blend;
The former foe and faithful friend
In closest amity contend
For who shall first salute the chief
With outstretched hand and laurel leaf.

Now while the cannon's greeting roar
Reverberates from shore to shore,
And countless flags, the blue, the red,
Unite and flutter overhead,
Let hope her iris weave again,
And faith uplift the hearts of men,
And mirth and revel have their way,
It is the nation's holiday.

I knew not that I was to keep tryst with Apollo at the fir by the old stone wall, but he certainly met me therethis evening. I went to feel the soft grasses under my feet, to lean against the rough stones and look up my neighbor's lane to the westward, to listen to the soft purr of the fire-truck, and the rustle of the green corn-blades, so sweet to my ear, and perhaps to bring home a handful of goldenrod; but in sooth I saw the most refulgent sunset of the season. It was an autumnal signal, suitably emblazoned. Behind the dark tapering lines of the elms on the Morey farm was all the splendor and color for which the eye could wish. A clear space of sky was before me, so pure and serene it seemed like a soul's calm sea, wherein all thoughts of beauty lie anchored;—the thoughts, perhaps, being the few bars and flakes of crimson and gold, with here and there and inexpressible gleam that made the eye to dance and the spirit to rejoice. There was a throne and the steps thereof; and around him the shapes ineffable sat in lovely state where was the god—the joy-giver, potent now as when the earliest bard was young;—his rich robes overspreading all his blazing dais! The sky seemed full of silent laughter as though it were a morning and not an evening joy. I went only to get a little of dear air and earth, and I brought home heaven in my bosom as well. All this was a surprise, and it bore the added charm of liberty. No toll-gatherer stood at the gap in that stone wall to collect the fee due these celestial fireworks. No advertisement healded the splendid show. I think, perhaps, if a trumpet were blown mortals would come to see. As the romancer said,—"If we were charged so much ahead for sunsets, or if God sent around a drum before the hawthorns came in flower what ado would we not make about their beauty." As it was I gazed long and eagerly. I wished for the pencil of a Salvador Rosa, or of a Turner; but even that would be a mockery. The show transcended genius. So I could only put it in memory's portfolio, and turn away.

But other Martin, you are right—that is, if I am umpire in the case. I endorse your argument, and repeat after you as if it were the marriage service, or the most sacred oath in all the ritual: "Married life is true life. I think of an old bachelor as half a pair of scissors, no good for domestic use; I picture him as a single stick of wood laid on the hearth to make a fire,—lay a second stick close by the first tuck a few chips and twigs around them, apply the match, and see how soon the chamber is chered and illuminated! There you have a symbol of husband and wife and children. Again, the old bachelor is a blot on creation, a note of discord in the harmonies of the universe; he is neither man nor woman; he is a melancholy note of exclamation, walking the earth with head downward,—a reversal of the order of being." And this our brother doth depone reverently mindful that Sir Isaac Newton, William Cowper, Thomas Gray, Oliver Goldsmith, Phillips Brooks, Washington Irving, Fitz Greene Halleck, Charles Lamb, and even some apostles, were bachelors; for he hesitates: "Is this indictment too severe? I know it is open

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to dispute. There are many notable exceptions;—which, as you know, or rather, as you hear said, proves the tale."

"Wallace Bruce speaks here [Hillsboro Ohio] Oct. 14th. His theme will be Robert Burns." Note from C. H. C.

To Hon. Wallace Bruce,
They tell us when the maple leaf
To red and yellow turns,
You'll come to us from Brooklyn Heights
To talk of Robert Burns.
October suns shall softly shine
Upon your pleasant way,
Although this is not Scottish ground,
Nor Rocky Fork the Tay.
But here's a hand to welcome Bruce,
Give us a hand of thine,
In honor of the Peasant Bard,
And "days of auld lang syne."
You'll be at home where sunlight falls
Upon our waving grasses;
Will welcome be in social halls,
Amid our Highland lassies.
Mid forest shrines and vine clad graves,
With their simple song and story,
Their woodland paths and rural loves,
Their free life in its glory.
Auld Scotia's fame they claim as theirs,
They claim its broom and heather,
Since Bobby Burns their brother is,
And knits them all together.
Down craggy slopes—by crystal streams,
Wherever dwells fair woman,
Our plow boys do not pose as saints,
But are, like Burns, quite human.
Our lassies with the "gowden hair,"
And "blue-eyed lassies" charming;
And "lassies wi' the linwhite locks"
Are not to them alarming.
Of Bonnie Jeans, and Handsome Neils,
Our country is not chary,
And every rustic swain can find
A lovely Highland Mary.

CHARLES H. COLLINS
We wish Wallace Bruce a pleasant advent to that delightful country and its waiting people.
PASTOR FELIX.

HEROES OF BUENA VISTA.

Their Sadly Neglected Burial Ground Near Saltillo, Mexico.

The hardy young Americans who left their comfortable homes in the United States more than half a century ago and came to Mexico with Gen. Taylor to fight against the people of this country probably did not think that should they fall in battle their bones would be left to crumble to dust in an unmarked spot in this distant land. But to-day the dead heroes of the Buena Vista battlefield lie under but a few feet of earth in a neglected place just outside this city. At the time of their hasty burial their devoted comrades evidently sought to make the spot somewhat sacred by constructing an adobe wall around it. This wall is fast succumbing to the ravages of time, and in places it is completely gone. I visited the burial ground of the dead heroes to-day. A tramcar took me as far as the pretty San Francisco plaza and from there I walked through a dirty, narrow street until I came to an arroyo, on the other side of which the faint marks indicating the cemetery may be seen. Had I not received careful directions I would have passed the place unnoticed. On the side toward the city the wall is entirely gone for the most part, and a much travelled wagon road passes through the place and over the sacred dead. The place which had once been inclosed by the adobe wall embraces probably two acres, but investigation shows that many were buried west of the wall and up close to the arroyo.

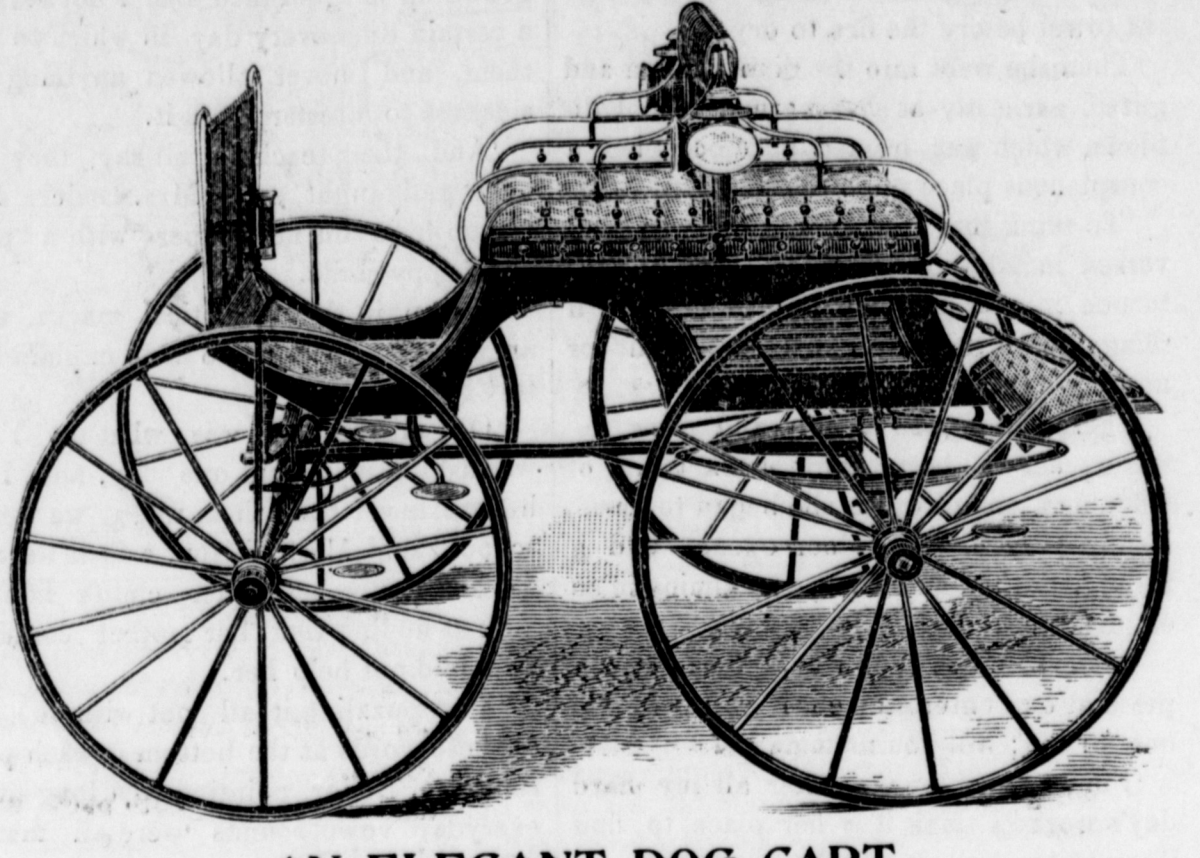
Some time ago the report was published in the press of the United States that the bones of the buried soldiers were protruding from the ground, and that the place presented a sickening spectacle. This report was not strictly true, but it is undoubtedly a fact that parts of many of the skeletons have come to the surface. The ground is strewn with fragments of bones, and it is evident that they come from the men who were buried there. None of these bones is large, as the heavy traffic through the place has broken them up into small pieces. If any skulls come to the surface they were no doubt quickly taken by the Mexican children who were about, and made innocent playthings of. Had they ever appeared they certainly would not have remained intact on the surface long. In the arroyo, through which floods of water pass at times and wash one side of the burial ground, there are also many pieces of bones among the rocks, and among them I saw an unbroken rib bone which looked like that of a human.

There is not a spear of grass nor a sign of vegetable life within the inclosure. It is

CARRIAGES! CARRIAGES!

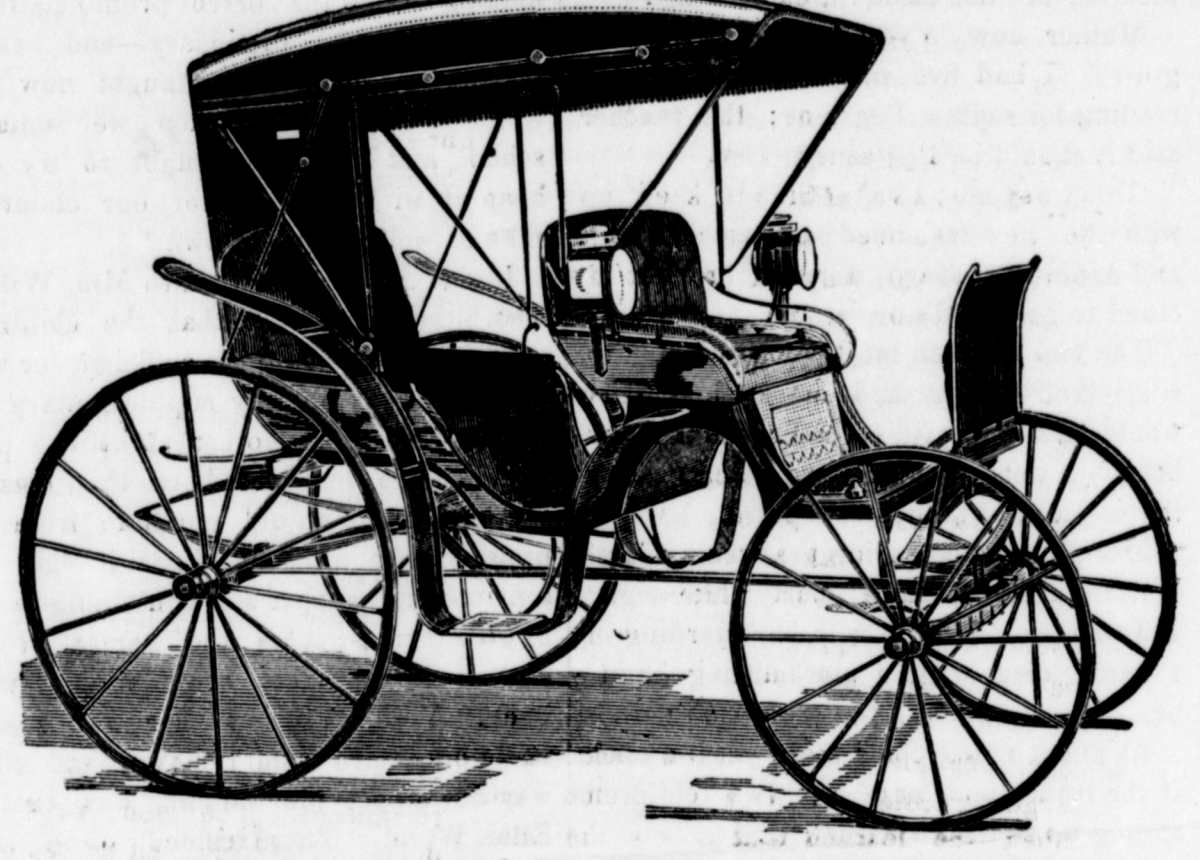
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perfectly barren. The place should certainly receive attention at the hands of the United States Congress, even if nothing more is done than to take such steps as will stay the ravages of time and weather on the treacherous soil, and permit the bodies lying there to rest undisturbed. It could easily be made an attractive and even beautiful place by laying it out in walks and planting trees and plants. The ravages of the floods in the arroyo on the soil of the cemetery could be checked by the building of a substantial wall along that side. In addition to the several hundred who were killed in battle, all of the soldiers who died in the hospital here were also buried there.—St. Louis Globe Democrat.

HIS LAST PRACTICAL JOKE.

How a Lawyer Came To Abandon The Distressing Pastime.

Mr. C. M. Harger one of the Youth's Companion contributors, tells in a West ern paper the story of the way in which a lawyer came to abandon practical joking. The senior lawyer of the bar in a certain county was a courteous gentleman of the old school of whom his inanimators were fond. This old lawyer was very near-sighted, but had a habit, when addressing a jury, of taking off his glasses.

One day when he was thus speaking, and his spectacles were lying on the table, his back was turned to the other members of the bar. The lawyer of whom allusion has been made, noticed on the table a piece of tissue-paper, and saw in this a chance to play a joke on the older man.

With a penknife he cut out pieces of the tissue-paper just large enough to cover the lenses of the spectacles, and with a little mucilage fastened them to the glasses. The paper was scarcely noticeable, but it was enough to prevent vision through the glasses.

es, and tried again. Then a deadly pallor overspread his face, which was not in the least amusing to see. He staggered to a chair. The young lawyers gathered around him.

"My God, gentlemen," he said "I am blind! I feared it for years!" Then he dropped his face into his hands.

The court-room was hushed. Before any one could speak, however, he had lifted his head and perceived that he could see again. He examined his glasses, and as he rubbed the tissue-paper, he flushed with indignation. Not a person in the room found the incident any thing to smile at,—not even the one who had perpetrated the "joke,"—and this man on the spot forswore practical joking forever.

Precipitate Haste.

"Light out down there?" yelled the old gentleman from the top of the stairs. The young man below did not catch the rising inflection, and lit' without taking hat or stick.

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