

Notches on The Stick

Circumstances soon arose that rendered Hunt's sojourn intolerable. Shelley was drowned in that squally bay, and that strange scene on the shore took place, when by the sudden agency of fire his body was restored to the elements. Hunt was there.

"That gentlest sage and friend most true Whom Adonais loved."

with Byron and Trelawney. The gifted gentle woman who dwelt with her poet in Casa Magni, was scarcely a more genuine mourner than Rimini's bard. In the autumn when they left Pisa for Genoa, Hunt visited the deserted house of Shelley. The place was rugged and wild, but seemed more so in its silence and desolation. A vacant room, an empty hall, a neglected garden are melancholy, when we remember the life once there. "The sea," he sighs, "fawned upon the shore, as though it could do no harm."

At Genoa Hunt, suffered the sorrow of estrangement. "The Liberal" had begun, and a strange venture it was for a man like Hunt to be concerned with. A plain-speaking editorial in England might be quite honorable, while a diatribe sent thither from Italy carries disrepute. We wish Hunt well out of this business, for the curse will be visited on his head. What matters that Byron's "Vision of Judgment" was published in its pages? Now come murmurs from the Tories and nobles. What have you, Byron, to do with this plebeian writer of diatribes? Shelley is gone now, and Byron is in a state of mind wherein Hunt seems by far too virtuous; and he finds he does not so dearly love a lord as to forget he is a fellow-Briton. Besides, (and oh, far more galling to Hunt than all else!) he is under pecuniary obligations to his lordship, who is not above regarding the "jingling of the guinea". Burns scorned to have pay for his songs, but Byron will higgie about the last farthing for his "Luras" and "Giora." So though they dwelt near each other, Hunt, with Mrs. Shelley in the Casa Negrotto, and Byron in the village of Albare, far better had they been leagues asunder. The marble staircase and balcony, the long suite of rooms that in England would be called splendid, and the flower garden, could not easily fascinate a heart-sick and home-sick man; and at the Casa Saluzzi he no longer enjoyed a hearty welcome. He describes himself as passing a melancholy time at Albare, walking about the stony all-ys, and thinking of Shelley. It was here he saw the first number of *The Liberal*; "there they prepared the few numbers which succeeded it, and here the coldness between Byron and Hunt grew to its height, and they parted."

Though at Genoa he abode longest, it is of his sojourn in Florence that we have the liveliest pictures. It was something that that unfortunate thing "The Liberal" was a thing of the past, and that the averted face of Byron was carried whither its owners would. Beside, was not Florence ever the poet's and the painter's joy? "I hailed it," writes Hunt, "as a good omen in Florence, that the two first words that caught my ears were, flowers and women—*fiore* and *donna*. The night of our arrival, we put up at an hotel in a very public street, and were kept awake by songs and guitars. It was one of the pleasantest pieces in the South we had experienced and, for a moment, we lived in the Italy of books. One performer to a journal accompaniment, sang a song about somebody's fair wife—*bianco moglie*—which set the street in rous of laughter.

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From the hotel, we went into a lodging in the street of beautiful women—*Via Delle Belle Donne*—a name which is a sort of tune to pronounce. We here heard one night a concert in the street, and looking out saw music-stands, books etc. in regular order, and amateurs performing as in a room. Opposite our lodging was an inscription on a house purporting that it was the Hospital of the Monks of Vallambrosa. Wherever you turned was music, or a grateful memory. From the *Vie delle Belle Donne*, we went to live in the Piazza Santa Croce, next to the church of that name containing the ashes of Michael Angelo. On the other side of it was the monastery of which Pope Sixtus V. went stooping as if in decrepitude "looking," as he said afterwards "for the keys of St. Peter."

"Agreeably to our old rustic propensities, we did not stop long in the city. We left Santa Croce to live at Maiano, a village on the slope of one of the Fiesolan hills, about two miles off. I passed there a very disconsolate time; yet the greatest comfort I experienced in Italy was from being in the neighborhood, and thinking, as I went about of Boccaccio. Boccaccio's father had a house at Maiano, supposed to have been situated at the Fiesolan extremity of the hamlet. That divine writer, whose sensibility outweighed his levity a hundred fold—as a divine face is oftener serious than it is merry—was so fond of the place, that he not only laid the two scenes of the Decameron on each side of it, with the valley his company resorted to in the middle, but has made the two little streams that embrace Maiano, the Affrico and the Mensola, the heroine of the *Nimphale Fiesolano*. A lover and his vestal mistress are changed into them, after the fashion of Ovid. The scene of another of his works is on the banks of the Mugnone, a river a little distance away; and the Decameron is full of the neighboring villages. Out of the windows of one side of our house we saw the turret of the Villa Gherardi, to which his joyous company resorted in the first instance; a house belonging to the Macchiavelli was nearer, a little on the left; and farther to the left, amongst the blue hills, was the white village of Stignano, where Michael Angelo was born; the house is still remaining in the possession of the family. From our windows on the other side, we saw close to us, the Fiesole of antiquity and of Milton, the site of the Boccaccio house before mentioned still closer, the valley of Ladies at our feet; and we looked toward the quarter of the Mugnone, and of a house of Dante, and in the distance beheld the mountains of Pistoia. Lastly, from the terrace in front, Florence lay clear and cathedraled before us, with the scene of Raddi's Bacchus rising on the other side of it, and the villa of Arcetri, illustrious for Galileo.

"But I stuck to my Boccaccio haunts, as to an old home. I lived with the divine human being, with his friends of the Falcon and the Basil, and my own not unworthy melancholy; and went about the flowery hills and lanes, solitary, indeed, and sick to the heart, but not unattended. . . . My almost daily walk was to Fiesole, through a path skirted with wild myrtle and cyclamen; and I stopped at the cloister of the Doccia, and sat on the pretty melancholy platform behind it, reading or looking through the pines down to Florence. In the valley of Ladies, I found some English trees,—trees not vine and olive—and even a bit of meadow; and these, while I made them furnish me with a bit of my old home in the north, did no injury to the memory of Boccaccio, who is of all countries, and finds his home wherever we do ourselves, in love, in the grave, in a desert island.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling has not lived on American soil in vain, having imbibed the American spirit, the spirit of true modernness that breathes through his poetry. The torpedo, that now draws our attention to itself, is set forth in his most recent numbers, as

"The doom-bolt in the darkness freed— The mine that splits the main."

He exults, as poet has rarely done, in the mechanical forces, and portrays them with accuracy, as in "McAndrew's Hymn."

It is said that Queen Victoria is a great

lover of Scott's poetry, and that she can, and does, repeat many of his descriptive passages when passing through the scenes to which they refer. She has also a relish for much of Burns' poetry, and for his sweet songs.

A monument to Miss Charlotte Yonge is proposed in England, and Sir Walter Besant and the American Ambassador, Col. John Hay are fosterers of the plan, while it is backed up by the Princess of Wales, and others of the nobility. It will take the form of a university scholarship at Winchester high school, which will be a fitting recognition of Miss Yonge's great services as a pioneer of that religion and high-toned literature for young people, which has for the past fifty years been the special glory of England."

A memorial to Dr. Thomas Arnold has recently been placed in Laleham church, and bears the following inscription: "To the memory of Thomas Arnold, D. D., head master of Rugby school, 1828-1842, regius professor of modern history in the university of Oxford, 1841-1842, scholar, historian, theologian, who as the head of a great public school, raised the character of all English education, powerful to rouse and train the intellect, but desirous above all to impress religion and duty upon the hearts of his pupils. In this parish, beloved by him as the home of his early labors, is offered this grateful tribute of respect and admiration. Born at West Cowes, June 15, 1795. Died at Rugby, June, 1842. Erected March, 1898."

"The McMaster University Monthly" is one of the best printed of Canadian College journals, and the March number is filled with excellent things. The frontispiece is a portrait of Dr. Augustus Hopkins Strong, with an account of this divine, and education, by G. W. A. Stewart. Articles of note are, "A Last Word,"—review of the second edition of Dr. Theodore H. Rind's, "At Minus Basin, and other Poems," by G. Herbert Clarke; "Adonair, and in Memoriam," by Grace Iler; "A Canadian Poet," (Charles G. D. Roberts.) by George L. Sprague. "Winter Flowers," by Blanche Bishop; and the song of the Pee-dee-dee," by Pamela S. Vining Yule, are very readable verses.

Frank R. Stockton, that master of lively improbabilities, has a public of his own, if we may judge by the fact that his publishers, the Scribners, are to bring out his "The Girl at Cobhurst," in an edition of 10,000 copies. The scene is said to be laid in a little American country village, and the plot is declared to be highly entertaining. Mr. Stockton never nods long at a time.

"Punch," that once made the English world laugh, is said to have run itself out. Howard Paul, in "The American Register" tells us it is regarded nowadays "as a very jog-trot publication, and few people read it. It exists on its former reputation, when Shirley Brooks, Horace Mayhew, Tom Taylor, Du Maurier, and other men of wit contributed."

Why may not Klondike yet exist in song and story? Mr. Hamlin Garland is about to visit it to note the life there, that he may serve it up in fiction. And doubt not that some poet is already on the ground.

The following stanzas, by Francis Sherman, are from the April Bookman:

The Return.

A day ago, as she passed through (September, with foreshadowed hair), The great doors of the year swung to, And little leaves fell here and there. Behind white-dusted clouds was lost The pageant of the level sun; We knew the silence tokened frost And that the old warm trees were done. And so we mourned and slept. But he (The Master of the moving hours)

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Called up the Southern wind; and we Awoke—to see, across the flowers, The gates flung back a morning's space, And (while the fields went wild for mirth) Above the threshold Summer's face Yearning for her old lover, Earth.

Our good friend Dr. Leggett, writes from his Pennsylvania home,—"The country is full of beauty now. The cherry trees, of which there are many all over the country, are in full bloom; so are the pear trees in the garden, and everything is in the full glory of the April time. I wish you could see our hills and valleys, and the beauty there at this season." Yet we look out on these Maine uplands, and see the old russet of the dead year. However there is here and there a green tinge and we have looked at Arbutus, and scented the sweet breath of that emblem of our lost Acadia. Even our frugal births give pleasure.

Sir James M. Le Moine, President of the Royal Society of Canada, writes us concerning the meeting at Ottawa in May. "We expect to see several savants of the U. S. as delegates. . . . Spring is very dilatory with us,—no flowers yet blooming in my garden. He refers to the death of his Eminence Elazar Axelandra Taschereau "the first and only Cardinal Canada has ever had. He was a man deservedly held in high esteem." PASTOR FELIX.

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PETER WIMMER'S CONQUEST.

How a Brave Californian Made a Treaty With the Indians.

The semi-centennial anniversary of the discovery of California gold, celebrated a few months ago, has aroused interest in the pioneers who led the way for the emigrants of 1849. Although a man by the name of Marshall actually picked up the first nugget of gold in the Coloma Valley, the name of Peter Wimmer, one of the early colonizers, is equally identified with that event.

While sojourning in Illinois, the white settlers were greatly annoyed by the Indians, and at one time Wimmer foresaw that another attack was to be expected. He called together the little band of white men, therefore, and told them that, in his opinion, it was necessary to meet the Indians and decisively conquer them before a large number had time to assemble at what appeared to be a preconcerted rendezvous.

Ten brave men responded to the call, and after placing the women and children in his own cabin, Wimmer set out with his followers upon a perilous mission. When they arrived at the mouth of the Kankakee River, their canoes were silently guided to the bank, where four Indian canoes were discovered. As soon as the top of the bank was reached, the white men saw the smouldering embers of a camp fire.

Then Wimmer offered to go forward and reconnoitre. It was scarcely possible that the guard would be asleep, so that this was a very courageous undertaking; but the fearless pioneer started with his accustomed prudence.

Crawling as noiselessly as a snake, he approached the fire; eight Indians lay asleep in a row, while the sentinel, in a half-sitting posture, was also wrapped in slumber. Securing the arms that the braves had left within easy reach when they lay down to rest, Wimmer crawled back to his companions and told them the state of affairs.

Then he stationed them around the enemy, and proceeded to carry out a plan for terrorizing the savages—a plan unprecedented in history. Directing his

men to have their arms in readiness, but on no account to fire unless he gave the order, Wimmer moved to a position commanding the scene, and began to sing in a loud, clear voice the words of the hymn:

Heaven's delight is in human kindness
The brave live on his weary way.
The first notes awakened the Indians, who sprang up in alarm each starting to seize his weapon. Consternation followed the discovery that they were unarmed, but this was nothing to the superstitious terror inspired by the calm, unconcerned manner of the "pale-face," who continued his hymn. The savages seemed paralyzed. After the singing was concluded, Wimmer reminded them of their depredations, thefts and murders, which he declared must stop. If the chief would agree to return all stolen stock, to commit no more thefts and to assist the white settlers against attacks from roving tribes, then their arms and canoes should be restored to them, and they might depart in peace. The result of this extraordinary measure was that a treaty of peace was immediately ratified, and never violated.

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