

Notches on The Stick

Another collection of poems by R. v. Frederick George Scott, entitled 'The Unnamed Lake.' (Toronto, William Briggs, Wesley Buildings.) is worthy the welcome. This writer is moved by the great events of the age, and the great thoughts 'giting the heart of man today. He deals with them strongly, poetically. There is a note of grandeur in these lines:

"When the ages were young and the tongue of the universe sounded his praise,
Over the dismal, abyssal, dark voids, where God went on his ways
To crown his creations with nations of flowering and animate life:—
Implanting a germ in the worm that would grow to his image with strife."

Ye tempests that sweep from the deep which the night and the light overspan,
Assemble in splendor, and render the praise of magnificent man!"

This sonnet has a noble, but no idle beauty. The poet ascends to the stars, but he stoops to touch the heart. The heavens that declare the glory of God, and the law of loving sympathy that moulds a tear, may not be far apart.

The Heaven of Love.

I rose at midnight and beheld the sky
So thick with stars, like grains of golden sand
Which God had scattered loosely from His hand
Upon the floorways of His house on high;
And straight I pictured to my spirit's eye
The giant worlds, their courses by wisdom planned
The weary waster, the gulf no sight hath spanned,
An endless time forever passing by.
Then filled with wonder and a sacred dread,
I crept to where my child lay fast asleep,
With chubby arm beneath his golden head.
What cared I then for all the stars above?
One little face shut out the boundless deep,
One little heart revealed the heaven of love.

In his mastery Mr. Scott is not among the least of our poets; and while he has humor and tenderness at command, he touches high themes with a grave reverence, and while he makes his appeal to the higher intellect he seeks to improve the heart of his reader.

We could never find it in our heart seriously to condemn that kid of the old fable, who, from the thatch of his shed, rated the wolf. He had the rare opportunity of speaking to his ancient enemy without diplomatic courtesy, and with comparative security to himself. We feel how human this is,—out of a high pulpit to deal out truth, or to say it cuttingly, like the editor, or the nameless correspondent. No doubt the kid did it in his heartiest manner. That hit about this occupancy of "coward's castle" was but the convenient sneer of his wolfship, who, doubtless, was just then out on a predatory excursion; and who exhibited as much of his native disposition as was possible to any timid kid on the earth. As for the kid, he might never have such an opportunity again.

A correspondent writes: "Have you read 'Quo Vadis' yet? A strong work, that, (yes, we could not be rid of it for many days after it was finished!) as depressing as experience. The din at Nero's banquets; his pageants, grotesquely gorgeous; the restless, imprisoned lions, sending their desert cry through the doomed city; the mighty fire, thundering sonorously among Rome's seven hills, in triumphant deluge,—we hear, see, feel it all, to our very marrow! The apostles are kindly drawn. Peter, standing aloft in the crowded amphitheatre silent, absorbed, courageous, masking from time to time over the dying martyrs in the ring, the barbaric, solemn, tragic, holy sign, is more impressive than Bulwer's Arbares, as he stood that day in the theatre of Pompeii, his white robe glittering with jewels, his arm outstretched, pointing to the rift in the awning at the upspringing fires of Vesuvius, while the audience surged towards him, wild for blood, and shrieking, 'Arbares to the lions!' There is much else in the book I would like to speak of, but that, perhaps, might weary you. But listen to one thing more. 'Whiter than the lilies of Hebron,' we shall see them after death, says this gifted Pole—those who on earth were sinned against. And that is my own doctrine." As might be supposed, the author of the above paragraphs has a poetic mind, and is a maker of excellent verse. The name of Mary Ellen Blanchard is not unknown to the public. I may be permitted to copy a few more sentences, containing no privacy. After speaking of some things that sadden and embitter life, she says,—“And yet, at this very hour, out of doors there is no dearth of loveliness. The snow-crystals glitter in the clear light of the sun, the sky is soft and full of sweet spring promises; while across the street one solitary cedar is moving its faded fans in a pleasant way, as though the impending greenness was delicious. We of Bohemia shake ourselves from dreams, morosely glad, to note the season's mir-

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insomnia, nervousness, and, if not relieved, bilious fever or blood poisoning. Hood's Pills stimulate the stomach, rouse the liver, cure headache, dizziness, constipation, etc. 25 cents. Sold by all druggists. The only Pills to take with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

acles once more,—being, as we are, brother and sister to yon cedar, the wide, bright azure sky, and the whole world."

We have been more than entertained by Dr. W. A. Quayle's article on 'The Gentleman in Literature,' in the current Methodist Review; we have been refreshed as with a draught of pure ether—the ozone of the hills. Whatsoever things are cleanly, noble, and inviting to a pure spirit, he has chosen to think upon these things. He has a crisp, sententious manner of uttering his thought, which he conceives imaginatively. A delicate poetic tinge shows through his style's texture, and he has the power to grasp and group salient things. To him the Knight of La Mancha is the matchless gentleman of literature. His forlorn grotesquerie does not discourage this admirer or bedcloud his view. He 'seems fantastic' and his creator (?) 'a laughter-monger'; but these are the straws of circumstances on the deep swift current of reality. 'Dare we think a gentleman could be ludicrous and fantastic?—for this Don was. We revolt against the notion that so gracious a thing could be grotesque. Yet is this our mature thought? Do not the facts certify that from this world's unregenerate standpoint manliness is grotesque? Was not Christ looked upon as mad? Did not his ideas of manliness appear as nothing other than fantastic, when he would substitute love for might, meekness for braggadocio, and purity of heart for an omnipresent sensuality? What were his ideals of manhood but battling with windmills or being enamored of a myth? Tested by standards of this world's make his notions and conduct were sheerly fantastic. As recorded on one occasion, 'They laughed him to scorn'; and this they did many another time, covertly or openly. Indeed, grasping the state of civilization as then existing and comprehending Christ's unearthly idea of what a gentleman was, we cannot be slow to perceive how ludicrous this conception would be to the Roman world. Tall dreams seem madness. Hamlet's feigned madness puzzles us even yet. Many an auditor heard Columbus with a smile illy concealed behind his beard. All high ideality sounds like a madman's babble.

To see a life live truly will strike many as a jest, and others as pathos too deep for sob. Don Quixote conceived a man ought to live for virtue. To be self-dedicated to the help of others; to be courageous as an army which has never met defeat; to be self-forgetful, so that hunger, pain, thirst, fatigue, become trifles; to have love become absorbing; to fill the mind's unathomed sky with dreams outshining dawns; to count honor to be so much more than life as that honor is all and life is naught; to interpret all men and women at their best, and so to expect good and not suspicion evil; to meet all men on the high level of manhood; and to love God with such persistency and eagerness as that the soul's solitudes are peopled with Him as by a host—if this be not a gentleman we have misconceived the species. Read this history of his early and later battles for right, and you will not find an impurity of word, suggestion, thought. God's lilies are not cleaner. . . . Better to be blinded as Don Quixote by a ravishing ideal, than to see, besotted in soul and shut out

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from God. That humorous figure astride lean Rosinante, esquired by pudgy, sensible Sancho, eager for chances to be of use, faithful to his love as dawn to the sun, strong in his desire of being all eyes to see distress, all ears to hear a call for succor, . . . this does not touch us as being humorous so much as it does as being pathetic. We see, but do not feel, the humor.

After Cervantes' great ideal, Thackeray's Colonel Newcome, and Tennyson's stainless knight, who "hated foulness as he hated hell," stand at his peak of honor. Of Newcome he says: "How unostentatious his bravery, . . . how alert his love, how open to enjoyment, how young his heart and how pure! What simplicity and what grave courtesy, particularly to women, how wide those windows of his soul open toward heaven, how magnanimous, how sad his face and heart, how sensitive his nature! . . . We can see him now, as if he lived among us yet." A gracious company, not far apart from these, are well spoken of. "Literature more and more concerns itself with spiritual quantities. The air of our century is aromatic with these beautiful conceptions, as witness, Jean Valjean, Dr. MacClure, Deacon Phoebe, Sidney Carton, Daniel Deronda, Donal Grant, Bayard, Red Jason, Pete, Captain Moray, John Halifax and Caponsacchi." With regard to gentlemanliness "Spenser stood on a higher mount of vision" than Shakespeare. He finds among that great poet's men no single gentleman. Heroes and strong souls enough, but lacking gentleness,—no ideal spiritual type among them all. "Shakespeare's men are always a little lower than the angels," whereas a gentleman might fittingly stand among angels as a brother. "Joseph, premier of Egypt" stands with him peer among gentlemen of the early world. Why not Daniel, premier of Assyria, with him? "Classic scholarship can show no gentleman Greece produced. Greek soil grew no such flowers beneath its radiant sky. . . . Test them by this canon of Tennyson: 'I would pluck my hand from a man, even if he were my greatest hero or dearest friend, if he wronged a woman or told her a lie'. . . . Julius Caesar was the flower of the Latin race. Nothing approximates him. Great qualities cluster in him like stars in the deep sky. But his ambition was like to that of Milton's Satan, and his lust was a bottomless pit." So no proper gentleman was he. "Dante knew not a gentleman, and could not dream him therefore." Milton evolved heroes and demigods, but has given no spiritual type of the gentleman. John Storm, in the much-talked of "Christian" of Hall Caine, may be hero or saint, but not gentleman. He lacks balance, "he means well, but is erratic, fitful, lacking centre. . . . Red Jason, in The Bondman is a worthier contribution to the natural history of the gentleman. View him how you will, he is great." Dr. Quayle made his literary mark in his recent volume of essays, "The Poet's Poet." His is a new voice but one to which we shall love to listen.

A friend, a little to the south of us, (Pennsylvania,) writes: "You should have heard our birds sing this morning! We can see no snow except in shady places and there very thin. Still, we may have a big storm this month; this is our month for blizzards. . . . I see by the last 'Bookman' that the 'London Academy,' an English literary journal, has awarded a prize of one hundred guineas to Stephen Phillips, the author of 'Christ in Hades,' for the best book published in 1897. It also gives a portrait of Mr. Phillips. Also an article by Stephen Crane 'Concerning the English Academy.' . . . Did you read, Clifton Scollard's poem 'A Winter Song'? He is a beautiful singer. Here is a sonnet by Eliza Woodworth, contributed to Scribners in 1892:—

Asleep Upon the Grass.

Upon the warm and fragrant grass I lay;
Above me towered the whispering maple-tree
(Whose voice, when storms march past, is like the sea.)

And round me was the throng of Summer-Day;
Thin gnats, and dusk ephemera, at play;
Passed yellow butterfly and banded bee;
The large-eyed robins came and I looked at me,
Then briskly hopped, content about the brae.
Wee, swinging spiders slid down mist-threads high
Grim, hurried ants across my palm would pass,
The shortest way, and lady-bugs, unsly,
Beetles came close, with backs like hammered brass.

For fear had left the elves that walk or fly,—
They said,—She is asleep upon the grass.

I have several of her poems descriptive of shore life, which I think are very fine. Her poems are mostly printed in the Independent. Miss Woodworth is much of an invalid, I take it, who lives in Washington D. C. I have corresponded with her for several years at intervals. She is certainly a rare poet. . . . I think you would like her very much. . . . Have you read in the March 'Cosmopolitan' 'The Dreyfus Mystery'? It is enough to make one's blood boil. Capt. Dreyfus may be guilty; but

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

.....Of the Household.....



1. It was tea which cost her ninety cents, and yet the dame looked sad;
It didn't seem to have the taste that China tea once had.



2. And the good man wasn't cheerful, for his tea was never strong;
He scolded servant, wife and child—vowed everything was wrong.



3. The maids gave "sass" about their tea, and said that they would leave;
And they broke some extra plates and cups, their feelings to relieve.



4. Then the children, too, were fractious—their mother thought them ill;
And quickly sought a famed M. D., although she feared his bill.



5. The sympathising doctor soon made the lady see
That the fault of these disasters must be due to wretched tea.



6. He said, "My best prescription isn't powders, draughts or pills.
The regular use of TETLEY'S TEA will cure your household ills."



7. The lady bought the tea at once, as she was told to do.
And if you'd seen the change it made, you'd go and buy it too.



8. And what a change! The good man's face is beaming o'er and o'er;
He said, "I'm fifty-two to-day and feel like twenty-four."



9. And the maids are so good-tempered—never give an answer tart;
While they do their work with such goodwill, and always look so smart.



10. And the children are quite happy, and add up two and two;
And make it four instead of five, as they always used to do.

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guilty or not, he has had no trial worthy of the name—but the rankest mockery of Justice. I don't believe him guilty. He has the misfortune to be a Jew, and that's enough to kill him in the French Army. You have read of Zola's trial and conviction for asserting Dreyfus' innocence and charging his crime upon high officials. Now he is in prison, and justice is outraged again. (B. F. L., Ward, Del. Co. Penn.) Our foregoing correspondent has touched this subject: 'What sort of novel, think you, will Zola now hurl at the public head? Now, if ever his 'realism' should be given a good airing. He has a right to black-guard if he likes!'

We like the beginnings of government, when it is for the people, and the people are right. We forebode the time when government is to be organized and administered in the interest of wealth and privilege. We love to live under primitive conditions of society. PASTOR FELIX.