

## Notches on The Stick

The modern spirit of toleration, merging too frequently in doctrinal and denominational indifference, did not obtain during the childhood of Mrs. Stowe. Her aunt, Harriett Foote, a strong character who left on her niece definite impressions, once hazarded the opinion—a rash one for the time—that “many persons out of the Episcopal Church would be saved at last, but they were resting entirely on *uncongenial mercy*.” In those days the lurid tinge of ultra-calvinism was still in the air, and its depressing effect was experienced by the susceptible heart of Harriett Beecher. She was instructed to cultivate the sense of the awfulness and fearfulness of God, to groan inwardly over sin, to fear and tremble. To be a Christian was an arduous and almost hazardous thing; and so she was made to conceive till she began to think it better she should die than live to be a disgrace to the church, and a burden to herself and the world. Sister Catherine seems to have approved of her miserable experiences, for she wrote: “Let her take courage in her dark sorrows and melancholies,” as Carlyle says; Samuel Johnson, too, had hypochondries; all great souls are apt to have, and to be in thick darkness generally till the eternal ways and the celestial guiding stars disclose themselves, and the vague abyss of life knots itself up into firmaments for them.” Yet the stress and sorrow that come to great souls in the time of their travail, and the hypochondriac miseries of constitutional malady, need not, be confounded with the needless laceration of a child's spirit the iron of creeds—a process in that age to frequent.

But Catherine Beecher had a stalwart mind. She exerted her powers at a time too, when “blue-stockings” was a stronger term of contempt than now. The learned professor of the day had none but withering phrases for his sister of equal calibre—indeed, in his judgment, she was not to be found. When a theologian of prominence in New England mentioned one of Catherine Beecher's publications to a German professor, declaring, “the ablest reputation of Edwards on ‘The Will’ which has been written is the work of a woman, the daughter of Dr. Lyman Beecher,” that incredulous and jealous Teuton, raising both his futile hands in astonishment, replied: “You have a woman that can write an able reputation of Edwards on ‘The Will’? God forgive Christopher Columbus for discovering America!” The Lyons, the Summervilles, the Brownings, the Eliots and the Beechers have made such intolerance something to be smiled at.

The literary instinct awoke early in Harriet and at the precocious age of twelve she wrote an essay having this for its portentous title: “Can the Immortality of the Soul be Proved by the Light of Nature?” It is uncertain whether she settled this vexed problem, but the closing words hint the probable truth: “Never till the blessed light of the gospel dawned on the borders of the pit, and the heralds of the cross proclaimed, ‘Peace on earth and good will to men,’ was bewildered and misled man enabled to trace his celestial origin and glorious destiny.” Is this the child that, finally condescended to the simplicities of “Uncle Tom?”

After some years of struggle and suffering, Harriet emerged to clear calm light and a peace of spirit not to be lost through all her subsequent experience. She was a child at home, no longer an alien; and she adjourned the settlement of indomitable

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questions to the day of future revelation. She tells us that someone “advised her to give up the pernicious habit of introspection to the first methodist minister who would take it;”—a slur that does not pertain to a denomination that has always insisted on assurance and joy, and that spiritual sunshine which makes so much for winsome attractiveness in the religious life. Methodism puts woe and darkness not in the background of the life of the believer, but in that of the impenitent and rebellious soul; and this view has general endorsement. James Russell Lowell, writing to Mrs. Stowe, upon the publication of “The Minister's Wooing” said: “Whatever creed may be true, it is not true that man can be saved by machinery. I can speak with some chance of being right for I confer a strong sympathy with many parts of Calvinistic theology, and . . . for one thing, I believe in hell with all my might, and in the goodness of God for all that.”

Mrs. Stowe had a sure touch upon sorrow-stricken souls. She had herself sorrowed so deeply as to be able to approach the woe of another. Her own dear boy was drowned while bathing in the Connecticut river, and she had by many a chastening influence been fitted to soothe, and sympathize. “Be not afraid and confounded,” she wrote to one suddenly crushed under a great bereavement, “if you find no apparent religious support at first. When the heart-strings are all suddenly cut, it is, I believe, a physical impossibility to feel faith or resignation; there is a revolt of the instinctive and animal system, and though we may submit to God it is rather by a constant painful effort than by a sweet attraction. There are cases when a superhuman grace is given and the soul is buoyed above itself, but more often we can only bleed in silent pain. For such deep places there is nothing but the remembrances of Him who, though a son, yet learned obedience by that which He suffered. We see that it cost Him agony and bloody sweat to say, ‘Not my will but thine.’ It did not come easily, even to Him, and He said it over and over in his anguish as we must. We know whose hand holds ours and that He makes no mistakes. These sorrows are our weanings from earth, and we fill the long night with tossings and moanings. Our Father, loving us better than we love ourselves, will educate us for our inheritance. It is no small thing, this eternal glory, and we must suffer something for it.” That “inheritance” and the sphere of spiritual beings, became to her imminent and real,—for she sings:

“It lies around us like a cloud,  
A world we do not see;  
Yet the sweet closing of an eye  
May bring us there to be.

“Its gentle breezes fan our cheek;  
Amid our worldly cares,  
Its gentle voices whisper love,  
And mingle with our prayers.”

She cultivated the habit of gentle, sympathetic attention to all who had even the slightest claim upon her. In writing of a friend she affirms: “It was associating with her that first gave me the idea of saying something to people who were not agreeable, and of saying something when I had nothing to say, as is generally the case.”

It can scarcely be doubted that Mrs. Stowe thought and acted conscientiously and sincerely, even in that which most tried our faith, the so-called revelations of Lady Byron. After her celebrated paper in the Atlantic Monthly, containing these, when denunciations began to pelt her thick and fast, she wrote: “It is worth while to have a storm of abuse once in a while, for one reason to read the Psalms; they are a radiant field of glory that never shines unless the night shuts in. Sometimes I have such nearness to the Blessed that I voice whispers, ‘Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder.’ ‘The eternal God is thy refuge.’ Depend upon it, the Lord didn't pitch me into this seething caldron for nothing, and the Son of man walks with me in the fire.”

A lover of peace was she, and of the fair tranquillities of life; but she was forced into emergencies, and if her literary life was not militant, in a controversial, it was in a humanitarian sense so, from the publication of “Uncle Tom.” She was a firm believer in the inspirational source and power of that book, which she felt that

some motive outside herself impelled her to write. In fact she rejected the mechanical principle in the construction of her stories. “Sermons, essays, lives of distinguished people,”—she explains to Mr. Fields, as a reason why she could not promise a story at a certain date,—“I can write to order at times and seasons. But a story comes, grows like a flower, sometimes will and sometimes won't, like a pretty woman. When the spirits help I can write. When they jeer, flout, make faces, and otherwise maltreat me, I can only wait humbly at their gates and watch at the posts of their doors.”

This heroic and gifted woman gradually declined into age and mental feebleness, and a “gentle flavor of mild decay” took possession of her faculties. It was as “a tired child” she left this earthly scene and was laid to her rest, July 1896, beside her husband and her children in the burial ground of Andover.”

Mrs. Nelly Fitch, daughter of Hon. Charles H. Collins, of Hillsboro, Ohio,—who is now at San Francisco, Cal., and who has written racy notes of travel, published in Ohio papers,—writes to her father under June 7th, 1898: “I went from the El Monte, where I am stopping, out to the Hill where Mrs. Frances L. Mace resides, to call upon her; but the nurse told me she had put her to bed, and asked me to come again, since Mrs. Mace could not then be seen. I left my card, with my respects for her, with the nurse, and hope she may give it to Mrs. Mace. The home where she lives is a pretty little yellow house, with lovely flowers in the yard. I like its location upon the hill, and the old-fashioned lane, (like a Devonshire lane in England,) which leads up to it, for it is very pretty. I would like to have seen her on your account. I told the nurse who I was, and left my card, and that was all I could do. Los Gatos is a lovely town. I will write you my impressions of the Santa Clara country when I have seen it all.

The following beautiful lines will show to the admirers of Mrs. Mace how still her heart is true to her native state:

### April in Maine.

I know how April comes back to Maine,  
How softly she steals through the wintry woods  
And her smiles illumine their solitudes,  
Till she hides her face in a veil of rain;

She hints of blossom to bush and tree,  
Then far her wayward journey takes,  
She waves her wand over sleeping lakes  
And they prattle of lilies that are to be.

No word to me you need to bring  
When the ice-chain breaks from the river I love,  
I can see the skies grow bright above  
When those waves their song of freedom sing;

When the arbutus peeps from its nest in the snow,  
When the maples their banner of green unfurl,  
When brookside willows their tresses curl,  
When the robins come, I shall see, I shall know!

Hearts' love is prisoned and bound in vain,  
And nature's voices ring far and clear,  
So I in exile can see and hear  
The springs return to my home in Maine.

Mrs. Nellie Wade Whitcomb, recently mentioned in PROGRESS, as a writer of verse, is about to remove from her place of residence at Dover, Me. She writes:

“My people and I are flitting from the dear old home, and the dear old town on the banks of the Piscataquis river, as it seems best for many reasons to do so. Our *lures* and *penates* are packed for Ocean Park, our summer home.” In reference to “the twin friends of the twin towns,” she writes: The article was a great surprise, and it was both odd and gratifying that it should have been in a St. John paper, because I have some newfound but very dear friends in that city.

Last Fall I went to New Brunswick a stranger, but came away with the feeling that I had always known it and the people,—how cordial and warm-hearted

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Modern Chivalry.

Sir Walter Raleigh's cloak has been a symbol of chivalry for many years, but the little street-boy's cap in the following story, from the Sunday Magazine, deserves an equally honorable place:

The best story I know of an Edinburgh street boy was told me by a lady who witnessed the incident. There was a Christmas treat given to poor children at a mission hall, and hundreds of little ones were assembled at the doors in advance of the hour of admittance, many of them barefoot.

Among the number was a sweet-faced little girl, who seemed less hardened than most to the cold, for she shivered in her poor jacket and danced from one foot to the other on the cold, hard stones. A boy

and hospitable they are! It occurred to me after my return that you might care to know that my friend and I fell in love with your beautiful ‘Evangeline Land.’ Its delights have never been exaggerated. We were about ten days in Wollville and vicinity, boarding at quaint Kent's Lodge, with its old-time belongings!

Mrs. Whitcomb had these pleasant words to say to her sister singer, above referred to: “Dear and brave Anna Boynton is busy on the farm,—very busy; but she sings in spite of the continuous work. Sorrow and care, indeed, seem only to make her life and song clearer and sweeter.”

Mrs. Whitcomb has a song of her favorite river, which she is soon to leave:

The Piscataquis River.  
I glide between my low green hills,  
A bed for high, blue spaces;  
And flow, a lucid amber flood  
Above the water races.

The rocks below still shatter me  
In shining shards of whiteness;  
A moment I must plunge and foam,—  
Then gain unbroken brightness.

Sweep freely on, the past forgot,  
While singing low but gaily,—  
To hold the sky, or soak the sod,  
And turn the mill-wheel daily.

I clasp my islands cool and close,  
In mild or stormy weather.  
And call the brooks to follow me,—  
We dance along together,

And leave the noisy town, to glide  
Through quiet country meadows,  
Where slender elm or sombre pine  
Dip dark and trembling shadows.

My fringing flowers oft lean and touch  
The tide, to cool their flushes,  
While down my lucid mirror looks  
The dreaming Dawn, and blushes.

When day, grown pale, has taken flight,  
Down through the dusk will blossom  
A shining floweret of the night,  
And nestle in my bosom.

At last I leap into the sea,  
Yet leave old comrades, never;  
For he, who once has dwelt by me,  
Will dream of me forever.

Our poetess is the youngest child of E. D. and Mary Wade, and was born at Parkman, Me., June 16, 1861. When she was three years of age her parents removed to Dover, where they have since resided. She graduated from the classical department of the Maine Central Institute, at Pittsfield, Me.; and was married at the age of twenty-one to Mr. Sergeant S. Whitcomb, of Lawrence, Kansas. Mrs. Whitcomb has written largely for the religious press, and is editor of “The Missionary Helper,” published at Providence, Rhode Island.



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It's the wash,  
out early, done  
quickly, cleanly,  
white.

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**SURPRISE SOAP**  
with power to clean with-  
out too hard rubbing, with-  
out injury to fabrics.

**SURPRISE**  
is the name. don't forget it.

not much older watched this performance for a few minutes, and then with a sudden impulse of protection took off his cap, put it down before her and said:  
‘Ye maun stand on that.’

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### Bad Manners.

First impressions mean a great deal. The language of the face and manner is the shorthand of the mind, and is quickly read. Orison S. Marden cites an example.

Can you write a good hand? asked a man of a boy who had applied for a situation.

‘Yass,’ was the answer.

‘Are you good at figures?’

‘Yass,’ was the answer again.

‘That will do. I do not want you,’ said the merchant.

After the boy had gone a friend said, ‘I know that lad to be honest and industrious; why don't you try him?’

‘Because his manners are bad. He has not learned to say ‘Yes, sir,’ and ‘No, sir,’ replied the merchant. ‘If he answered me as he did, how will he answer customers?’

## A YOUNG GIRL'S ESCAPE.

Saved from being a Nervous Wreck

BY

MILBURN'S HEART AND NERVE PILLS.

For the benefit of Canadian mothers, who have daughters who are weak, pale, run down or nervous, Mrs. Belanger, 124 Rideau Street, Ottawa, Ontario, made the following statement, so that no one need suffer through ignorance of the right remedy to use: “My daughter suffered very much from heart troubles at times. Often she was so bad that she could not speak, but had to sit and gasp for breath. She was so extremely nervous that her limbs would fairly shake and tremble. Frequently she would have to leave school; and finally she grew so weak that we were much alarmed about her health. I gave her many remedies, but they did not seem to do her any good.

Then I heard of Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills, and got a box of them, and they have indeed worked wonders with her. I can recommend them very highly as the best remedy I ever heard of for complaints similar to those from which my daughter suffered.”

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## SOME OLD EGYPTIAN

—at any rate

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