

## Notches on The Stick

The reader familiar with "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" will recall the spirited apostrophes to Italy in the Fourth Canto, and perhaps also the fact that it is a paraphrase of a sonnet by an Italian poet, familiar not only to students, but to the common people of that land, and dear to them as a passionate expression of patriotic devotion. We will contrast Byron's lines with a translation of the source whence they were derived. [St. XLII, XLIII]:

Italia! O Italia! thou who hast  
The fatal gift of beauty, which became  
A funeral dower of present woes and past,  
On thy sweet brow is sorrow poughed by shame,  
And annals raved in characters of flame.  
O God! that thou wert in thy nakedness  
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim  
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press  
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;  
Then might thou more appal; or, less desired,  
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored  
For thy destructive charms; then shouldst thou find  
Woe'd not be seen the armed torrens pour'd  
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde  
Of many nation's spoilers from the Po  
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword  
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,  
Victor or vanquished, thou the slave of friend and foe.

Vincenzo Da Filicaia [Pron. fe-le-ka-ya],  
a poet of modern Italy, struck the chord  
that Byron so finely reechoes:

Italia, O Italia! ha! less thou,  
Who dost the fatal gift of beauty gain,—  
A dower fraught with never ending pain,  
A seal of sorrow stamped upon thy brow  
Oh, were thy beauty more, or less thy charms!  
Then shouldst thou, O Italy, whom thy loveliness  
Now lures afar to conquer and possess,  
Adore thy beauty less, or dread thy arms!  
No longer then should hostile torrents pour  
A down the Alps; and Gallic troops be laved  
In the red waters of the Po, no more;  
No longer then, by foreign courage saved,  
Barbarian sword should thy sons implore,—  
Vanquished or victor, still by Goths ensnared.

It is the generally conceded right of a poet, or writer of original powers, to avail himself of literary material that has become so digested and incorporated with his thought as to have received the new stamp of his especial genius. Such adaptations are frequently found in the pages of all great poets, dramatists and romancers; nor are such felt to detract from their merit or the fertility of their minds, but rather to enhance their power, as, so far from suggesting plagiarism, they imply the common use and possession of great ideas among equal spirits, and the familiar sense of recognition, with all due credit, on the part of him who discovers them anew in the use and guise of an accepted master. So Byron has given us not this paraphrase of Filicaia's sonnet alone, but also a rendering of one of Dante's most haunting and exquisite passages, in all its pathos and beauty, in his "Don Juan":

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart  
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day  
When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;  
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way  
As the far bell of vesper makes him start,  
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;  
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?  
Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns.

The last two lines are, however, pure Byron. For it was not for the sake of poetry, but love, that the Englishman went back to Florentine, who sang: "It is the hour that thaws the heart, and sends homeward the voyagers' affections, it perchance they since morning have bidden their dearest friends adieu; and that smites with love the pilgrim in his wayfar- ing, if he should hear a distant bell that seems a-mourning for the dying day."

Filicaia belonged to a school of poets, marking the decadence of the Italian muse known as "The Arcadians." They belonged to the early part of the Seventeenth century; and beside himself, Marini was the one of all the piping crew most worthy of remembrance. Their master fault was artificiality and their greatest lack, something to say. They were jugglers with words; and though sometimes they fell into bizarre and brilliant forms and colors, inanity and emptiness chiefly marked them—a not very enduring result. Most of them consulted no oracles, and seemed to value their toys and tricks of language as something in advance of the great thoughts and inspirations, as well as the great art, of the earlier masters. We sometimes think we are upon a corresponding period in much of the English poetry of today. We have taken the inevitable step from art to artifice, and all kinds of mannerisms are introduced and cultivated. But by the force of inherent genius Filicaia rose, when at his best, free above the corrupting influence of his school. He had true feeling, strength of thought and energy

of expression. There was a martial and patriotic fire in his soul, that gave birth to odes, instinct with lyric enthusiasm, as they are moulded into form by the master's patient and cunning hand. Two of his best sonnets are given below, the latter of which seems to have had its influence on the muse of Longfellow, as he has written one in some respects similar.

### Time.

I saw a mighty river, wild and vast,  
Whose rapid waves were mom'n's, which did glide  
So swiftly onward in their silent tide,  
That ere their flight was heeded, they were past:  
A river, that to death's dark shores doth fast  
Conduct all living with resistless force,  
And though unfeeling, pursues its noiseless course,  
To quench all fires in Lethe's stream at last.  
Its current with creation's birth was born;  
And with the heavens commenced its march sublime,  
In days and months, still hurrying on untired,  
Marking its flight, I inwardly did mourn,  
And of my musing thoughts responded, Time.

### Providence.

Just as a mother, with sweet pious face,  
Turns toward her little children from her seat,  
Gives one a kiss, another an embrace,  
Takes this upon her knee, that on her feet;  
And while from actions, looks, complaints, pre-  
tenses,  
She learns their feelings and their various will,  
To this a look, to that a word dispenses,  
And whether stern or smiling, loves them still;—  
So Providence for us, high, infinite,  
Makes our necessities its watchful task,  
Hearkens to all our prayers, helps all our wants;  
And even if it denies what seems our right,  
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,  
Or seems not to deny, or in denying grants.

England is manifesting her sense of the greatness of Gladstone by the number and splendor of the memorials she is projecting. These are: 1. A statue by the royal artist, Brock, to be procured by the House of Commons, and placed in Westminster Abbey. 2. A statue by Pomeroy, which will be known as "The Liberal Party Memorial," and which will be located somewhere within the Houses of Parliament. 3. A national and non-political memorial, to be erected by the subscriptions of the people; and to administer this rapidly accumulating fund a committee has been formed, of which the Prince of Wales is president. 4. Monumental memorials, possibly to enshrine statues, in the cities of London, Edinburgh and Dublin. 5. A monumental building at Hawarden, for the accommodation of the St. Deniol Library, the gift of Gladstone to the town, arranged by himself, and which at the present time is housed inconveniently in a temporary iron structure. The cost of these national structures will be at least \$250,000, and nearly half that amount is already contributed. This might seem somewhat excessive for a beginning, but no national character of the present era better deserves such commemoration. He was indeed an oak, venerable and stalwart, green of leaf to the last. Long be it ere his honors shall have become mere!

The wars of yesterday have become the material of history, while the graphic pen and pencil thrill us with events that have scarcely yet become cold or lost the stain of blood. All is life and motion, in "The Cuban and Porto Rican Campaigns," by Richard Harding Davis, the movement of armies and navies, the bruit and signal of "oatles to be born," and then the fearful and inspiring procession of war itself. It is a book not to be read without interest. One becomes convinced, after reading of that charge up the hill of San Juan, and the captive of that death-dealing height that brave deed was never done in this world. Seen through Davis' eyes, Shafter becomes pitiful, indeed; and we are inclined to wish intertwining official tape out of the pathway of moving armies; though it seems forever destined to be there, while incompetence clothed with dignity claims its sacrifice. The articles which compose this book, with some modification and readjustment, were originally contributed to Scribner's Magazine. They are the work not merely of a newspaper correspondent, who has an opportunity of ascertaining and reporting facts, but of a practised and well-endowed literary writer, who knows how to embellish and combine them. Mr. Davis has an extraordinary faculty of observation; he sees rapidly, and yet distinctly and seizes upon the salient and essential points of vision, so that his narrative becomes clear and his pictures vivid in the presentation. The book is abundantly illustrated from photographs taken by the artist who was his associate in the field. Mr. Davis tells nothing more than he has seen or heard; he gives his estimates independently, and is not afraid of his opinion. This book must become an important document with the future historian, who shall deal with American relations with Cuba.

John Reade, of Montreal author of "Merlin" has been long and widely known as one of the best and purest of Canadian writers. His sonnets, which are usually excellent have received especial praise.

### The Future.

It were not well that we the veil should raise  
Of that thick curtain of futurity,  
Which veils from us the things that are to be  
Amid the shadows of the coming days,  
For who of us could tread the common ways  
Of life, serene and hopeful if he saw  
The sentence of the inexorable law,  
Like the doomed king, where'er he turned his gaze?

Kind the All-wise has kept that prescient lore  
Beyond our reach. It is enough to know,  
(Ah! let us hard to learn!) that as men sow  
They reap—nor worse nor better, less nor more.  
Thus taught the Prophets with inspired tongue:  
Thus Nature warns and thus her bards have sung.

James Whitcomb Riley has been brought into prominence on the lyceum platform, and adds pizzicato to his best poems in the Hoosier dialect by his inimitable impersonations, and the magnetic comicality of his voice and manner. Riley has also a sentimental and romantic side, and some of his poems, other than dialect, are gems of exquisite beauty. The New York World refers to his love for children, and his great tenderness of heart, and to the popular surprise that he should have remained unmarried. According to the account given Riley early loved, but lost the object of his affection, and has ever remained faithful to her memory. "The poem, 'Beautiful Hands' in 'Pipes of Pan,'" declares The World, "is believed to contain Riley's only reference to his sweetheart." The last stanza is especially tender and pathetic:

Beautiful hands, O beautiful hands  
Could you reach out of the alien lands  
Where you are lingering, and give me to-night  
Only a touch—we e'er so light—  
My heart were soothed, and my weary brain  
Would hush itself into rest again;  
For there is no solace the world commands  
Like the caress of your beautiful hands!

Prof. Charles G. D. Roberts gives us in "Acta Victoriana," what we may err in supposing an advance chapter of his third volume in the Trilogy of Acadian romance of which "The Forge in The Forest," and "A sister of Evangeline," are the first and second. It concerns the machinations of the Black Abbe. Under a portrait of Prof. Roberts, on another page, we find this quatrain:

### The Snow Drop.

When, after many days, the snow was dead,  
Its white soul lingering on earthy bed,  
Because this flower, its pure petal bloom  
With spring's most chill and virginal perfume fed.

His last book seems to meet with general critical acceptance. A prominent educator and writer of Canada writes to us: "I have read with delight Roberts' 'Sister of Evangeline.' It is idyllic—some passages are very beautiful indeed. The local color is admirable. He sees that country with just such eyes as I do, and feels the witchery of its charm. The story is swift in movement, beautifully told, and I have no doubt leaves a more correct impression of the real causes at work in bringing about the 'grande derangement' than has ever been given in formal histories. I do not know, but I take it that his next book will deal with 'Gruel and the Black Abbe.' When completed it will be a unique trilogy, altogether the most charming literary writing in prose that the 'Basin' has begotten."

Dr. Theodore H. Rind, of Toronto, and George Martin, Canadian poets, have both been prostrated by the prevailing distemper, La Grippe, but are now recovering. Mr. Martin and wife will go to Florida early in February to recuperate.

Mr. Lawrence J. Burpee, of the Justice Department, Ottawa, is preparing for an English publisher a volume on the literary history of Canada. PASTOR FELIX.

### So Funny.

A Lady at a literary reception recently informed a New York gentleman that she had heard selections from the American 'hoosier poet' read in London. 'How curious that a hoosier should become your poet laureate in America,' she said.

The American to whom she spoke did not know what she meant until she said that her favourite among the 'hoosier poets' was 'When the Frost is on the Pumpkin.' Then he told her that it was 'James Whitcomb Riley, the Hoosier poet.' 'Oh you Americans have such queer or pronouncing things' said the woman. 'Yes but Mr. Riley is not a hoosier, he

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is—' began the American, about to explain how Mr. Riley obtained his name from the 'Hoosier State,' as Indiana is called. But she cut the explanation short with, 'Oh, I see; it's a joke, then; you American are so funny.' I suppose you think Mr. Riley is a blue-stocking, and so you call him a hoosier.

### Explained.

A certain gallant son of Erin, living in America, offered his services at the beginning of the late war with Spain; but his employer, wishing to retain him at work, told the examining surgeon that Tim had once been made temporarily deaf by an explosion, and that his hearing was still bad.

'Do you hear well?' asked the doctor while Tim was being examined.

'Loike a weasel, sorr, was the answer.

'Has your hearing always been good?'

'Splendid, sorr.'

'See here; weren't you in an explosion some time before you came to this place, and weren't you totally deaf for weeks afterwards?'

'Sure, not me, sorr,' replied Tim. 'I could hear every word that wore wrote to me, sorr.'

His evasive reply ignored, Tim was accepted, was wounded in the chest, and came home on furlough. He was made so much of that he felt justified in exaggerating his experience, and even declared that 'the bullet went right through me here,' as he put his hand over his heart.

Tim even told this to the surgeon, and the doctor saw a chance to get even. 'Tim, Tim,' he exclaimed, 'stick to the truth. If the bullet had taken the course you say it would have gone plump through the heart. Tell that to some ignoramus who doesn't know anatomy.'

'That are yez talkin' about?' retorted Tim. 'Sure, it's the book-larnin' that's foolin' yez, doctor. There wasn't a mother's son went up the blazin' hill that day as his heart wasn't in his mouth.'

### LEFT HIM TO DIE.

Bright's Disease Pronounced Past Hope by Physicians—South American Kidney Cure is the Life Saver.

A traveller for a well known western manufacturing firm was so hale and hearty that the possibility of his contracting kidney trouble was farthest from his mind, but through constant exposure Bright's Disease, that most insidious of ailments, laid hold on him. He doctored for months—physicians gave him but a short time to live. A friend who had derived great benefit from South American Kidney Cure recommended it to him. When he had taken seven bottles all signs of the disease had left him, and to-day he is as well as ever.

### Told at Last.

The superintendent of a school in a provincial city directed the teachers the other day to ascertain the occupations of the parents of all the scholars in their respective classes. The inquiry proceeded well until the infant class was reached, when a small, red-headed, and much freckled boy obstinately refused to give any information. 'Isn't your father living, then, Johnny?' inquired the teacher.

'Yes, miss,' was the glum reply.

'Doesn't he work?'

'No, miss.'

'But he keeps you and your mother doesn't he?'

The small scholar assented emphatically.

'Then isn't he in business?'

'Yes, miss.'

Visions of a gambler in a checked suit and diamond studs, for a barman dealing out fiery fluids, crossed the teacher's mind.

'Johnny,' she urged solicitously, and yet

with apprehension, 'what does your father do?'

There was a moment's pause, while the sob in the small boy began to rise to the freckled surface.

'My father,' said he, 'aint in regular work. 'He's the lady with the whiskers in the circus, and ma said if I give it away she'll whip me!'

### Grasped the Situation.

How the Hodkins' geese were kept off the Podkins' premises is an interesting story.

The geese strayed for forage, as geese will, and sometimes invaded the Podkins' front lawn. Mrs. Podkins, kindly soul, said she, 'didn't want to git th' men-folk a-scrappin an' a-mixin' things up over a parcel o' geese.' So she organised a board of strategy, consisting of herself, her daughter 'Sis,' and her boy 'Joe.'

The result of their deliberations and certain preparations, wherein figured needle and thread, some grains of corn and some bits of cardboard, became evident the next morning.

The Hodkins' geese appeared as usual, but returned home quickly, qualling so noisily as to bring the Hodkins in a body to the front door. What they saw astonished them.

Depending from each fowl's bill was a bit of thread, the inner end anchored to a grain of corn in the bird's interior department, while to the other end of the string was attached a card bearing this inscription:

'Please Keep your Geese at Home.' The Hodkins' water-fowl are not now allowed to go outside the Hodkins' boundary—even on parole.

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### Too Salt for Him.

When a Liverpool gentleman gets a chance of poking fun at a Manchester man he doesn't let it slip. There is no love lost between the two cities, the Ship Canal probably accounting for some of the rivalry between them. This is the latest story to the point.

He was an innocent young mechanic from a Manchester engineering shop. It was his first trip to the seaside. He stood upon the step of his bathing machine at New Brighton for a few moments surveying the waters before him, when suddenly he plunged in, head foremost.

When he rose to the surface his face wore an expression of anguish. He began using vigorous language, emerged from the water and was just in the act of entering his bathing machine when his friend stopped him. 'What's the row? he asked. 'Is the water too cold for you?'

'Not it; it's not too cold, but some great silly fro' Liverpool has been throwin' salt in it.'

### Social Discussion.

The Optimist: 'Great results have been accomplished by the modern system of division of labour.'

The Pessimist: 'Meaving the system by which one man does the work and the other man gets the money.'

### More for Her Money.

'I hear that your daughter has broken off her engagement with the count. Is it true?' 'Yes; she ran across a chance to get a duke at the same figure.'



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