

IN AND AROUND EDINBURGH

Story of the Life of John Connell, the Blind Poet and Singer.

TENNYSON'S HOME IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Why the English Keep to the Left in Riding—Trick Henry Irving Played on Tennyson—Scottish Highways.

LONDON, Dec. 27.—[Correspondence of THE BEE.]—An eminent German author and myself visited Farringford House, Isle of Wight, the home of the late Lord Tennyson, a few months before the poet's death.

We found him among the shrubbery which luxuriously hides the quiet old place, wandering in the verdant and blossoming like an unseasonable St. Nicholas masquerading beneath a frowsy slouch hat.

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shared a third class compartment with as many uncounted Yorkshire jokers, were left to roam as best they could by way of a raging London "penny" bus.

In Edinburgh Town. There is a quaint little inn of Edinburgh, hard by St. Andrew's Square, in which I love to make my home when in "Auld Reekie"; for while it is but a few steps from the city's peerless Princess street it is still within the precincts of a fine old residence district, macadamized by the hands of a score of the great literary Scotchmen of other days.

Much going and coming between this inn and the city places brought my notice to the fact that nearly every pleasant summer night when the hush of evening had fallen and the town a marvellous singlet the tenderest ballads of Scotland came that way, stood for a quarter of an hour or so in the quiet entrance to St. Andrew's street and intervals to the accompaniment of an accordion sang sweetly for those who tarried.

At chance glimpses of the singer and his regular evening audience I noticed, too, that the man never solicited alms. He stood quiet still in the middle of the street, and now and then some one of the crowd, in the mood of his singing voice, stepped up to him and placed a coin within his hand. These were copper coins always, and they nearly always came from the pockets of poor people. Finally, the singer and the accordion touching my own heart, I went and placed a coin in his hand, as others had done before me.

Then for the first time I saw that the man was blind. I saw, besides, such a face as will haunt me all my lifetime. I cannot tell you what painter has put most of hopeful patience, exalted resignation and sublime faith into any face upon canvas. But here was a face that instantly revealed them all. I went back to him, I told him I would like to know him; asked him if I could come to his home, or if he would let his wife and lodgings and in a moment more we had arranged for a meeting at the little St. Andrew's street inn for the next day.

When he came his first words put us both as warmly in touch as though our hearts had been open to each other for a lifetime. "I knew by your voice," he said sadly, "you saw through my sightlessness. And we blind folk are mainly quiet as seen; that is, we think you make rhymes, do I not?" This deprecating "God knows my heart is sair t' sing wi' a pen, too!"

So I knew he had already sung "wi' his pen," and made him repeat his rhymes. His rhymes were another Burns in rags and obscurity. Surely this is so, then I went with him home, No. 13, Gilchrist street (second flat), Nicholson street, Edinburgh; away up among the densely inhabited wynds and tenements of old Edinburgh. There were just so many children one could scarcely count them or remember their names; a kindly-faced wife, loyal and true; a hearty, hearty man, the comfort of this life as the face of a stern-beamed crew; but with faith, hope and unflinching love enough within it to save an entire race.

The story of the man and his bitter struggle is a short one; because of his vocation, his poverty, his silent suffering. He was a mechanic of the highest order, a man of education and advancement, perhaps with dreams of fame. The blindness came. That the wife and lad might not starve, he must sing upon the street. Then a passing grand lady heard him sing. She sent for him and gave him an audience. The old housewife, however, to make her husband presentable the soft-hearted wife gave all their savings and pledged all their little belongings for clothing and bread for a new year.

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AMONG THE LITERARY FOLK

Improvement Manifest in Book-Making by American and English Publishers.

TWO NOTABLE NOVELS OF 'NINETY-TWO

Evils of the Contract System—Why There Are so Many One-Book Authors—A New Literary Mania—Personal Gossip.

NEW YORK, Jan. 6.—[Correspondence of THE BEE.]—The most irritating reflection of the past year, in a literary sense, is, I think, when one looks back upon it, that the greatest books of the year have come to us from English authors. I refer now to Thomas Hardy's "Tess" and Mrs. Humphrey Ward's "David Greave." What have our American authors given us to approach these two books as impressive pieces of literary work? Both books are unquestionably great of their kind, no matter from what standpoint one views either of them.

Almost all phases of the mania for book collecting have been named and defined, but there is still one phase that, as far as I can see, has never been touched on by writers about books, and it is a very interesting phase, too, said a prominent New York bookseller to me the other day.

"It is a peculiar mania, which I, as an extensive dealer in rare books, am in position to see a great deal of. I call it 'Francomania,' and it refers to that class of book-buying which is content with nothing but French books and French editions. This preference is based on general notions for the French publishers lead the world in book-making. They display the greatest, the most exquisite taste, they bestow the utmost pains and they expand the largest sums in the printing, manufacture and binding of books. The reputation they have obtained among book buyers has been entirely in all respects due to bookmaking, and it is not surprising that their creed is simply, 'There is nothing good but the French.'

"But, at the same time, these Francomanians push their preferences too far. It is like every craze—from the devotion to one object a man soon comes to regard everything else as worthless. The English publishers and American publishers have improved steadily during late years in the art of book-making and now manufacture beautiful books; and to see one of these rabid Francomanians elevate his nose in contempt over a dainty and genuinely artistic sample of English or American bookmaking is absolutely exasperating. If the reader of good taste would recognize creditable pieces of work at once, no matter where manufactured; but they have no real taste, no discrimination, no independent judgment, or if they once had, it has become completely warped and stultified by the craze, the mania to which they are falling victims. Their creed is simply, 'There is nothing good but the French.'

"This mania takes a curious and amusing form, the victims often having their English classics in French, or, at least, French editions. Now, I know of several cases of my own experience when the so-called French editions were purchased by the workmen, on paper of English manufacture, and illustrated by English artists; but it bore a French imprint, and the reader was not satisfied. You are familiar, of course, with Sterne's 'Sentimental Journal,' and you know what a delicate, exquisite specimen of English literature it is. It is greatly admired by the French as possessing the peculiar charm and grace of style which characterizes their own literature. It is a great pity, therefore, that a French edition published in Paris. This is only one of many examples I could give of the curious extremes to which Francomania urges its victims.

"Edward W. Bok.

If you will call at our new store we will present you with a copy of a beautiful piece of music, Ford & Charlton, 1508 Dodge.

AT BEDTIME I TAKE A PLEASANT HERB DRINK. THE NEXT MORNING I FEEL BRIGHT AND MY HEAD AND COMPLEXION IS BETTER.

LANE'S MEDICINE. A Frenchman's sell it for a dollar and a package. If you can't get it, write to the proprietor, Lane's Family Medicine, 107 Broadway, New York.

WITHOUT THE BOW (RING). It is easy to steal or ring watches from the pocket. The thief gets the watch in one hand, the chain in the other and gives a short, quick jerk—the ring slips off the watch stem, and away goes the watch, leaving the victim only the chain.

This idea stopped that little game. The bow has a groove on each end, and the chain is firmly locked, so that it cannot be pulled or twisted off.

Sold by all watch dealers, without cost, on Jas. Bos Filled and other cases containing this trade mark—Ask your jeweler for pamphlet.

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KENNEDY'S CAUTION. KENNEDY'S EAST INDIA BITTERS. A FINE BLEND OF PURE MALT AND HERB INFUSION. ONLY IN BOTTLES WITH TRADE MARK LABELS.

The Mercer. Omaha's Newest Hotel. COR. 12TH AND HOWARD STS. 40 Rooms at \$10 per day. 50 Rooms at \$15 per day. 80 Rooms with Bath at \$20 per day. 100 Rooms with Bath at \$25 per day.

OPENED AUGUST 1st. Modern in Every Respect. Newly Furnished Throughout.

C. S. IERB, Prop. TO THE OWNERS OF ALL LOTS OR PARTS of lots on "B" street from 13th street to 17th street.

You are hereby notified that the undersigned, three disinterested freeholders of the city of Omaha, have been duly appointed by the mayor, with the approval of the city council of said city, to assess the damage to be done by the grading of "B" street from 13th street to 17th street, declared necessary by ordinance No. 13, passed December 13th, 1892, approved December 15th, 1892.

MANHOOD RESTORED? "Nerve Seeds." Guaranteed to cure nervous debility, loss of vitality, and all other ailments of the nervous system. Write for circulars and testimonials.

For Sale in Omaha by Sherman & McConnell, 1515 Dodge Street.

thus far the most alluring offers have failed to tempt him. Edmund Clarence Steedman will also be heard this year. Mrs. Custer is now a pronounced reader of her writings, and has had a number of "dates" made for her. "Chancellor" Harris, I understand, is also going to try his luck with "Uncle Remus." And so we shall not have a lack of author-readers, or opportunities denied those who are interested in the personalities of the writers whose books they admire to see the men who write them.

New Mania for French Books. "Almost all phases of the mania for book collecting have been named and defined, but there is still one phase that, as far as I can see, has never been touched on by writers about books, and it is a very interesting phase, too, said a prominent New York bookseller to me the other day.

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