

FEROCIOUS FRIENDSHIP.

An Incident in the Life of the Tragedian Macready.

Between Macready and my brother Charles existed a kind of ferocious friendship. Macready, whatever he may have been in private life, had at the theater a simply horrible temper and he was in the habit of using at rehearsals and even in an undertone when acting the most abusive language—language which my brother sometimes passed by with a smile, but which he occasionally hotly resented. He did not mind Macready constantly addressing him as "beast," but he objected to having his eyes, his limbs and his internal organs coupled with invective terms. Yet, oddly enough, the great tragedian, with whom he was constantly quarrelling, had a grim respect and liking for him. He knew him to be a gentleman and a scholar and one who was a competent judge of picturesque effect and an acute dramatic critic. On one occasion Macready having to play "Othello," and my brother not being included in the cast, the tragedian thus addressed him: "Beast, I want you to go in front tonight and give me afterward a full and candid opinion as to the merits of my acting. Omit nothing. Tell me how I played and how I looked. I have an idea that I shall surpass myself this evening." Now, the great actor used to go through a tremendous amount of realistic effort in the part of Othello and toward the close of the tragedy would get into such a disorganized physical condition that he was all perspiration and foaming at the mouth and presented a somewhat shocking spectacle.

My brother duly occupied a seat in the front row of the dress circle and narrowly watched the performance from beginning to end. Then he went behind the scenes and repaired to Macready's dressing room. The artist was being disrobed by his dresser and was panting with excitement in an armchair.

"Well, beast, what was it like?" My brother told him that he had derived the highest gratification from the performance and he had never seen him play Othello more superbly. He was magnificent in his speech to the Venetian senate, the jealous scenes with Iago were splendid, the murder of Desdemona was superb, and he died infinitely. Macready's face lighted up more and more as my brother answered his many queries.

"The well, beast," he observed at last. "The well—very well, and, now, what was my appearance—how did I look, beast?"

My brother cogitated for a moment and then, with perfect candor, replied, "Like a sweep, sir!"—G. A. Sala's Recollections.

Unloaded on the Editor.

Soon after arriving in London Justin McCarthy obtained an introduction to an editor who had started what was then the novel feature of publishing short stories in newspapers. Mr. McCarthy wrote a story for him and sent it in. A few days later he called at the office to learn its fate.

"I hope you can see your way to accept it," he said timidly.

"Yes, and sixty more like it," replied the editor.

Nothing more was heard of Mr. McCarthy for several months. When he eventually put in an appearance at the office he had a large parcel with him.

"What have you got there?" asked the editor, seeing him untie the cord.

"These are the sixty stories you asked me to write," answered his visitor. The editor gasped for breath.

"But I didn't ask you to write anything like that number!" he said.

"You expressed your willingness to accept sixty stories like the one I wrote on approval, and here they are. I merely took you at your word," quoth the young Irishman. The stories were not refused.

The Salamander.

In Andrews' "Anecdotes Ancient and Modern" (1759) one reads, "Should a glass house fire be kept up, without extinction for a longer time than seven years, there is no doubt but that salamander would be generated in the cinders." This probably accounts for the popular idea that a salamander lives in the fire, a fallacy so far removed from the truth that the curious lizard-like beast so called cannot endure even the heat of the sun, but skulks away under stones to avoid it. It will never lose its reputation for fire eating, though, which lingers still in the heating utensil that is named after it.

Dickens and Thackeray.

"I once missed meeting Dickens at Chatsworth. He left the day of my arrival," writes Leveson-Gower in his memoirs. "Thackeray came that same afternoon and was anxious to hear about Dickens' visit. He wondered whether he had loaded the duke very much. My impression is that, though professing to be friends, these two great novelists did not care much for one another."

A Careful Wife.

Hobby (desperately)—Give me your clothesline. I'm going to hang myself. Wife (sweetly)—Oh, George, I'm so sorry. This clothesline is so rotten it won't hold you. You'll have to buy one, dear!—Cleveland Leader.

Bad Result of Experiment.

Aunt Ann—You think John no longer loves you? New Wife (sobbing)—I—I know it, auntie! I p-put on an ugly old hat this morning and he never noticed the dif-dif-difference!—Chicago Tribune.

A Real English John.

Leopards, it is stated, are becoming unpleasantly numerous in the neighborhood of Sima. Two of them recently lay in wait for the mail cart, but fortunately they were spotted.—London Punch.

READING HABITS.

You Must Cultivate System If You Would Improve Your Mind.

The mind is a very delicate, complicated piece of mechanism, and, although made to do a certain kind of work marvelously well, yet, when put to an entirely different use, its efficiency is ruined, just as the delicate machinery intended for producing fine watch parts would be completely spoiled for this purpose if used to make clock parts. When the mind becomes deflected to a certain extent from its normal condition by the vicious reading habit, it diverges more and more and rarely goes back to the normal.

By desultory habits of reading and lack of system you confuse the mind with a large mass of unclassified material. You pick up a book and read a few pages and then pick up another one and then go from that to a paper or magazine. This puts the mind in a chaotic state, because you let everything run into the mental reservoir without any order or definite plans. Systemless reading is profitless. You cannot gain knowledge of a friend or prize his friendship by a hasty first impression, so in reading a book you cannot gain everlasting good by skimming over its contents or by reading a few pages one night and then putting it on a shelf to gather dust until you get time to read it again. Everything comes out of the mind as it went in, and if it does not enter in an orderly manner it will come out in chaos.—Success.

EARLY DINING.

In Ancient England It Was at 10 o'clock in the Forenoon.

The ordinary hour for dinner in England in the fifteenth century appears to have been 10 o'clock in the forenoon. In the larger baronial castles a lavish hospitality was practiced, but even among the lower ranks, says a contemporary, the "bona fide traveler" could always be sure of a welcome and the best provision that the house afforded. To shut the door upon the houseless stranger was an offense which the church would not readily condone, and it was remarked of more than one who had strayed in this respect that luck ever afterward deserted him. The approach of the meal was often announced by the blowing of horns, so that wayfarers might hasten their movements.

Curiously enough, grace was said before the tables were laid, and the guests appear to have had their appetites whetted in a most salutary manner by regarding the movements of the attendants as they spread the cloths and brought in saltcellars, drinking vessels and other necessaries. To wait on others at table was considered rather honorable than otherwise, and the story of the Black Prince attending to the wants of the captive French monarch contains nothing extraordinary. In the households of the great the carvers and those who presented the wine at table were never less than esquires and often nobles and barons.—Family Magazine.

Irritant Drugs.

The use of tea and coffee, says an authority, who includes tobacco as well, is injurious and ought not to be indulged in by those who seek to place themselves in the best condition to resist disease, because they belong in the category of irritant drugs. These, by rousing the vital forces to get rid of the poison, provoke the action which is mistakenly supposed to be an added force, whereas this action is only one of self preservation. It will readily be seen how much supporting and building up of the system there are in such substances by trying to live on them to the exclusion of other things. The result would prove the absurdity of the idea.

A Simple Man.

It takes a neighbor to disentangle a man from a handsome setting. A good many years ago, when Wordsworth was poet laureate of England, a worthy Cumberland yeoman walked many miles, in response to widely scattered notices, to hear the poet laureate address a meeting. When he discovered who held the high sounding title, he left the hall in indignation.

"'Twas nobbut old Wadsworth o' Rydal, after aw!" he said scornfully on his return to his family.

The Shillalah.

The shillalah, accounted Ireland's national weapon of defense, was originally a common blackthorn stick, but in modern times it has been replaced by the more wiry ash sapling. The real shillalah is a young shoot of the sloe shrub or blackthorn pulled by the root from the crevice of some rock. After being trimmed it is placed in the smoke of turf peat, which softens the hard fiber, and when it has reached a condition as pliant as rubber it is straightened.

Words Passed.

Judge—You say that words passed between the accused and his wife. Did you hear what they were? Witness—No; I didn't hear them, but I saw them. Judge—Saw them? Witness—Yes. They were in the dictionary that he threw at her.

Experiment.

"I have been married twice, once for love and once for money." "Are you satisfied?" "Not quite. I should like to try marrying for a little of both, if I may."—Puck.

In the Restaurant.

"He seems to be an experienced waiter." "Oh, yes. Note the calm indifference with which he treats people who are in a hurry."

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DICKENS' "SITUATIONS."

The Similarity of His Methods in Winding Up His Plots.

It is curious what a penchant Dickens had for certain melodramatic situations, which seemed to his fancy so telling that he repeated and reproduced them many times over. That his works are all dramatic and conceived in the true spirit of the stage is plain from the vast list of adaptations. Each story has been adapted again and again and will bear the process admirably.

One method for winding up his plot, to which he was excessively partial, was the unmasking of the villain owing to the betrayal of some confederate. The parties are generally brought together in a room by the more virtuous members. The confederate then emerges from his concealment and tells a long story of villainy. We have this denouement first in "Oliver Twist," where Monks makes his revelations, in "Nickleby" Ralph is confronted with "the man Snawley and Squeers." In "The Old Curiosity Shop" Quilp is similarly exposed. In "Barnaby Rudge" Haredale forces his hereditary enemy to make revelations. In "Chuzzlewit" Jonas is confronted with another betrayer. In "Copperfield" Uriah Heep is denounced and exposed by Mr. Micawber. In "Bleak House" Lady Dedlock is similarly tracked. In nearly all the cases the guilty person goes off and commits suicide.—London Spectator.

THE FLUTED COLUMN.

Why the Greeks Adopted This Form in Their Architecture.

The Greeks observed that a smooth column melted in the light and that its lines were vague and uncertain, writes Jean Schoeffer in the Architectural Record Magazine. In order to restore its definiteness they conceived the idea of fluting it. The sharp ridges of the flutings, catching the light, contrasted with the dark hollows, thus giving body to the column and emphasizing the vertical outline of the edifice, whence a double advantage. This discovery could never have been made on paper.

Then, as the abacus of the capital casts a shadow upon the top of the column, the junction of capital and column becomes indistinct. To restore the necessary effect the Greek cuts several deep lines at the point of junction, and to emphasize them he paints them in a dark tone. Even the curve of the circular torus carrying the abacus is so designed that the bright light, striking upon the relief, shall fade into a shaded half that toward the hollow. Thus, as Viollet le Duc truly says, the Greek preserves even in appearance the forms which his reason tells him to adopt as being the best and most enduring.

A GORGEOUS SIGHT.

The Way an Eskimo Belle Looks When Dressed For a Dance.

When an Eskimo young lady goes to a ball she is a gorgeous sight to gaze upon. A traveler reports just how a belle was dressed on such an occasion.

Her dress was made of the intestines of a seal, split and sewed together. This makes a transparent garment and the girl trimmed it with elaborate embroidery of colored worsteds and fringed it with strings of beads. Her trousers were white and made of Siberian reindeer skin embroidered with strips of wolf skin. Her hair was braided on each side with strips of wolf skin and strings of beads. Heavy necklaces and pendants of beads and teeth of animals hung around her neck and over her shoulders.

Snow white gloves made of fawn skin were on her hands. These fitted perfectly and were ornamented with strips of skin from some animal—perhaps the seal. To complete this elaborate outfit this Eskimo belle carried long eagle feathers, one in each hand, which she waved as she danced.—Washington Star.

Get Outdoors.

Get outdoors and you won't need to take sleep opiates. It is a palpable fact that we can't be out in the fresh air and sunshine very long before feeling an inclination to drowsiness. Isn't it the easiest thing in the world to lie down in a sunny field, with a handkerchief over your face, and fall asleep? And, if you have ever crossed the ocean, you must have noticed how the fresh breezes and the sun's rays hot the passengers dozing in their chairs. Sunlight and air are nature's own remedies for sleeplessness, and if insomnia patients could take a good course of this treatment they would need no poppy juices.

The Cormorant.

The cormorant is trained by the Chinese as a fishing bird. A ring is placed around the bird's neck, which prevents it from swallowing the fish it has taken. One Chinaman will utilize a dozen of these birds during the day's fishing, sending them under the water in regular succession. They were formerly used in the same manner in England. Charles I. had an officer of his household designated as master of the cormorants.

A Wooden Actor.

When Morris had the Haymarket theater Jerrold had occasion one day to find fault with the strength, or, rather, the want of strength, of the company. Morris expostulated and said: "Why, there is V. He was bred on 'these boards!'" "He looks as though he had been cut out of them," replied Jerrold.

Preparing For the Wedding.

"I suppose," said the facetious stranger, watching a workman spread a carpet from the church door to the curb, "that's the highroad to heaven you're fixing there." "No," replied the man; "this is merely a bridal path."—Philadelphia Press.

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Misses—Bridget, have you made lobster a la Newburgh? Bridget—No, mum; I never worked farther the Hudson than Nyack.—Puck.

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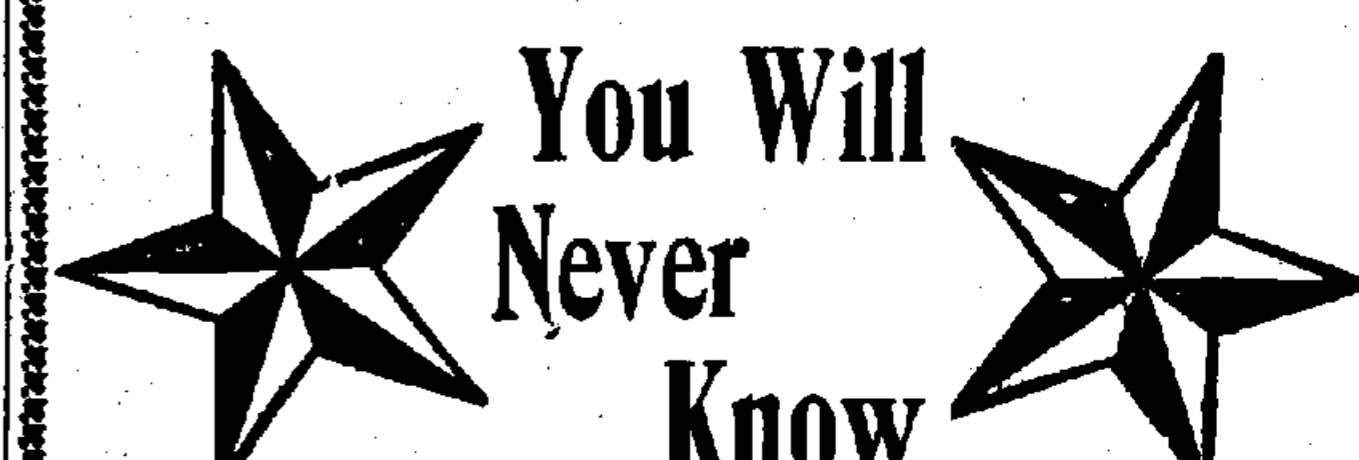
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